



SAVED TO SERVE

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THE GREAT CONTROVERSY, CHAPTER 17—HERALDS OF THE MORNING

1. What is the title of chapter 17 of *The Great Controversy*? _____
2. What does the word heralds mean? Answer: Signs, harbingers, indicators, signals. A herald also represents a messenger with a message.
3. Note: The word "morning," that is a part of the title, refers to the Second Coming of Jesus. Therefore, the title "Heralds of the Morning" means signs that show the Second Coming of Jesus is at hand.
4. Note: The title "Heralds of the Morning" does not only point to indicators that Jesus is coming quickly, but also the messages and the messengers that signal that Christ's coming is even at the doors.
5. Why is the fulfillment of Bible prophecies important? Answer: It gives us the assurance that the Bible is inspired, that Jesus Christ and His ministry are real even though we do not see Him, that we can confidently read, believe, and claim biblical promises in times of crises. In short it should increase our faith. See John 14:29; John 13:19; 2 Peter 1:16-19; Proverbs 22:20,21.
6. What doctrine is the very keynote of the sacred scriptures? _____

The doctrine of the second advent is the very keynote of the Sacred Scriptures. From the day when the first pair turned their sorrowing steps from Eden, the children of faith have waited the coming of the Promised One to break the destroyer's power and bring them again to the lost Paradise. Holy men of old looked forward to the advent of the Messiah in glory, as the consummation of their hope. {GC 299.1}

7. In the Old Testament, which preacher proclaimed the Second Coming of Jesus, even before the First Advent occurred? Jude 14,15

8. Note: Job, David, Isaiah, Habakkuk and many others from the Old Testament heralded the Second Coming of Jesus. See ***The Great Controversy, pages 299 to 302.***

9. Note: In the New Testament, Jesus heralded His Second Advent. See John 14:1-3 and Matthew 25:31,32.

10. Note: In the New Testament, the holy angels heralded Christ Second Advent. See Acts 1:11.

11. Note: In the New Testament, both Paul and John heralded Christ Second Advent. See 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 1:7; Revelation 11:15; Revelation 22:20.

12. Note: Not only the preachers from the Sacred Scriptures, but early Christians and the Reformers heralded the Second Coming of Jesus.

"If death be the last enemy to be destroyed at the resurrection, we may learn how earnestly believers should long and pray for the second coming of Christ, when this full and final conquest shall be made."--"This is the day that all believers should long, and hope, and wait for, as being the accomplishment of all the work of their redemption, and all the desires and endeavors of their souls." "Hasten, O Lord, this blessed day!"-- **Such was the hope of the apostolic church, of the "church in the wilderness," and of the Reformers.** {GC 303.4}

13. What does Bible prophecies show us? Luke 21:25,27; Mark 13:24-26; Revelation 6:12 _____

Prophecy not only foretells the manner and object of Christ's coming, but presents tokens by which men are to know when it is near. Said Jesus: "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars." Luke 21:25. "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory." Mark 13:24-26. **The revelator thus describes the first of the signs to precede the second advent:** "There was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood." Revelation 6:12. {GC 304.1}

14. What was the date of the first of the heralds regarding the Second Coming of Jesus? Describe the impact of this herald. Revelation 6:12

These signs were witnessed before the opening of the nineteenth century. **In fulfillment of this prophecy there occurred, in the year 1755, the most terrible earthquake that has ever been recorded. Though commonly known as the earthquake of Lisbon, it extended to the greater part of Europe, Africa, and America. It was felt in Greenland, in the West Indies, in the island of Madeira, in Norway and Sweden, Great Britain and Ireland. It pervaded an extent of not less than four million square miles.** In Africa the shock was almost as severe as in Europe. A great part of Algiers was destroyed; and a short distance from Morocco, a village containing eight or ten thousand inhabitants was swallowed up. A vast wave swept over the coast of Spain and Africa engulfing cities and causing great destruction. {GC 304.2}

- 15a. What did the people attempt to do in order to preserve themselves from the great Lisbon earthquake? _____

