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GOSPEL ADVOCATE SERIES

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# Annual Lesson Commentary

ON

Improved Uniform Series

OF

International Bible Lessons

1937

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## A FOREWORD

If this, the sixteenth volume of the Annual Lesson Commentary, falls below the high standard set by previous volumes, the reader will graciously attribute its defects to the inexperience of its author. He knows that the work is not perfect, but it is hoped that the sincere student will find the comments and suggestions helpful.

Topics for investigation and discussion may be profitably used in midweek prayer meetings and in teachers' meetings. This will help to stir up interest in the lessons, and will give the teachers a better background for their work. No scripture references are given with these topics, for every Bible student should do some research work for his own improvement.

Let the student pray, as did David, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

R. L. WHITESIDE.

# LESSONS FOR 1937

## FIRST QUARTER The Gospel of John

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# BIBLE DICTIONARY OF PROPER NAMES

Arranged and Compiled by H. LEO BOLES

## A

- Aaron (bright or shining), Ex. 4: 14. Brother of Moses and first high priest.  
Ab, Abba (father), Gal. 4: 6. Name given to God.  
Abednego (servant of Nego), Dan. 1: 7. One of Daniel's companions.  
Abel (breath, vanity), Gen. 4: 1. Second son of Adam.  
Abiathar (father of abundance), 1 Sam. 23: 9. High priest and fourth in descent from Eli.  
Abigail (father is joy), 1 Sam. 25: 14. Wife of Nabal; became David's wife.  
Abimelech (Melech is father), Gen. 26: 1. King of Gerar in the time of Isaac.  
Abishai (my father is Jesse), 1 Sam. 26: 6-9. The eldest of the three sons of Zeruiah, David's sister, and brother of Joab.  
Abner (father is light), 1 Sam. 14: 50. King Solomon's captain.  
Abraham, Abram (father of a multitude, exalted father), Gen. 12: 1. Founder of the Hebrews and father of the faithful.  
Absalom (father is peace), 2 Sam. 15: 1. Third son of David.  
Achaia (trouble), Acts 18: 12. A Roman province which included Greece.  
Achan (trouble), Josh. 7: 19-26. Stole golden wedge, etc. Stoned by Joshua.  
Adam (ruddy, one made or produced), Gen. 3: 15. Name of the first man.  
Adonijah (my Lord is Jehovah), 2 Sam. 3: 4. Fourth son of David.  
Agabus, Acts 11: 27. A Christian prophet who came from Jerusalem.  
Agag, 1 Sam. 15: 8. Title of the kings of Amalek.  
Agrippa, Acts 12: 20. One of the Herods.  
Ahab (father's brother), 1 Kings 18: 19. Son of Omri, seventh king of Israel; very wicked.  
Ahimelech (brother of Melech), 1 Sam. 22: 11. High priest at Nob; gave David the showbread to eat.  
Ai (heap), John 7: 2. City lying east of Bethel, destroyed by Joshua.  
Alexander, Mark 15: 21. Son of Simon, the Cyrenian.  
Alexandria (from Alexander), Acts 18: 24. Capital of Egypt.  
Alpha (first letter of Greek alphabet), Rev. 1: 8. It means the beginning.  
Altar, Gen. 8: 20. Place for worship and sacrifice.  
Ambassador (messenger or agent), 2 Cor. 5: 20. A person commissioned.  
Amen (true), Isa. 65: 16. Close of prayer.  
Amos (burden), Amos 1: 1. Minor prophet.  
Amphipolis (a city surrounded by the sea), Acts 17: 1. A city of Macedonia, through which Paul and Silas passed on their way from Philippi to Thessalonica.  
Amram (an exalted people), Ex. 6: 18. Father of Moses.  
Ananias (Jehovah hath been gracious), Acts 5: 1. Husband of Sapphira, smitten dead.  
Anathema (cursed), Gal. 1: 9. A word used by Paul to show condemnation.  
Anise (dill), Matt. 23: 23. A small garden plant.  
Anna (grace), Luke 2: 36. A prophetess at Jerusalem.  
Annas (humble), Acts 4: 6. The son of Seth; was appointed high priest A.D. 7.  
Antichrist (opposed to Christ), 1 John 2: 18. Only John uses this word as applied to the enemies of Christianity.  
Antioch (from Antiochus), Acts 11: 20. City in Syria, also in Pisidia.  
Apollonia (belonging to Apollo), Acts 17: 1. A city in Macedonia.  
Apostle (one sent forth), Matt. 10: 2-4; 2 Cor. 8: 23. The official name of the twelve disciples sent out by Jesus.  
Apphia (fruitful), Phil. 2. A Christian woman addressed jointly with Philemon.  
Aquila (an eagle), Acts 18: 2. A Jew whom Paul found at Corinth, husband of Priscilla.  
Archelaus (prince of the people), Matt. 2: 22. Son of Herod the Great.  
Archippus (master of the horse), Col. 4: 17. A Christian teacher in Colosse.  
Areopagus (Mars Hill), Acts 17: 22. The rocky heights in Athens, opposite the western end of the Acropolis.  
Arimathea (height), Matt. 27: 57. A city of Judea.  
Aristarchus (the best ruler), Acts 20: 4. A companion of Paul on his third missionary journey.  
Asa (physician, healer), 2 Chron. 14: 8. Third king of Judah; reigned forty years.  
Asia ( ), Acts 19: 26. Continent, also Roman Province.  
Athens (city of Athena), Acts 17: 21. The capital of Attica, and the chief city of Grecian learning.  
Augustus (venerable), Luke 2: 1. The first Roman emperor.  
Azotus (Ashdod, a stronghold), Acts 8: 40. City nearly midway between Gaza and Joppa.

## B

- Baal (owner, or lord), Num. 22: 41. The male god of the Phœnician and Canaanitish nations.  
Babel (confusion), Gen. 10: 10; 11: 1-9. Tower built on the Plain of Shinar.  
Babylon (from Babel), Jer. 24: 5. The land of the Chaldeans.  
Balaam (from Baal), Num. 23: 19. A prophet of Midian who tried to curse Israel.  
Barabbas (son of Abba), John 18: 40. The robber who was released at the trial of Jesus.  
Balak (making waste), Num. 22: 24. King of the Moabites.

- Baptist, the (the baptizer), Matt. 3: 1. The same as John the Baptist.  
 Barak (lightning), Judges 4: 1-24. Defeats Sisera's army.  
 Barbarian (any one not a Greek), Rom. 1: 14. Applied to those who were not of the Greek nation.  
 Bar-Jesus (son of Jesus), Acts 13: 6. A false prophet.  
 Barnabas (son of consolation or exhortation), Acts 4: 36. An early disciple of Christ and traveling companion of Paul.  
 Barsabbas (son of Sabas or rest), Acts 1: 23. Voted on as an apostle to take Judas' place.  
 Bath-sheba (daughter of the oath), 2 Sam. 11: 3. Wife of Uriah; became David's wife.  
 Belial (worthlessness), 2 Cor. 6: 15. An expression for lawlessness.  
 Belshazzar (may Bel protect the king), Dan. 5: 2. The last king of Babylon.  
 Benjamin (son of the right hand), Gen. 35: 16. The youngest son of Jacob.  
 Berea (well watered), Acts 17: 10. A city of Macedonia.  
 Bernice (bringing victory), Acts 25: 13. The eldest daughter of Herod Agrippa I.  
 Bethany (house of dates), Mark 11: 1. A village situated near the Mount of Olives.  
 Bethel (the house of God), Gen. 12: 8; 28: 11-19. City about twelve miles north of Jerusalem.  
 Bethesda (house of mercy), John 5: 2. Market place near Jerusalem.  
 Bethlehem (house of bread), 1 Sam. 17: 12. City of David, birthplace of Christ.  
 Bethphage (house of figs), Luke 19: 29. Place on the Mount of Olives, on the road between Jericho and Jerusalem.  
 Bethsaida (house of fish), John 12: 21. The home of Andrew, Peter, and Philip.  
 Bildad (Bel hath loved, or, son of contention), Job 2: 11. The second of Job's three friends.  
 Bilhah (timid, bashful), Gen. 29: 29. Concubine of Jacob, and mother of Dan and Naphtali.  
 Blasphemy (speak against), Matt. 12: 32. Speaking evil against God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit.  
 Blastus (sprout), Acts 12: 20. The chamberlain of Herod Agrippa I.  
 Boanerges (sons of thunder), Mark 3: 17. Name given to the two sons of Zebedee.