"The shock" of the earthquake "was instantly followed by the fall of every church and convent, almost all the large public buildings, and more than one fourth of the houses. . . The earthquake happened on a holyday, when the churches and convents were full of people, very few of whom escaped."-- Encyclopedia Americana, art. "Lisbon," note (ed. 1831). "The terror of the people was beyond description. Nobody wept; it was beyond tears. They ran hither and thither, delirious with horror and astonishment, beating their faces and breasts, crying, 'Misericordia! the world's at an end!' Mothers forgot their children, and ran about loaded with crucifixes. **Unfortunately, many ran to the churches for protection; but in vain was the sacrament exposed; in vain did the poor creatures embrace the altars; images, priests, and people were buried in one common ruin.**" It has been estimated that ninety thousand persons lost their lives on that fatal day. {GC 305.2}

15b. What will the wicked, the unrepentant, do at the Second Coming of Jesus? Revelation 6:12-17 _____

16a. Note: The Papacy proclaims that people must turn to Mary, the Eucharist, and Sunday worship, in order to be preserved from calamities.

During the apparition which took place on July 13, 1917, the Blessed Virgin also showed the children a vision of Hell, saying to them: "You have seen Hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart. **If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.**" **Despite the war and persecution of the Church which Our Lady said would befall mankind**, she also reassured the children that: "In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph." **Mary instructed the children to pray the Rosary often, saying: "Through the Rosary, you can stop wars."** On Sunday, October 13, 1917 the "Miracle of the Sun" was seen by an estimated 30,000 to 100,000 people. In 1930, the Catholic Church proclaimed the supernatural character of the apparitions and a shrine was erected at Fatima. <http://aleteia.org/2016/12/17/pope-francis-to-visit-fatima-on-100th-anniversary-of-marian-apparitions/>

#237. **Sunday, like the Jewish Sabbath, is meant to be a day which heals our relationships with God, with ourselves, with others and with the world**... It [Sunday] protects human action from becoming empty activism; it [Sunday] also prevents that unfettered greed and sense of isolation which make us seek personal gain to the detriment of all else. The law of weekly rest forbade work on the seventh day... [See Ex 23:12]. Rest opens our eyes to the larger picture and gives us renewed sensitivity to the rights of others. **And so the day of rest, centered on the Eucharist, sheds it light on the whole week, and motivates us to greater concern for nature and the poor.** http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

16b. Note: Satan through his human agents is leading the world to believe that Mary is alive, inspired, and that she can preserve the world from calamities, if they turn to her. Satan also leads the world to believe that since Mary's prophecies have come to pass, we can trust her instructions in the future

STILL STANDING: Virgin Mary statue unharmed following East Texas tornadoes <http://www.easttexasmatters.com/news/local-news/still-standing-virgin-mary-statue-unharmed-following-east-texas-tornadoes/703054670>

Why do statues of Our Lady survive disasters? <http://www.catholicerald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2015/08/28/why-do-statues-of-our-lady-survive-disasters/>

The three children who predicted World War II, the fall of Communism and an attempt to kill a Pope: Girls and boy 'who were visited by Virgin Mary' will be made saints this weekend <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4500394/Three-Secrets-Fatima.html>

16c. Note: The Lord inspired Ellen White prophesy the following statement, which is being fulfilled in the above statement from Pope Francis. This fulfillment of the prophecy should give us assurance that Ellen White was indeed inspired by God and that we can claim the promises therein.

16d. Note: The Lord raised up Ellen White to counter the evil influence of "Mary." The mere fact that Ellen White's prophecies have come to pass our faith in Jesus should be increased.

17a. "In order to fulfill my solemn duty to protect America and its citizens, the United States will withdraw from the Paris climate accord but begin negotiations to reenter either the Paris accord or an entirely new transaction under terms that are fair to the United States," Trump said from the White House Rose Garden. "We're getting out. And we will start to renegotiate and we'll see if there's a better deal. If we can, great. If we can't, that's fine," he added. In triggering the official withdrawal procedures, Trump will spark a lengthy process that won't conclude until November 2020 -- the same month he's up for reelection, ensuring the issue becomes a major topic of debate in the next presidential contest. <http://www.cnn.com/2017/06/01/trump-announces-paris-climate-agreement-decision.html>

17b. Renegotiation: Trump said he's interested in renegotiating a new plan, but if he can't, "that's fine." UNFCCC released a statement later saying renegotiation is not on the table.

The reaction: Elon Musk quit Trump's council. CEOs said they were disappointed. 50 mayors pledged to uphold the deal. Key European leaders expressed their regret.