## C

- Caesar (Latin name), John 19: 12. In the New Testament, always the Roman emperor.  
 Caiaphas (depression), Matt. 26: 3. High priest of the Jews.  
 Cain (possession), Gen. 4: 1. Oldest son of Adam; killed his brother Abel.  
 Caleb (capable), Num. 13: 6. One of the faithful spies.  
 Cana (place of reeds), John 2: 1. Place of Christ's first miracle.  
 Canaan (low, flat), Gen. 10: 6. Fourth son of Ham; name applied to Palestine.  
 Candace (name of dynasty), Acts 8: 27. Not the name of an individual, but of a dynasty of Ethiopian queens.  
 Capernaum (village of Nahum), Matt. 4: 13. Village located on the western shore of Galilee.  
 Carpus (wrist), 2 Tim. 4: 13. A Christian at Troas.  
 Cesarea (Kaisarea, Caesar), Acts 8: 40. City on coast of Palestine.  
 Cesarea Philippi (from Caesar and Philip), Matt. 16: 13. City twenty miles north of the Sea of Galilee.  
 Chinnereth (lute, harp), Josh. 19: 35. Another name for the Sea of Galilee.  
 Chorazin, Matt. 11: 21. One of the cities in which Jesus did many mighty works.  
 Christ (anointed), 1 Tim. 1: 2. The same as Messiah.  
 Chuzas (the seer), Luke 8: 3. The house steward of Herod Antipas.  
 Cilicia (the land of Celiz), Acts 9: 30. A province in the southeast of Asia Minor.  
 Circumcision (cut around), Lev. 12: 3. A Jewish custom.  
 Claudius (lame), Acts 18: 2. Fourth Roman emperor; reigned from 41 to 54 A.D.  
 Cleopas (from Cleopatra), John 19: 25. One of the two disciples to whom Jesus talked on the way to Emmaus.  
 Colosse, Col. 1: 2. A city of Phrygia in Asia Minor.  
 Corinth, Acts 18: 1-18. City of Greece, about forty miles west of Athens.  
 Cornelius (of a horn), Acts 10: 1. A Roman centurion of the Italian cohorts stationed in Cesarea.  
 Crescens (growing), 2 Tim. 4: 10. An assistant of Paul, said to have been one of the seventy disciples sent out by Christ.  
 Crispus (curled), Acts 18: 8. Ruler of Jewish synagogues at Corinth.  
 Cummin, Matt. 23: 23. Small plant with an aromatic flavor.  
 Cyprus, Acts 4: 36. An island in the Mediterranean Sea, about a hundred and forty miles long and sixty miles wide.  
 Cyrene, Acts 2: 10. The principal city of that part of Northern Africa which was anciently called Cyrenaica.  
 Cyrus (the son), 2 Chron. 36: 22. The founder of the Persian Empire.

## D

- Damascus, Acts 9: 11. One of the most ancient cities in the world, located in Syria.  
 Daniel (God is my judge), Dan. 1: 3. The fourth of "the greater prophets."



- Darius (lord), Dan. 6: 1. The name of several kings of Media and Persia.  
 David (well beloved), 1 Sam. 16: 1. Youngest son of Jesse; second king of Israel.  
 Deborah (a bee), Gen. 35: 8; Judges 4: 5. Name of Rebekah's nurse; also a prophetess.  
 Decapolis (ten cities), Matt. 4: 25. A district east of the Jordan and south of the Sea of Galilee.  
 Delilah (languishing), Judges 16: 4-18. Delivered Samson to the Philistines.  
 Demetrius (belonging to Demeter), Acts 19: 24. A maker of silver shrines at Ephesus.  
 Demas (governor of the people), Col. 4: 14. Companion of Paul during his first imprisonment at Rome.  
 Denarius (containing ten), Matt. 18: 28. A Roman silver coin, worth about sixteen cents.  
 Derbe (juniper), Acts 14: 20. City not far from Iconium.  
 Deuteronomy (the giving of the law the second time), Fifth book of the Bible.  
 Diana (Latin name), Acts 19: 24. The Ephesian goddess.  
 Dispersion (scattered), James 1: 1. Applied to the Jews who lived out of Palestine.  
 Dorcas (gazelle), Acts 9: 36. A disciple raised from the dead by Peter at Joppa.  
 Doubter. One without faith.

## E

- Easter (passover), Acts 12: 4. Translated "Passover" in the Revised Version.  
 Eden (pleasure), Gen. 2: 8-14. The first residence of man.  
 Edom (red), Gen. 32: 3. Name given to Esau and his country.  
 Egypt (land of the Copts), Ex. 1: 14. Place where Israel was held in bondage.  
 Egyptian (native of Egypt), Acts 21: 38. An inhabitant of Egypt.  
 Elder (old man), Gen. 24: 2. Name applied to rulers of the city and officers of the church.  
 Elijah (Jehovah is my God), 1 Kings 17: 1. Prophet in the days of Ahab.  
 Elisabeth (God is an oath), Luke 1: 36. Wife of Zacharias and mother of John the Baptist.  
 Elisha (God is my salvation), 1 Kings 19: 16. Prophet who succeeded Elijah.  
 Elymas (a wise man), Acts 13: 6. A sorcerer who opposed Paul.  
 Endor (fountain of Dor), 1 Sam. 28: 7. Home of the witch with whom Saul communed.  
 Enoch (dedicated), Gen. 4: 17. Walked with God and was translated.  
 Epaphras (lovely), Col. 1: 7. A fellow laborer and prisoner with Paul.  
 Ephesus (permission), Acts 19: 29. The capital of the Roman province of Asia.  
 Ephraim (double fruitfulness), Gen. 41: 50. Younger son of Joseph.  
 Epicureans (from Epicurus), Acts 17: 18. Those who believed in getting the greatest pleasure out of life.  
 Erastus (beloved), Acts 19: 22. One of Paul's attendants at Ephesus.  
 Esau (hairy), Gen. 25: 25. Twin brother of Jacob.  
 Esther (a star), Esth. 7: 3. Jewish wife of King Ahasuerus.  
 Ethiopia (burnt faces), Acts 8: 27. The country south of Egypt.  
 Eunuch (bed keeper), Acts 8: 34. A man deprived of his virility.  
 Euodias (fragrance), Phil. 4: 2. Christian woman at Philippi.  
 Euraquilo, Acts 27: 14. Compounded from two words meaning east and north.  
 Eutyclus (fortunate), Acts 20: 9. A youth of Troas who went to sleep and fell out the window. Paul restored him to life.  
 Eve (life), Gen. 2: 21. Name given to the first woman.  
 Exodus (a going out). Name given to the second book of the Bible.  
 Exorcist (casting out), Matt. 12: 27. One who pretended to cast out evil spirits.  
 Ezekiel (God is strong, or God doth strengthen), Ezek. 1: 3. The third of the major prophets.  
 Ezra (help), Neh. 12: 1. Wrote the book which bears his name.

## F

- Felix (happy), Acts 24: 26. A Roman officer who held Paul in prison.  
 Festus (festival), Acts 24: 27. Roman officer who succeeded Felix.  
 First-born, Ex. 13: 12. First male born into the family, who inherited the name and property of the father.  
 First Fruits, Ex. 22: 29. First ripe fruit given to Jehovah.  
 Frankincense, Ex. 30: 34-36. A sacrificial fumigation.

## G

- Gabbatha (a platform), John 19: 13. Place where the judgment seat of Pilate was.  
 Gabriel (man of God), Luke 1: 19. The angel that appeared to Elisabeth and Mary.  
 Gadarenes (Gerasenes), Mark 5: 1. Place where Jesus healed two demoniacs.  
 Gaius (Latin name), Acts 19: 29. A Macedonian who accompanied Paul in his travels.  
 Galatia (land of the Gauls), Acts 18: 23. The central district of Asia Minor.  
 Galilean (an inhabitant of Galilee), Acts 2: 7. The people of the northern part of Palestine or province of Galilee.  
 Galilee (circuit), Luke 17: 11. The northern country of Palestine.  
 Gallio (Latin name), Acts 18: 12. The Roman proconsul of Achaia when Paul was at Corinth.



- Gamaliel (recompense of God), Acts 5: 24. A noted teacher of the law in Jerusalem; Paul's teacher.
- Gaza (the fortified), Acts 8: 26. One of the cities of the Philistines.
- Gennesaret (garden of the princes), Matt. 14: 34. A name given to the fertile plains on the western shore of the Lake of Galilee.
- Gentile (nation), Acts 11: 18. Any one who was not of the Jewish race.
- Gethsemane (an oil press), Matt. 26: 36. Garden near Jerusalem.
- Gideon (he that cuts down), Judges 6: 34. The fifth recorded judge.
- Gilboa (a bubbling spring), 1 Sam. 28: 4. Mountain where Saul was killed.
- Golgotha (skull), Matt. 27: 33. The Hebrew name of the spot where Christ was crucified.
- Goliath (an exile), 1 Sam. 17: 4. The famous giant whom David killed.
- Gomorrhah (submersion), Gen. 14: 2-8. The city which was destroyed with fire from heaven.
- Gospel (good message), Rom. 1: 16. Good tidings of joy.
- Greece, Greeks, Grecians, Dan. 8: 21; Isa. 66: 19; Acts 20: 2. Names of the country and people who preceded the Roman Empire.