The cost: Scientists say any delay in US efforts to halt greenhouse gas emissions could cost in the long term. The US is the second largest emitter, only behind China, which is staying in the deal.

The future: The vast majority of scientists agree that higher temperatures will cause rising seas, flooded coastal cities, mass extinction, drought, migration crises, deadlier heatwaves, crop failures and stronger storms. <http://www.cnn.com/2017/06/01/politics/us-paris-agreement-trump/index.html>

17c. The 21st century presents no greater moral challenge than addressing the threat of human-caused climate change. President Donald Trump has utterly failed that test... This decision is wrong in the sense that it is evil—it will result in devastation to life on Earth for generations to come. Its global consequences and impact on every living being on the planet makes it fundamentally immoral. His failure, however, only increases the responsibility of others. If this President fails, it falls then to the people and their elected representatives to reject, reverse, and overcome it. The Parliament is committed to that reversal and to overcoming its consequences as well as the ignorance on which it is based. We call on others who cherish all that is sacred in our world to join in that commitment, and to endorse that commitment with their own words and their own actions. <https://parliamentofreligions.org/blog/2017-06-01-1507/parliament-world%E2%80%99s-religions-condemns-president-trump%E2%80%99s-plans-withdraw-paris>

17d. "This time is right upon us. The Spirit of God is being withdrawn from the earth. When the angel of mercy folds her wings and departs, Satan will do the evil deeds he has long wished to do. Storm and tempest, war and bloodshed,—in these things he delights, and thus he gathers in his harvest. And so completely will men be deceived by him that they will declare that these calamities are the result of the desecration of the first day of the week. From the pulpits of the popular churches will be heard the statement that the world is being punished because Sunday is not honored as it should be. And it will require no great stretch of imagination for men to believe this. They are guided by the enemy, and therefore they reach conclusions which are entirely false. — {RH September 17, 1901 Par. 9}"

17e. The dignitaries of church and state will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected. In the soon-coming conflict we shall see exemplified the prophet's words: "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17. {GC 592.3}

18a. On one occasion, when in New York City, I was in the night season called upon to behold buildings rising story after story toward heaven. These buildings were warranted to be fireproof, and they were erected to glorify their owners and builders. Higher and still higher these buildings rose, and in them the most costly material was used. Those to whom these buildings belonged were not asking themselves: "How can we best glorify God?" The Lord was not in their thoughts...The scene that next passed before me was an alarm of fire. Men looked at the lofty and supposedly fire-proof buildings and said: "They are perfectly safe." But these buildings were consumed as if made of pitch. The fire engines could do nothing to stay the destruction. The firemen were unable to operate the engines. {9T 11-14}

18b. "They told us there was an accident in tower one, that the fire department was on its way, that our building was secure and safe, and that we could return to our offices shortly," Hickey said. "They kept saying, 'Repeat, building two is secure, repeat, building two is secure,'" Simmons said. "A number of people did turn around." "Stay where you are. This is a secure area. Please remain in the building. Stay where you are," Bartels recalled the announcer saying. "We didn't slow down. We just ignored it, kept on moving." It was 9:06 a.m.—"Lawsuits likely after WTC attacks," <http://www.cnn.com/2001/US/10/10/rec.tower.evacuation/>

19a. Read *The Great Controversy*, page 235.1. "Under various disguises the Jesuits worked their way into offices of state, climbing up to be the counselors of kings, and shaping the policy of nations. They became servants to act as spies upon their masters. They established colleges for the sons of princes and nobles, and schools for the common people; and the children of Protestant parents were drawn into an observance of popish rites. All the outward pomp and display of the Romish worship was brought to bear to confuse the mind and dazzle and captivate the imagination, and thus the liberty for which the fathers had toiled and bled was betrayed by the sons. The Jesuits rapidly spread themselves over Europe, and wherever they went, there followed a revival of popery." {GC 235.1}

19b. **South Korea's Moon Jae-in seeking Vatican's help on North Korea...** South Korean President Moon Jae-in is requesting help from the Vatican in easing tensions on the Korean peninsula. Moon, who is South Korea's second Roman Catholic president, requested the pope to play a mediating role in what he hopes could culminate in a summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un....**The South Korean archbishop said Pope Francis played a pivotal role in U.S.-Cuba relations in 2014.** "Even when the United States and Cuba were in the middle of a longstanding conflict they needed each other," Kim said. http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2017/05/22/South-Koreas-Moon-Jae-in-seeking-Vaticans-help-on-North-Korea/3241495503034/