## H

- Hadad, Gen. 25: 15. An early king of Edom.
- Hades (hell), Matt. 16: 18. Used in the Revised Version for "hell."
- Hagar (flight), Gen. 16: 1. An Egyptian handmaid of Sarah, concubine to Abraham, and mother of Ishmael.
- Ham (black), Gen. 14: 5. The name of one of the three sons of Noah.
- Hannah (grace), 1 Sam. 1: 2. One of the wives of Elkanah, and mother of Samuel.
- Hazael (whom God sees), 2 Kings 8: 7-15. A king of Damascus, anointed by Elisha.
- Heber (alliance), Gen. 46: 17. Grandson of Asher.
- Hebrew (from Eber, beyond, or on the other side), Gen. 14: 13. Posterity of Abraham.
- Hebron (alliance), Josh. 15: 54. City about twenty miles south of Jerusalem.
- Hell (Gehenna), Matt. 5: 22. Place of torment for the wicked.
- Hellenist (Grecian), Acts 6: 1. Term applied to Greek-speaking Jews, or Grecian Jews.
- Herod (hero like), Luke 3: 19. The Herod family were alien by race and Jewish in faith; Roman rulers over Palestine.
- Herodians (from Herod), Matt. 22: 15. Party among the Jews who were supporters of the Herodian family.
- Herodias (from Herod), Matt. 14: 8-11. Granddaughter of Herod the Great.
- Hezekiah (Jehovah strengtheneth), 2 Kings 18: 5. Thirteenth king of Judah and son of Ahaz.
- Hierapolis (holy city), Col. 4: 13. A city of Phrygia.
- Hiram, 2 Sam. 5: 11. The king of Tyre, who sent workmen and material to help build the temple.
- Hittites (descendants of Heth), Josh. 9: 1. One of the Canaanitish tribes.
- Hophni, 1 Sam. 2: 12. One of the wicked sons of Eli.
- Horeb (desert), Ex. 3: 1. A mountain. (See Sinai.)
- Hosanna (save, pray), Matt. 21: 9. The cry of the multitude on Jesus' triumphal entrance into Jerusalem.
- Hosea (salvation), 2 Kings 15: 30. One of the minor prophets.
- Hoshea (salvation), Isa. 7: 16. Same as Hosea or Joshua.
- Hymeneus (belonging to Hymen, the god of marriage), 1 Tim. 1: 20. He denied the true doctrine of the resurrection.

## I

- Ichabod (inglorious), 1 Sam. 4: 21. The son of Phineas and grandson of Eli.
- Iconium, Acts 14: 1. Paul visited this city with Barnabas on his first missionary tour. Located north of Antioch, in Pisidia.
- Illyricum, Rom. 15: 9. District lying along the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea.
- Immanuel (God with us), Matt. 1: 23. The name applied to Christ.
- Inn (lodging place), Luke 2: 7. Similar to our rooming houses or hotels.
- Isaac (laughter), Gen. 35: 27. The son of Sarah by Abraham.
- Isaiah (Jehovah is salvation), Isa. 1: 1. One of the major prophets of the Old Testament.
- Ishmael (may God hear), Gen. 16: 15. Son of Abraham by Hagar, the Egyptian handmaid.
- Israel (persevere with God, prince to God), Gen. 32: 28. Name given to Jacob and the nation which came from the twelve tribes.
- Issachar (there is a reward), Gen. 30: 18. The ninth son of Jacob; one of the twelve tribes.
- Italy, Acts 18: 2. A well-known country.

## J

- Jachin (he doth establish), 1 Kings 7: 21. One of the two pillars which was set up in the porch of the temple.
- Jacob (supplanter), Gen. 25: 26. Son of Isaac and Rebekah, twin brother of Esau.
- Jambres, 2 Tim. 3: 8. One of the Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses.

- James (the Greek form of "Jacob"), Matt. 10: 2. Son of Zebedee, brother of John, and one of the twelve apostles.
- Jannes, 2 Tim. 3: 8. An Egyptian magician who joined Jambres in opposing Moses.
- Jason, Acts 17: 5. Entertained Paul and Silas; attacked by Jewish mob.
- Jebusites (from Jebus), Num. 13: 29. One of the Canaanitish tribes in Palestine.
- Jehoiada (Jehovah knows), 2 Sam. 8: 18. High priest at one time.
- Jehoshaphat (Jehovah hath judged), 1 Kings 15: 24. Fourth king of Judah, son of Asa.
- Jehovah (I Am, the Eternal Living One), Lev. 24: 15. One of the names given to God.
- Jehu (Jehovah is he), 2 Kings 9: 2. Founder of the fifth dynasty of the kings of Israel.
- Jephunneh (it will be prepared), Num. 13: 6. Father of Caleb, a good spy.
- Jeremiah (whom Jehovah appoints), Jer. 1: 1. One of the major prophets.
- Jericho (place of fragrance), Josh. 13: 16. First city destroyed by Joshua; its walls were thrown by faith.
- Jeroboam (whose people are many), 1 Kings 11: 28. The first king of the divided kingdom of Israel.
- Jerusalem (the city of peace), 2 Chron. 25: 23. The religious and political capital of the Israelites.
- Jesse (wealthy), Ruth 4: 18-22. The father of David, and son of Obed, the son of Boaz, by the Moabitess, Ruth.
- Jesus (Jehovah is salvation), Matt. 1: 21. One of the names given to Christ, the Messiah.
- Jew (a man of Judah), Mark 7: 3. A name applied to members of the kingdom of Judah after the separation of the ten tribes; later applied to all Israelites.
- Joab (Jehovah is Father), 2 Sam. 14: 1-20. Nephew of David and captain of his hosts.
- Job, Job 1: 1. Probably one of the patriarchs.
- Joel (Jehovah is God), 1 Sam. 8: 2. One of the minor prophets.
- Johanna (grace or gift of God), Luke 3: 27. The name of a woman.
- John the Baptist (Jehovah's gift), Matt. 3: 1. A forerunner of Christ.
- John (from Johanan), Luke 1: 11. Name given to son of Zacharias, later called "John the Baptist."
- Jonah (dove), 2 Kings 14: 25. The fifth of the minor prophets.
- Joppa (beauty), Acts 11: 5. A town on the southwest coast of Palestine.
- Jordan (the descender), Josh. 2: 7. The river which bounds the eastern border of Palestine.
- Joseph (may he add), Gen. 37: 2. The elder of the two sons of Jacob by Rachel.
- Joshua (Jehovah is salvation), Ex. 17: 9. Moses' minister and successor as leader of the children of Israel.
- Jot (the English form of the Greek iota, the smallest letter of the Greek alphabet), Matt. 5: 18. It was formed like an English comma (,).
- Jubilee (joyful shout), Lev. 25: 11. Every fiftieth year was called the year of Jubilee.
- Judah (praised), Gen. 37: 26. The fourth son of Jacob by Leah.
- Judas Iscariot (Judas of Kerioth), John 6: 71. The name of the betrayer of Jesus.
- Julius (fr. Greek), Acts 27: 1. A Roman centurion.
- Jupiter (a father that helps), Acts 14: 12. The national god of the Hellenic race.
- Justus (just), Acts 18: 7. A Christian at Corinth with whom Paul lodged.

## K

- Kadesh, Kadesh-Barnea (holy), Num. 13: 3. Place where Miriam died, and the farthest point reached in the wandering in the wilderness.
- Kidron, or Kedron (turbid), Luke 22: 39. Name of brook or valley, southeast of Jerusalem.
- Kish (a bow), 1 Chron. 23: 21. The father of Saul.
- Kohath (assembly), Ex. 6: 16. One of the three sons of Levi.