19c. **Venezuelan activists call for help in Vatican** <http://www.romereports.com/2017/05/25/venezuelan-activists-call-for-help-in-vatican>
South Korea asks Pope Francis to intervene for dialogue with North <http://www.romereports.com/2017/05/26/south-korea-asks-pope-francis-to-intervene-for-dialogue-with-north>

20. Read *The Great Controversy*, page 588.1

Dialogue helps overcome old prejudices. This was the objective of the ecumenical meeting organized by the Focolare Movement. Christians from more than 300 churches and ecclesial communities attended, and the highlight of the meeting was attending the pope's weekly catechesis. POPE FRANCIS: "I greet the participants of the Ecumenical Week promoted by the Focolare Movement." The Second Vatican Council gave a strong impetus to ecumenism. It ended a stage of mutual suspicion, and made a new way of dialogue with other Christians possible. Since then, the popes following the Council have had important meetings. Most recently were the prayer in the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, the trip to Sweden to remember the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, and an October meeting with the Archbishop of Canterbury. <http://www.romereports.com/2017/05/28/protestant-leaders-inspired-after-general-audience-with-the-pope>

21a. Read *The Great Controversy*, page 444.2. "The wide diversity of belief in the Protestant churches is regarded by many as decisive proof that no effort to secure a forced uniformity can ever be made. But there has been for years, in churches of the Protestant faith, a strong and growing sentiment in favor of a union based upon common points of doctrine. To secure such a union, the discussion of subjects upon which all were not agreed—however important they might be from a Bible standpoint—must necessarily be waived." {GC 444.2}

21b. **One in the Spirit: Catholics, Pentecostals celebrate Pentecost with pope...** Pope Francis invited some 300 Pentecostal and evangelical leaders to Rome to join an estimated 30,000 Catholic charismatics in celebrating Pentecost and marking the 50th anniversary of the Catholic charismatic renewal...Recognizing that "it is precisely the Holy Spirit who heals divisions," he said, Pope Francis wanted an ecumenical celebration...The Vatican-sponsored dialogue with Pentecostals and evangelicals is somewhat different than its other ecumenical dialogues, which are working toward a restoration of full unity, including in doctrine, ministry and the sacraments...Where the Catholic charismatic relationship with Pentecostals is positive, it provides an example of "spiritual ecumenism," which is less about agreement on theological points and more about common prayer. <https://cnstopstories.com/2017/05/30/one-in-the-spirit-catholics-pentecostals-celebrate-pentecost-with-pope/>

22a. Read *The Great Controversy*, page 571.1. "The Roman Church now presents a fair front to the world, covering with apologies her record of horrible cruelties. She has clothed herself in Christlike garments; but she is unchanged. Every principle of the papacy that existed in past ages exists today. The doctrines devised in the darkest ages are still held. Let none deceive themselves. The papacy that Protestants are now so ready to honor is the same that ruled the world in the days of the Reformation, when men of God stood up, at the peril of their lives, to expose her iniquity. {GC 571.1}

22b. Justin Trudeau asks pope for public apology to Canada's indigenous communities... **Trudeau asked Pope Francis for a public apology, on behalf of the Church, to Canada's first indigenous communities, who suffered physical and sexual abuse by Catholic-run schools.** It is a drama that affected about 150,000 natives in the late nineteenth century, who were forced to abandon their customs and assimilate the rest of the population in schools belonging to federal authorities, Catholics or Protestants. In 2009, Pope Benedict XVI apologized and "expressed his sorrow at the anguish caused by the deplorable conduct of some members of the Church." <http://www.romereports.com/2017/05/30/justin-trudeau-asks-pope-for-public-apology-to-canada-s-indigenous-communities>

23. What was the second herald for the Second Coming of Jesus? What date did it occur, and after what great sign? Revelation 6:12

Twenty-five years later appeared the next sign mentioned in the prophecy--the darkening of the sun and moon. What rendered this more striking was the fact that the time of its fulfillment had been definitely pointed out. In the Saviour's conversation with His disciples upon Olivet, after describing the long period of trial for the church,--the 1260 years of papal persecution, concerning which He had promised that the tribulation should be shortened,--He thus mentioned certain events to precede His coming, and fixed the time when the first of these should be witnessed: **"In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." Mark 13:24. The 1260 days, or years, terminated in 1798. A quarter of a century earlier, persecution had almost wholly ceased.** Following this persecution, according to the words of Christ, the sun was to be darkened. **On the 19th of May, 1780, this prophecy was fulfilled.** {GC 306.1}

24a. How was the great dark day described?