## L

- Laban (white), Gen. 24: 10. Father of Leah and Rachel; father-in-law of Jacob.
- Laodicea (justice of the people), Col. 4: 16. A town in the Roman province of Asia.
- Laodiceans, Col. 4: 16; Rev. 3: 14. The inhabitants of Laodicea.
- Lazarus (whom God helps), John 11: 1. Brother of Martha and Mary; lived at Bethany; raised from the dead by Jesus.
- Leah (weaned), Gen. 29: 16. Daughter of Laban; first wife of Jacob.
- Lebanon (white), Deut. 1: 7. Mountain range north of Palestine.
- Levi (joined), Gen. 29: 34. Name of the third son of Jacob by Leah.
- Levite (joined), Luke 10: 32. One of the tribe of Levi.
- Leviticus. Third book of the Bible.
- Libertines (from liberty), Acts 6: 9. Applied to Jews who had been taken prisoners and then set free.
- Lois (agreeable), 2 Tim. 1: 5. The grandmother of Timothy.
- Lord's Day (first day of the week), Rev. 1: 10. Corresponds to our "Sunday."
- Lot (veil, or covering), Gen. 11: 27. The son of Haran and nephew of Abraham.
- Lucius, Acts 13: 1. One of the teachers at Antioch.
- Luke (light-giving), Acts 13: 1; Col. 4: 14. Traveled with Paul and wrote the book that bears his name.
- Lycaonia (landing of Lycanion, or wolf land), Acts 14: 11. A province in Asia Minor.



Lydia (strife), Acts 16: 14. First European convert at Philippi.

Lysias (fr. Greek), Acts 23: 26. A Roman officer.

Lystra, Acts 16: 1. One of the cities visited by Paul on his first and second missionary tours; home of Timothy.

## M

Macedonia (extended land), 2 Cor. 8: 1. A province in Europe, north of Greece; Gospel first preached there by Paul.

Magdalene (inhabitant of Magadan), Matt. 27: 56. Mary Magdalene, present at crucifixion of Christ.

Magi (wise men), Matt. 2: 1-12. Those who visited the babe Jesus.

Malachi (my messenger). Author of the last book of the Old Testament.

Malchus (king, or kingdom), Matt. 26: 51. The name of the servant of the high priest whose right ear Peter cut off in the garden of Gethsemane.

Mammon (riches), Matt. 6: 24. Word used to personify wealth.

Manaen (comforter), Acts 13: 1. Foster brother of Herod and teacher and prophet in church at Antioch.

Manasseh (forgetting), Gen. 4: 51. The oldest son of Joseph.

Manna (What is this?), Ex. 16: 14-36. Food given the children of Israel in the wilderness.

Mark, Acts 12: 12. One of the evangelists and writer of the book that bears his name.

Martha (a lady), Luke 10: 38. Sister of Lazarus and Mary.

Mary (a tear). A common name in the New Testament; mother of Jesus.

Matthew (gift of Jehovah), Matt. 10: 3. One of the twelve apostles and writer of the first book of the New Testament.

Matthias (gift of God), Acts 1: 26. The apostle elected to fill the place of the traitor, Judas.

Melchizedek (king of righteousness), Gen. 14: 18-20. King and priest of God; type of Christ as priest.

Melita (premeditate), Acts 28: 1. An island in the Mediterranean Sea.

Mercury (herald of the gods), Acts 14: 12. The god of commerce and bargains.

Mesbach (guest of a king), Dan. 1: 4. One of Daniel's friends in captivity.

Mesopotamia (between the rivers), Deut. 23: 4. Country between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

Messiah (anointed), Matt. 20: 20. A prophetic name applied to Jesus.

Methuselah (man of the dart), Gen. 5: 25. The son of Enoch, and the oldest man recorded among the patriarchs.

Midian (strife), Gen. 25: 2. A son of Abraham by Keturah.

Miletus, Acts 20: 15. City on the coast, thirty-six miles to the south of Ephesus.

Mint, Luke 11: 42. An herb which the Jews used as their tithe.

Mite, Mark 12: 41-44. A coin current in Palestine in the time of Jesus, worth about one-fifth of a cent.

Moab (of his father), Deut. 2: 11. Son of Lot by his eldest daughter.

Molech (king), Jer. 49: 1. The god of the Ammonites.

Moriah (chosen by Jehovah), Gen. 22: 2. The mount where Abraham offered Isaac.

Moses (drawn), Ex. 2: 5. The leader of God's people.

Myrrh, Ex. 30: 23. One of the ingredients of the oil of holy ointment.

Mysia (land of beech trees), Acts 16: 7. Region about the frontier of the provinces of Asia and Bithynia.

## N

Naaman (pleasantness), 2 Kings 5: 18. Captain of the army of Syria; a leper, cleansed by Elisha.

Nabal (fool), 1 Sam. 25: 3. First husband of Abigail, one of David's wives.

Naomi (my delight), Ruth 1: 2. Wife of Elimelech and mother-in-law of Ruth.

Naphtali (wrestling), Gen. 30: 8. The fifth son of Jacob; son of Bilhah, one of Rachel's handmaids.

Nathan (a giver), 2 Sam. 7: 2. Name of the prophet who rebuked David.

Nathaniel (gift of God), John 1: 47. An early disciple of Jesus; some think the same as Bartholomew.

Nazarene (from Nazareth), Matt. 2: 23. A name sometimes given to Jesus.

Nazareth (the guarded one), Matt. 2: 23. A village in Galilee and home of Jesus.

Nazarite (one separated), Num. 6: 1-21. Person who takes a peculiar vow to be set apart from others for the service of God. Sometimes spelled "Nazirite."

Neapolis (new city), Acts 16: 11. First place Paul landed in Europe, about twelve miles from Philippi.

Nebo (prophet), Num. 32: 3. Mountain on the east side of the Jordan.

Nebuchadnezzar (may Nebo protect the crown), Jer. 46: 2-12. The most powerful of the Babylonian kings.

Nehemiah (consolation of the Lord), Ez. 2: 2. One of the leaders of the first expedition from Babylon to Jerusalem.

New Testament (new covenant). Name given to the Holy Scriptures after the advent of Christ.

- Nicodemus** (conqueror of the people), John 3: 1. A Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews and teacher of Israel who visited Jesus at night.
- Nicolaitans** (followers of Nicholas), Rev. 2: 6. A sect whose deeds were severely condemned.
- Niger** (black), Acts 13: 1. One of the teachers and prophets in the church at Antioch.
- Nile** (blue, dark), Gen. 15: 8. The principal river of Egypt.
- Nimrod** (rebellion, or the valiant), Gen. 10: 8. A grandson of Ham.
- Nineveh** (abode of Ninus), Gen. 10: 11. The capital of the ancient kingdom of Assyria.
- Ninevites**, Luke 11: 30. The inhabitants of Nineveh, to whom Jonah preached.
- Numbers**. The fourth book of the Old Testament.
- Nymphas** (bridegroom), Col. 4: 15. A wealthy Christian in Laodicea.

## O

- Old Testament**. Name given to the Holy Scriptures before the advent of Christ.
- Olives**, Mount of, 2 Sam. 15: 30; Acts 1: 12. Mount near Jerusalem.
- Omega**, Rev. 1: 8. Last letter of the Greek alphabet.
- Onesimus** (profitable, useful), Col. 4: 9. The name of the servant of Philemon.
- Ophir** (abundance), 1 Chron. 29: 4. A seaport from which Solomon obtained gold for the temple.

## P

- Padan-aram** (table-land of Aram), Gen. 28: 2. Name applied to country which bordered on the Euphrates to distinguish it from the mountainous district.
- Palestine** (land of strangers), Ex. 15: 14. One name for the land of Canaan.
- Palsy** (contracted from paralysis), Matt. 12: 10-13. A disease which caused the loss of the power of motion.
- Pamphylia** (of every tribe), Acts 13: 13. One of the provinces on the coast of Asia Minor.
- Paphos** (boiling or hot), Acts 13: 6. City on Island of Cyprus, which Paul and Barnabas visited on first missionary journey.
- Parable** (placed beside, a comparison), Matt. 24: 32. A form of teaching by comparison.
- Paradise** (orchard of pleasure, pleasure ground), 2 Cor. 12: 4. A term applied figuratively to the celestial dwelling of the righteous.
- Parthians** (from Parthia), Acts 2: 9. People who lived in Parthia.
- Passover** (commemorating the death angel's passing over the houses of Israel in Egypt), Ex. 12: 1-51. The first of the three great annual feasts of the Jews, held on the fourteenth day of the first month.
- Patmos**, Rev. 1: 9. Name of an island in the Aegean Sea, twenty miles south of Samos; place where John was banished.
- Patriarch** (father of a tribe), Acts 7: 8. Name given to the head of a family or tribe in Old Testament times.
- Paul** (small, little), Acts 23: 6. Name given to the apostle to the Gentiles.
- Pentateuch** (five). Greek name given to the first five books of the Old Testament.
- Pentecost** (fiftieth), Acts 2: 1. Feast which came fifty days after the Passover.
- Perga** (fr. Greek), Acts 13: 13. A city in Pamphylia.
- Pergamos** (height, elevation), Rev. 1: 11. A city of Mysia, about three miles to the north of the River Caicus.
- Pergamum**, Rev. 1: 11. Same as Pergamos.
- Persia** (pure, splendid), Ezek. 38: 5. Name given to an ancient empire.
- Peter** (a rock or stone), John 1: 42. Name given to Simon, the brother of Andrew, one of the twelve apostles.
- Pharaoh**, Ex. 1: 8. Common title of the kings of Egypt.
- Pharisees**, Matt. 15: 7. A religious sect among the Jews. They believed in a resurrection of the dead.
- Philadelphia** (brotherly love), Rev. 3: 9. Town on the borders of Lydia and Phrygia.
- Philemon** (loving), Col. 4: 9. Name of Christian to whom Paul addressed his Epistle in behalf of Onesimus.
- Philetus** (beloved), 2 Tim. 2: 17. Associated with Hymeneus.
- Philip** (lover of horses), John 1: 44. One of the twelve apostles.
- Philistines** (immigrants), Jer. 47: 4. One of the tribes that inhabited Caphtor, or Crete.
- Phebe** (radiant), Rom. 16: 1. The name of a Christian woman.
- Phrygia** (dry, barren), Acts 16: 6. Name of a province in Asia Minor.
- Pilate** (armed with a spear), Luke 13: 1. Judge of Roman court who permitted Christ to be crucified.
- Pisgah** (peak), Num. 21: 20. Highest point of Mount Nebo.
- Pontus** (the sea), Acts 2: 9. Province of Asia Minor.
- Pretorium** (palace), Matt. 27: 27. Place where court was held.
- Priest**, Gen. 14: 18. One who officiated at the altar.
- Priscilla** (from Prisca, ancient), Acts 18: 26. Wife of Aquila.
- Prophet** (one who speaks for another), Ex. 15: 20. God's mouthpiece to the people.
- Proselyte** (a stranger, a new comer), Matt. 23: 15. Name given by Jews to foreigners who accepted the Jewish religion.
- Proverbs** (a comparison), Num. 21: 27. Books supposed to have been compiled by Solomon.



**Publican** (Roman taxgatherer), Luke 3: 13. Name of one who gathered taxes for the Roman government.  
**Pyrrhus**, Acts 20: 4. The father of Sopater of Berea.

## Q

**Quartus** (fourth), Rom. 16: 23. A Christian of Corinth.  
**Quaternion**, Acts 12: 4. A guard of four soldiers.

## R

**Rabbi** (master), Matt. 23: 7. Title signifying "teacher."  
**Raca** (fool), Matt. 5: 22. A term of reproach.  
**Rachel** (ewe, or sheep), Gen. 29: 31. Younger daughter of Laban, and beloved wife of Jacob.  
**Rahab** (fierceness, pride), Isa. 51: 9. A name sometimes given to Egypt.  
**Rebekah** (ensnarer), Gen. 22: 23. Sister of Laban, wife of Isaac.  
**Red Sea** (a seaweed resembling wool), Ex. 14: 2. Body of water crossed by Israelites.  
**Rehoboam** (enlarger of the people), 1 Kings 14: 21. Son of Solomon and first king of Judah.  
**Reign** (to rule), 2 Tim. 2: 12. To govern, to rule over.  
**Reuben** (behold a son), Gen. 29: 32. Jacob's eldest son.  
**Revelation**. Last book of the New Testament.  
**Rhoda** (rose), Acts 12: 13. The name of a maid who announced Peter's arrival.  
**Rome**, Rev. 17: 9. The name of a world empire.  
**Rue**, Luke 11: 42. A garden plant tithable in the time of the Savior.  
**Rufus** (red), Mark 15: 21. Name of an early Christian.  
**Ruth** (a female friend), Ruth 1: 4. The Moabitess who became the wife of Boaz.

## S

**Sabaoth** (armies), James 5: 4. Name applied to the Lord.  
**Sabbath** (a day of rest), Ex. 16: 22. The seventh day of the week.  
**Sabbath Day's Journey**, Acts 1: 12. About three-fourths of a mile.  
**Sabbatical Year**, Ex. 23: 10. Each seventh year.  
**Sadducees** (followers of Zadok), Matt. 3: 7. Religious sect opposed to the Pharisees.  
**Salamis** (salt), Acts 13: 5. City in the eastern part of the Island of Cyprus.  
**Samaria** (watch mountain), 1 Kings 16: 23. Name of a city thirty miles north of Jerusalem; also of the country surrounding it.  
**Samaritan** (watch mountain, Samaria), Luke 10: 33. An inhabitant of Samaria.  
**Samson** (like the sun), Judges 15: 20. One of the strongest men; one of the judges of Israel.  
**Samuel** (asked of God), 1 Sam. 3: 1-18. The last judge of Israel.  
**Sanhedrin** (a council chamber), Matt. 26: 57. The supreme court of the Jewish nation.  
**Sapphira** (bright color, beautiful), Acts 5: 1-11. Wife of Ananias.  
**Sarah** (princess), Gen. 20: 12. Wife of Abraham, mother of Isaac.  
**Sarai** (my princess), Gen. 11: 29. First name of Sarah.  
**Sardis** (red), Rev. 1: 11. A city of Asia Minor, and capital of Lydia.  
**Satan** (adversary), Matt. 16: 23. Name applied to the devil.  
**Saul** (desired), 2 Sam. 1: 23. Name of the first king of Israel; first name of the apostle Paul.  
**Sevea** (implement), Acts 19: 14. A Jew residing at Ephesus when Paul visited that city.  
**Scribes** (to write), 1 Kings 4: 3. Those who transcribed the law.  
**Scythian**, Col. 3: 11. Name applied to the people who lived north of the Black Sea.  
**Septuagint** (the seventy). The Greek Version of the Old Testament.  
**Sergius Paulus**, Acts 13: 7. Name of the proconsul of Cyprus.  
**Sheba** (an oath), 2 Sam. 20: 1-22. Name of queen who visited Solomon.  
**Shem** (name), Gen. 5: 32. The eldest son of Noah.  
**Shiloh** (place of rest), Judg. 21: 19. A city in Ephraim.  
**Shittim** (the acacias), Num. 25: 1. Name of country opposite Jericho; also species of wood.  
**Silas** (woody), Acts 15: 22. Traveling companion of Paul; same as Silvanus.  
**Siloam** (sent), John 9: 7. Name of pool in the days of Jesus.  
**Simeon** (heard), Gen. 29: 32. Second son of Jacob; common name among the Jews.  
**Simon** (hearing), Luke 4: 38. Another name for Peter.  
**Sinai** (thorny), Ex. 19: 1. Mountain where the law was given.  
**Smyrna** (myrrh), Rev. 2: 8-11. A city of Asia Minor, situated on Aegean Sea, forty miles north of Ephesus.  
**Sodom** (burning), Mark 6: 11. Ancient city of Syria, destroyed by fire.  
**Solomon** (peaceful), 2 Sam. 12: 24. David's son who succeeded him to the throne.  
**Sopater** (savior of his father), Acts 20: 4. One of the companions of Paul.  
**Stephen** (crown), Acts 6: 5. Name of one of the seven chosen at Jerusalem; the first Christian martyr.  
**Susanna** (a lily). One of the women who ministered to Jesus.  
**Sycamore** (mulberry), Amos 7: 14. A fruit tree in Palestine.  
**Symeon** (Simon), Acts 13: 1. A teacher and prophet in the church at Antioch.



Synagogue (congregation), Matt. 13: 54. Place where the Jews met for worship.  
 Syntyche (with fate), Phil. 4: 2. Female member of the church at Philippi.  
 Syria, Judg. 10: 6. Name of country.  
 Syrophenician, Mark 7: 26. A mixed race of people.

## T

Tabernacle (tent), Ex. 25: 9. Constructed by Moses as a place of worship.  
 Tabitha (gazelle), Matt. 9: 25; Mark 5: 41. Also called "Dorcas."  
 Tares (darnel), Matt. 13: 25. A weed similar to wheat in its early stages.  
 Tarsus, Acts 9: 11. Chief town of Cilicia, home of Paul.  
 Taverns, the Three (inn), Acts 28: 15. On the Appian road, where Paul lodged for a time.  
 Temple, 1 Kings 7: 15-22. House built by Solomon for worship.  
 Ten Commandments, Ex. 34: 28. The name given to the Decalogue.  
 Tertullus (fr. Greek), Acts 24: 1. A Roman orator.  
 Tetrarch, Matt. 14: 1. Name given to the governor of the fourth part of the country.  
 Theophilus (friend of God), Luke 1: 3; Acts 1: 1. Person to whom Luke wrote his Gospel and Acts of Apostles.  
 Thessalonica, Acts 17: 2. Town in Macedonia where Paul established a church; wrote two letters to the church.  
 Thomas (twin), Matt. 13: 55. One of the apostles.  
 Thyatira, Rev. 2: 20. A city on the borders of Mysia.  
 Tiberias, John 6: 1. Another name given to the Sea of Galilee.  
 Timothy (worshipping God), Acts 16: 1. Paul's companion. Paul wrote two letters to him.  
 Titus (honorable), Gal. 2: 1. An early Christian to whom Paul wrote one letter.  
 Transfiguration, Matt. 17: 1-13. The event in the earthly life of Christ which marked his glorified state.  
 Troas, Acts 16: 8. A seaport of Asia Minor.  
 Trogyllium, Acts 20: 15. A town in Asia Minor.  
 Trophimus (nutritious), Acts 21: 27. Accompanied Paul to Jerusalem.  
 Tychicus (fateful), Acts 20: 4. Companion of Paul on some of his journeys.  
 Tyrannus (sovereign), Acts 19: 9. Paul taught in the school of Tyrannus.  
 Tyre (a rock), Matt. 15: 21. City on the east coast of the Mediterranean.