24b. Read *The Great Controversy* pages, 306.3 to 307.4

25a. What caused persecution to cease in 1773, "a quarter of a century" before 1798?

As the Inquisition was the tribulum by which the Papacy inflicted such sore tribulation upon the church, and as the Order of the Jesuits was the strength of the Inquisition, therefore we believe that the abolition of the Order of the Jesuits is the event that marks the end of the tribulation. They had been expelled from Portugal in 1753, from France in 1761, and from Spain in 1767; but these decrees could not be permanently successful as long as the Jesuits retained their Order intact, and had the support of the Pope...France and Spain elected Pope Clement XIV. upon his pledge that he would dissolve the Order. He issued his bull July 21, 1773, directing that, for the welfare of the church and the good of mankind, the institution of Loyola should be abolished." For these reasons we believe that the abolition of the Order of Jesuits is the event, and July 21, 1773, is the date, when "the tribulation of those days" ended. {August 12, 1886 ATJ, SITI 487.12}

25b. Note: The Order of Jesuits was restored, reestablished in 1814.

"The Jesuits were restored in 1814, by Pope Pius VII.; but not to their persecuting power. In the different countries of Europe since that time the Order has been expelled and restored several times, and even by the Papacy once. **But Pius IX., after his return from Gaeta in 1849, gave them its entire confidence till the day of his death, and in his Vatican decrees is seen the crowning triumph of Jesuit Ultramontaniam.** {August 12, 1886 ATJ, SITI 487.13}

The movements of the Protestant Church in the early part of this century, alarmed the Roman Pontiff, Pius VII., and induced him, in 1814, to restore the Jesuits to all their former privileges, and to call upon Papists to afford them protection and all necessary assistance." {April 27, 1842 JVHe, HST 26.15}

25c. Note: Since the Order of the Jesuits was restored in 1814 to combat Protestantism, this is the entity that is working aggressively to bring the Papacy back to world dominance and to persecute God's people.

25d. To understand Pope Francis, look to the Jesuits <http://ncronline.org/news/vatican/understand-pope-francis-look-jesuits>

25e. With Their First Pope, Jesuits Are Making a Comeback <http://www.newsweek.com/their-first-pope-jesuits-are-making-comeback-267930>

25f. Note: It is a startling fact that pope Francis is the first publicly announced Jesuit pope. Both entities, Jesuitism and Popery, are merged into one office for the first time in modern history.

26a. While the Lisbon earthquake, the sun becoming black as sackcloth of hair, and moon becoming red as blood, literally happened; there are spiritual applications for these signs upon God's professed people in these last days.

26b. I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people. {EW 270.2} **"When the shaking comes, by the introduction of false theories, these surface readers, anchored nowhere, are like shifting sand. They slide into any position to suit the tenor of their feelings of bitterness. . . ."** {TM 112.1}

26c. The earthquake would represent a time of severe shaking and sifting out among God's people. The word of God foretells that there will be a severe shaking among God's people in these last days. The sun and the moon would represent doctrinal debates among God's professed people that will cause a shaking. The sun is used in the Bible to represent Jesus, His righteousness, and that His people can get victory over sin. See Psalm 84:11; Malachi 4:2. There are also various teachings casting doubts on the Sonship of Jesus and His divinity. Do we know what we believe? The moon is used in the Bible to represent the feast days and ceremonial laws. There are teachings regarding the feast days and the ceremonial laws that are causing many professed Christians to question what they believe.

26d. Certain it is that there has been among us a departure from the living God and a turning to men, putting human in place of divine wisdom. **God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat.** The Lord calls upon all who believe His word to awake out of sleep. Precious light has come, appropriate for this time. It is Bible truth, showing the perils that are right upon us. **This light should lead us to a diligent study of the Scriptures and a most critical examination of the positions which we hold.** God would have all the bearings and positions of truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting. **Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God so that when the testing time shall come** and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear. {5T 707.3}

27. What warning and instruction did Jesus leave with His church, once they saw the heralds of His Second Coming? Luke 21:25-28,30,31.