## U

Ur (light, or the moon city), Gen. 11: 28. The land of Abraham's nativity.  
 Uriah (light of Jehovah), 2 Sam. 23: 39. One of David's brave men.  
 Uzzah (strength), 2 Sam. 6: 6. Priest who touched the ark and died.

## V

Version. A translation.  
 Vision, Luke 2: 25, 26. A revelation.  
 Vows, Gen. 28: 18-22. A solemn promise made to God to perform or to abstain from performing a certain thing.  
 Vulgate, The. The Latin version of the Bible.

## W

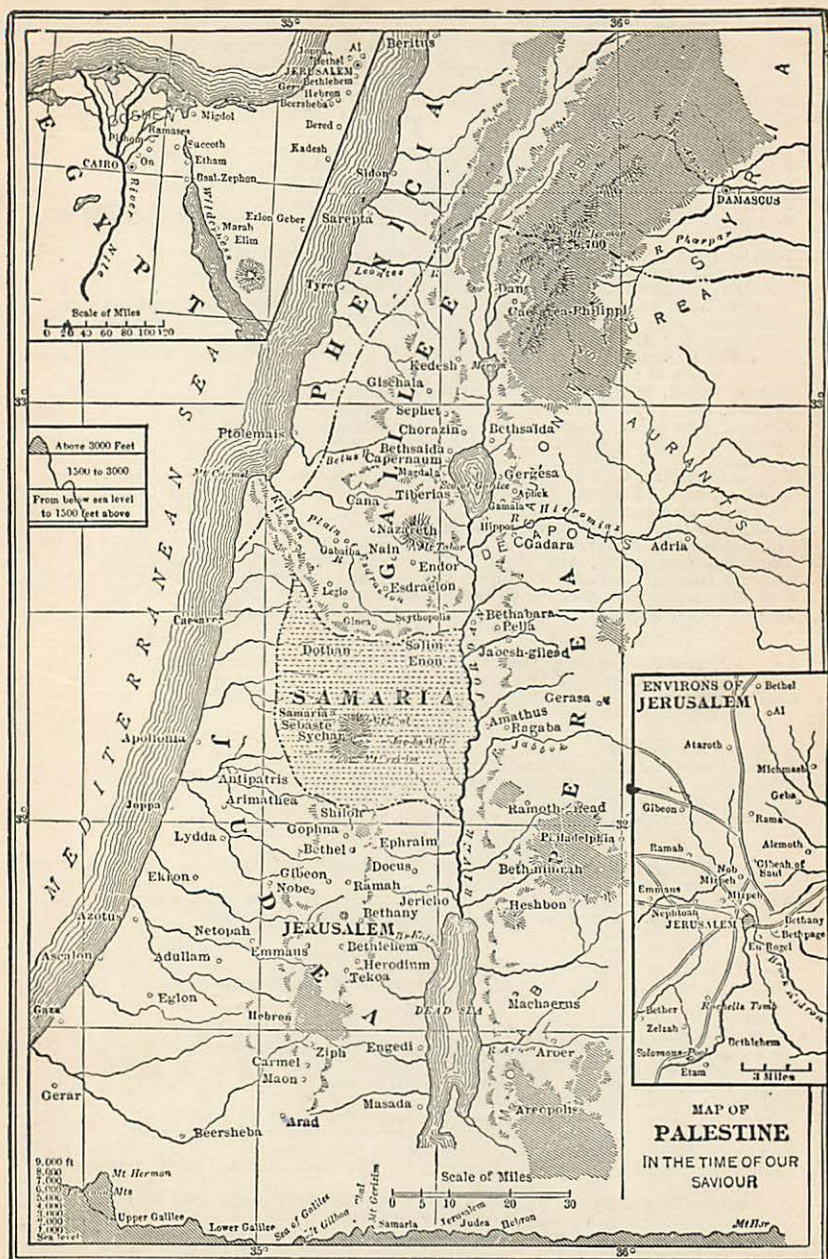
Watches of Night, 1 Sam. 11: 11. The Jews divided the night into military watches instead of hours.  
 Wave Offering, Ex. 29: 34. An offering which accompanied the peace offerings.  
 Way, Acts 19: 9. A term used for the Gospel or Plan of Salvation.

## Y

Year, Gen. 1: 14. The highest division of time.  
 Yoke (subjection), 1 Kings 12: 4. An implement for working oxen; sign of authority

## Z

Zacchaeus (pure), Luke 19: 5. A tax collector, publican who lived near Jericho.  
 Zachariah (remembered by Jehovah), 2 Kings 10: 30. Fourteenth king of Israel.  
 Zacharias (Greek form of "Zachariah"), Luke 1: 5. Father of John the Baptist.  
 Zadok (just), 1 Chron. 24: 3. Name of priest in time of David.  
 Zebedee (my gift), Matt. 4: 21. Father of James and John.  
 Zebulun (a habitation), Gen. 30: 20. The tenth of the sons of Jacob.  
 Zechariah, Ex. 5: 1, 6. The eleventh in order of the twelve minor prophets.  
 Zenas, Tit. 3: 13. A believer who is described as "the lawyer."  
 Zephaniah (hidden by Jehovah), Zeph. 1: 1. The ninth in order of the twelve minor prophets.  
 Zerubbabel (born at Babel, Babylon), Ez. 6: 18. The head of the tribe of Judah at the time of the return from the Babylonian captivity.  
 Zeruah (Balsam), 1 Sam. 26: 6. Mother of Joab, sister of David.  
 Zidon, or Sidon, Gen. 10: 15; Luke 6: 17. An ancient city of Phoenicia on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean.





## FIRST QUARTER

### THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

**AIM:** *To encourage the student to seek an understanding of the deeply spiritual message of the Gospel of John and to enter into loving fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.*

*Lesson I—January 3, 1937*

### THE SON OF GOD BECOMES MAN

John 1: 1-18

- 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 The same was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made.
- 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
- 5 And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not.
- 6 There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John.
- 7 The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him.
- 8 He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light.
- 9 There was the true light, *even the light* which lighteth every man, coming into the world.
- 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world knew him not.
- 11 He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not.
- 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, *even to them that believe on his name*:
- 13 Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.
- 15 John beareth witness of him, and crieth, saying, This was he of whom I said, He that cometh after me is become before me: for he was before me.
- 16 For of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace.
- 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- 18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—*"The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us."* (John 1: 14.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Phil. 2: 1-11.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

December 28.	M.	.....	The Light of Men (John 1: 1-9)
December 29.	T.	.....	The Incarnation (John 1: 10-18)
December 30.	W.	.....	The Purpose of the Incarnation (Heb. 2: 9-18)
December 31.	T.	.....	The Servant Lord (Phil. 2: 1-11)
January 1.	F.	.....	The Gospel of Life (2 Tim. 1: 3-14)
January 2.	S.	.....	Oneness with the Father (John 14: 7-11)
January 3.	S.	.....	Revelation through the Son (Heb. 1: 1-9)

### THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—In the beginning, 4 B.C. and A.D. 27. Our lesson goes back to the creation of all things, before time, as we know time, began.

He whom John calls the Word became flesh, that is, was born of the virgin Mary, 4 B.C., and was baptized of John A.D. 27. This peculiar way of dating the birth of Jesus, and other events in his life, grew out of a mistake as to the year in which Jesus was born. It was not till the sixth century after the birth of Jesus that people began to date events from his birth. In that century a learned monk, Dionysius Exiguus, calculated the time; but his date was later found to be four years too late. By that time the civilized nations were so generally using his date that it was not convenient to try to correct it.

*Place.*—Bethany. Some versions have Bethabara. This was not the Bethany near Jerusalem. This Bethany, or Bethabara, was on the east side of the Jordan, perhaps opposite Jericho. (John 1: 28; 10: 40.) The location of this place is not now known.