28. What did Jesus foretell about the condition of His professed people, just before His Second Advent? Luke 21:34-36; Revelation 3:1,3

29. Note: Along with the signs that pointed to the Second Coming, Jesus sent messages of Bible prophecy.

30. To reform His professed people and to prepare them to stand in the day of the Lord, what messages did Jesus send? Revelation 14:6-16.

31. What says the first angel's message, before the Second Coming? Revelation 14:6,7,16

32. Note: This first angel does not represent literal supernatural beings from heaven. This angel represents the Lord's human messengers.

This message is declared to be a part of "the everlasting gospel." The work of preaching the gospel has not been committed to angels, but has been entrusted to men. Holy angels have been employed in directing this work, they have in charge the great movements for the salvation of men; but the actual proclamation of the gospel is performed by the servants of Christ upon the earth. {GC 312.1}

33. The Lord was unable to use which group of people to herald the First Advent of Jesus, so that we may better understand the people that the Lord will work through in these last days?

It was not the scholarly theologians who had an understanding of this truth, and engaged in its proclamation. Had these been faithful watchmen, diligently and prayerfully searching the Scriptures, they would have known the time of night; the prophecies would have opened to them the events about to take place. But they did not occupy this position, and the message was given by humbler men. {GC 312.3} See John 12:35,42,43; John 8:12.

An angel visits the earth to see who are prepared to welcome Jesus. But he can discern no tokens of expectancy. He hears no voice of praise and triumph that the period of Messiah's coming is at hand. The angel hovers for a time over the chosen city and the temple where the divine presence has been manifested for ages; but even here is the same indifference. **The priests, in their pomp and pride, are offering polluted sacrifices in the temple. The Pharisees** are with loud voices addressing the people or making boastful prayers at the corners of the streets. **In the palaces of kings, in the assemblies of philosophers, in the schools of the rabbis, all are alike unmindful of the wondrous fact which has filled all heaven with joy and praise--that the Redeemer of men is about to appear upon the earth.** {GC 314.1}

34. Why were the professed leaders of the Jewish church without excuse being ignorant of the place and time of the First Advent of Jesus?

At the time of Christ's first advent the priests and scribes of the Holy City, to whom were entrusted the oracles of God, might have discerned the signs of the times and proclaimed the coming of the Promised One. The prophecy of Micah designated His birthplace; Daniel specified the time of His advent. Micah 5:2; Daniel 9:25. God committed these prophecies to the Jewish leaders; they were without excuse if they did not know and declare to the people that the Messiah's coming was at hand. Their ignorance was the result of sinful neglect. The Jews were building monuments for the slain prophets of God, while by their deference to the great men of earth they were paying homage to the servants of Satan. **Absorbed in their ambitious strife for place and power among men, they lost sight of the divine honors proffered them by the King of heaven.** {GC 313.1}

35. Who did the angel from heaven find to be ready to hear the proclamation that Jesus was born?

There is no evidence that Christ is expected, and no preparation for the Prince of life. **In amazement the celestial messenger is about to return to heaven with the shameful tidings, when he discovers a group of shepherds who are watching their flocks by night, and, as they gaze into the starry heavens, are contemplating the prophecy of a Messiah to come to earth, and longing for the advent of the world's Redeemer. Here is a company that is prepared to receive the heavenly message.** {GC 314.2}

See Luke 2:8-15 and Matthew 2:1-3,9-12.

It was not alone upon the hills of Judea, not among the lowly shepherds only, that angels found the watchers for Messiah's coming. **In the land of the heathen also were those that looked for Him; they were wise men, rich and noble, the philosophers of the East. Students of nature, the Magi had seen God in His handiwork. From the Hebrew Scriptures they had learned of the Star to arise out of Jacob, and with eager desire they awaited His coming,** who should be not only the "Consolation of Israel," but a "Light to lighten the Gentiles," and "for salvation unto the ends of the earth." Luke 2:25, 32; Acts 13:47. They were seekers for light, and light from the throne of God illumined the path for their feet. **While the priests and rabbis of Jerusalem, the appointed guardians and expounders of the truth, were shrouded in darkness, the Heaven-sent star guided these Gentile strangers to the birthplace of the newborn King.** {GC 315.2}