*Persons.*—Jesus, John the Baptist, and the people. Our Lord Jesus Christ, whose life and works we are to study during this quarter, was with the Father in the beginning as the Word. He was not called the Son of God till he came into this world, and he was not publicly announced as the Son of God till he was baptized. Though we study him, we shall not fully comprehend him. John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ. His mission was twofold; he was sent to make ready a people for Christ (Luke 1: 17) and to introduce Christ to the people (John 1: 29-34).

*Lesson Links.*—As this lesson goes back to the beginning, back to a point before time was, there is no previous lesson with which to connect it; but as this lesson sets forth the deity of Christ Jesus, it has a vital connection with all the other lessons of this quarter. John put much stress on the previous existence of Christ, and therefore on his divine nature. Jesus taught and performed miracles to convince the people of the truth which John sets forth in this lesson. John declares that he wrote for that same purpose: "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." (John 20: 30, 31.) At the time John wrote, people generally knew that a man named Jesus had lived in Palestine, and that he had been crucified. It was John's purpose to show that this Jesus was the Christ.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### The Divinity of Jesus (Verses 1, 2)

John's first words are also the first words of Genesis—"In the beginning." John affirms the deity of Jesus and his presence with the Father before time was. He was not simply a mere spoken word—not a mere idea, but a person. In the beginning he was with God, "and the Word was God." This does not mean that he was the Father; it is an affirmation as to his nature. His nature was neither angelic, nor human, but God. That Jesus existed as a divine being before the world was created is also proved by a petition in his prayer on the night of his betrayal: "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17: 5.)



### Christ the Creator and the Light of the World (Verses 3-5)

"All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made." Paul also says, "For in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist." (Col. 1: 16, 17.) From Heb. 1: 1, 2, we learn that God created the worlds through his Son. The Father planned; the Son executed the plans. The Son was the builder. This helps us to understand to whom God was speaking in Genesis, first chapter, when he said, "Let there be light," "Let there be a firmament," and so on; and also the significance of the plural pronoun in the expression, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

*Life and Light.*—"In him was life." His life was inherent, not derived; he is the source of life. He had, and has, the power to impart life to others. "I am the resurrection, and the life." (John 11: 25.) He is the source of spiritual life here and in the world to come; but the expression, "In him was life," seems here to refer to the life which he imparted to created beings. It is certain that nothing originated its own life. From the life in him comes all our spiritual light. "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8: 12.) "And the light shineth in the darkness." Light dispels darkness; yet a person may shut himself off even from the light of the sun; and so may he shut himself off from the light that comes from Jesus. Ignorance is darkness, and there is such a thing as willful ignorance. Sin is darkness. The world was in darkness when Jesus came, "and the darkness apprehended it not," did not seize the light he brought. They were steeped in sin and ignorance, and rejected the light; for "men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil." Such people harden their hearts, stop their ears, and close their eyes, because they do not want to turn from their sins and be healed. (Matt. 13: 15.) A man sins against himself and all people over whom he has an influence, when he closes his eyes against the light of the Lord.

### The Testimony of John the Baptist (Verses 6-9)

In announcing to the aged Zacharias that Elisabeth, his aged wife, would bear him a son, the angel Gabriel said, "And thou shalt call his name John." (Luke 1: 8-20.) Later, after John began to baptize people, he was called John the Baptist. The prophet Isaiah had said, "The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level, and the rough places a plain." (Isa. 40: 3, 4.) Matthew, Mark, and Luke quote this prophecy as having its fulfillment in John the Baptist. He prepared the people for Christ by leading them to forsake sin and be baptized; and he then introduced Christ to the people by pointing him out to them. On the morrow after John was questioned by a delegation of Pharisees, "he seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world! This is he of



whom I said, After me cometh a man who is become before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel, for this cause came I baptizing in water. And John bare witness, saying, I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize in water, he said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth in the Holy Spirit. And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God." (John 1: 29-34.)

*The True Light.*—Jesus the Christ is the light of the world. His disciples are the light of the world in the sense that they teach his word and live it before men. Jesus is the source of all spiritual light. "There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world." Johnson says, "Grammatically, both in the Greek and the English, coming may belong to the light, or every man. We believe it should agree with light." As John was speaking about Jesus as the light coming into the world, and not man's coming, it seems that Johnson's idea is correct. This agrees with the marginal reading: "The true light, which lighteth every man, was coming into the world." And Jesus himself says, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me may not abide in the darkness." (John 12: 46.)

### Results of Christ's Mission to Earth (Verses 10-13)

Jesus was a stranger in the world which he made. The world knew him not, and even now does not know him. "He came unto his own [Greek, and his own things], and they that were his own [people] received him not." The whole world was his by creation. Perhaps no scripture has been more generally misapplied than verses 11-13. When John wrote these verses the Old Covenant had been long ago abolished, Jesus had been crowned king, and the gospel of salvation had been preached in all the known world. The people generally had rejected him. "But as many as received him [three thousand received him on Pentecost and many thousands thereafter] to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name." Notice the present tense—believe, not believed. John was speaking of a present truth, not of a past fact. The mission of Jesus embraced the whole world. "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. 1: 15.) The Gentiles, as well as the Jews. And as many as obeyed the gospel were born again. The Jews depended on their Jewish blood, but under the gospel that does not make one a child of God; only the will of God, the gospel of Christ, can make one a child of God. In Christ Jesus we are sons of God. "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.)

### The Incarnation, and the Testimony of John the Baptist (Verses 14-18)

*The Word Becomes Flesh.*—"And the Word became flesh," that is, took upon himself the nature of man. Deity appeared in a human body. He was of the seed of David according to the flesh. (Rom.



1: 3.) "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same." (Heb. 2: 14.) This Son of God and Son of man dwelt among us. "And we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father." Not only did they see his glory on the mount of transfiguration, but they also saw it in his teaching, in his character, and in his mighty works. "This beginning of his signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory." (John 2: 11.) It was in his teaching and in his miracles of mercy that they saw the glory of his mission.

*John the Baptist's Testimony.*—"This was he of whom I said, He that cometh after me is become before me: for he was before me." Here John the Baptist affirms the existence of Jesus before he became flesh; for Jesus was not born before John was, yet he existed before John had an existence. In greatness also Jesus was before John, that is, he was greater than John. Later John said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3: 30.)

*A Contrast.*—Verses 16-18 are the words of John, the writer, and not of John the Baptist. "For of his fullness we all received." He was not here writing of what "we all received" during the personal ministry of Jesus, but of what all Christians now receive; for no one received the full blessings of Christ till the gospel began to be preached in its fullness. "Grace for grace"—grace upon grace, or grace in abundance. "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." The law given through Moses was for the children of Israel, and by it they were kept as a distinct race, separate from all other people; but it ended at the cross of Christ. (Col. 2: 14; Eph. 2: 13, 15.) When the law ended, then grace and truth—the full benefits of the gospel—began to be extended to all the world. Grace and truth go together; they cannot be separated. We cannot deny the truth, and still claim God's grace. And the only way Christians can lead people into God's grace is to teach them the truth as revealed in the New Testament. It is a fatal error to think you are doing a person a favor by compromising the truth to please him. Truth makes us free; falsehood makes us slaves. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8: 32.) "No man hath seen God," not with bodily eyes as they had seen him in the person of Jesus. He was God manifest in the flesh. "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us." (Matt. 1: 23.) Jesus declared, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Hence, both in his teaching and in his person Jesus declared God to the world.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

We can know that there are three persons in the Godhead, though we cannot comprehend their nature and unity. The finite cannot understand the infinite.

We can know that Deity united with humanity in the person of Jesus, though we cannot understand just how the two natures were united. But we can believe what the Bible says, and adjust our lives to its teaching. Herein lies our salvation.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The three persons in the Godhead.  
 The divinity of Jesus.  
 John the Baptist.  
 The baptism of Jesus.  
 Acceptable faith.

## QUESTIONS

Repeat the Golden Text, and give its meaning.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, and discuss the mistake in chronology.  
 Give the place and its location.  
 Give the persons.  
 What name does John apply to Jesus?  
 Do you think our lesson heading is accurate?  
 Tell how our lesson begins.  
 What was John's purpose in writing?

*Verses 1, 2*

What two books begin alike?  
 Give proof that Jesus existed before the world was created.

*Verses 3-5*

By whom were all things created?  
 Discuss Col. 1: 16, 17.  
 What light do these New Testament teachings throw on some expressions in the first chapter of Genesis?  
 "In him was life"—what does this expression mean?  
 Give proof that Jesus is the source of spiritual light.

What is spiritual darkness?  
 Why do people not accept the light of Jesus?

*Verses 6-9*

Who were the parents of John the Baptist?  
 Why was he called the Baptist?  
 What prophecy was fulfilled in him?  
 What testimony did John the Baptist give concerning Jesus?  
 How did John know who Jesus was?  
 In what sense are Christians the light of the world?

*Verses 10-13*

To what and to whom did Jesus come?  
 To whom did Jesus give a right to become children of God?  
 Discuss the meaning and application of verses 11-13.  
 When do people become children of God?

*Verses 14-18*

In what way did the Word become flesh?  
 In what way did they behold his glory?  
 Give the testimony of John the Baptist.  
 Discuss verse 17.  
 In what sense had no man seen God?  
 In what sense had they seen him?

*Lesson II—January 10, 1937*

## NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

## John 3: 1-17

- 1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:
- 2 The same came unto him by night, and said to him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him.
- 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
- 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?
- 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew.
- 8 The wind bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.
- 9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?
- 10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou the teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things?
- 11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.
- 12 If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?



13 And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up;

15 That whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life.

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.

17 For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3: 3.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 51: 7-13.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

January 4.	M.	.....	The Necessity for the New Life (John 3: 1-8)
January 5.	T.	.....	Attaining the New Life (John 3: 9-17)
January 6.	W.	.....	The Gospel of Salvation (Rom. 1: 8-17)
January 7.	T.	.....	The Victory of Love (1 John 5: 1-5)
January 8.	F.	.....	A New Creature (2 Cor. 5: 14-21)
January 9.	S.	.....	Living in Christ (Col. 3: 1-11)
January 10.	S.	.....	Growing in Grace (2 Pet. 3: 14-18)

### THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—According to Usher, A.D. 27; according to Hales, A.D. 28. Hales' date is more likely true; for, according to both, Jesus was baptized A.D. 27. That must have been during the dry, warm season of A.D. 27; for, as John preached and baptized in the open, he must have done the major part of his baptizing during the warm, dry season. After Jesus was baptized, he spent forty days in the wilderness, and it does not seem reasonable that this was in the winter. But as the Passover came about the breaking up of the rainy season early in the spring, Jesus must have been baptized the year before. As the conversation with Nicodemus took place while Jesus was attending the Passover, it must have been in the spring of A.D. 28.

**Place.**—Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the capital city of the Jews. In it the temple was located, and in it all the annual feasts of the Jews were observed. For further particulars, the student will consult a Bible dictionary, or an encyclopedia, or some book of travels in Palestine.

**Persons.**—Jesus and Nicodemus. At this early period in his ministry Jesus had begun to attract the attention of those who were in authority in Jerusalem. Nicodemus was a member of the Sanhedrin, the high court of the Jews. It appears that he was not so stiff and self-righteous as the other members of that court.

**Lesson Links.**—After the temptations of Jesus, he returned to the place where John was baptizing, at which time John pointed him out as the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Two of John's disciples followed Jesus. Jesus then gathered about him three other disciples, and with them journeyed to Galilee. (John 1: 35-51.) While in Galilee he attended a marriage feast in Cana, and then went down to Capernaum. (John 2: 1-12.) When the time drew near for the Passover, he went up to Jerusalem. While there, probably before the Passover, he cleansed the temple of unholy traffic, and also did many signs.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## Nicodemus' Opinion of Jesus (Verses 1, 2)

Nicodemus was a Pharisee, and also a member of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was really more than a high court, for it ruled the Jews. Only three times is Nicodemus mentioned, and each time by John. Each time he appears as a friend of Jesus. Once, in seeking to prevent the court's hasty condemnation of Jesus, he said, "Doth our law judge a man, except it first hear from himself and know what he doeth?" (John 7: 51.) He also assisted Joseph in burying Jesus. (John 19: 38-40.) Early in the ministry of Jesus Nicodemus was favorably impressed by the teaching and the miracles of Jesus, and therefore sought this interview with him. Some have said that he came to Jesus by night, because he was too cowardly to come by day; but that does not seem to be true, for he had enough courage to demand that the council give Jesus a fair trial. It is more in keeping with what we know of him to conclude that he came by night so as to have a quiet talk with Jesus, which he could not have by day when the crowds were pressing upon him. Nicodemus spoke very positively to Jesus, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God." Rabbi, a title of honor among the Jews, was conferred upon distinguished teachers of the law. It literally signified my master. Whether Nicodemus included the other members of the court when he said, "We know," is a matter of conjecture. Perhaps it was an indefinite expression like our "We all know," "Everybody knows," etc. By the expression, "a teacher come from God," he meant a teacher whom God had sent, an inspired teacher, and not one appointed by man, as were the teachers among the Jews. Nicodemus was thoughtful enough to recognize the genuineness of the signs which Jesus did, and to know that no man of his own ability could perform such signs. He knew, therefore, that Jesus was a teacher sent from God. It does not seem that he had grasped the idea that Jesus was the long-expected Messiah. But he did have the correct idea of miracles wrought in connection with a teacher of religion; to him they were a sign of God's endorsement of the teacher—signs that God had sent the teacher as his representative.

## "Ye Must Be Born Anew" (Verses 3-7)

It is reasonable to conclude that John gives us a very condensed report of this conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus. It seems that something, not reported, must have led up to the Lord's statement: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Verily, verily," introduces a solemn affirmation. Nicodemus, like all other Jews, would think that his being a Jew would give him a place in the kingdom, which they expected. Something, therefore, must have been said about the expected kingdom. Jesus would give him to understand at once that his being a Jew would count for nothing in his favor. "Except one"—any one—the greatest as well as the lowest, the Jew as well as the Gentile. To see the kingdom is to enjoy its blessings. As the child is born into the kingdom of nature, so are people born into the kingdom of God. There is no other way to enter that kingdom. Because Nicodemus had his mind on the natural birth, the language of Jesus greatly puzzled him. He could not see how it was possible



for an old man, such as he, to experience another physical birth. Jesus answered him by saying, "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Whatever the new birth is, it must be experienced by any one in order to enter the kingdom of God.

*The New Birth.*—It is plain that the new birth puts one into the kingdom; he passes out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Christ. Because one enters this new life, the change is called a birth. In becoming a Christian, one is born again. In other places the process of becoming a Christian is called conversion, turning again, creation, making alive, and other designations. No meaning must be attached to any one of these terms, or any certain combination of them, that will contradict, or make useless, the others. Literally, to be born and to be created are very different processes, yet both terms are applied to the process of becoming a Christian. When a thing is literally created, it is not born; yet the change in becoming a Christian is so great that it may be called a birth or a creation. It is also a turning again. One thing is worthy of note, and that is, when the apostles told sinners what to do to be saved, they never told them to be born again nor to be created anew. They were told in plain language what to do. Hence, the best way to find out—in fact, the only way to find out—what the new birth is or what the new creation is, is to find out what sinners did under the preaching of the apostles. In the cases of conversions, we learn what it is to be born again. To be born again is figurative language, and one is born again when he believes, repents, and is baptized. Hence, to be born of water and the Spirit is to believe what the Spirit teaches and to be baptized as the Spirit directs. No apostle ever said to alien sinners, "Ye must be born anew," but told them plainly what to do to be saved. The flesh is born of the flesh; the spirit of man is born of the Spirit. It is the spirit of man, not his flesh, that is born anew. Hence, Nicodemus need not have marveled at the truth that entering the spiritual kingdom is a new birth.

### Is the New Birth a Mystery? (Verses 8-12)

Many have thought that verse eight shows the new birth to be a great mystery; but it does not seem possible that Jesus started in to explain the new birth, and left it as an inexplicable riddle. But Jesus was not explaining what the new birth is, but how a man when he is old can be born again. Notice the last clause: "So is every one that is born of the Spirit." He does not say, "So is every one born of the Spirit." He was talking about the one that is born, and not how he is born. You cannot see the wind, but you know it blows by observing or experiencing its effects. You cannot see a man's spirit, but you know a man has a spirit by observing or experiencing its effects. It is this spirit in man that is born anew. Nicodemus still objects. "How can these things be?" He, with all other Jews, expected a material kingdom, and that all Jews would be citizens of it by virtue of their fleshly birth. They thought the kingdom would be their kingdom, and that they would rule the earth. Now to be told that he and all others must be born again to enter the kingdom that was theirs by right was more than he could understand; especially was it puzzling to him to hear that his spirit had to be born again or he could not enter the kingdom he had in mind. To put



Nicodemus in a more teachable mood, Jesus said, "Art thou the teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things?" When a man continues to raise objections to a thing of which he is ignorant, no one can teach him till he is made to realize his ignorance. If Nicodemus had not believed what Jesus said about things that take place here on earth, he would not believe, if he told him of heavenly things. Hence, there was no use to tell him of his future reign in his throne in heaven.

### "God So Loved the World" (Verses 13-17)

It seems that verse twelve ends the speech of Jesus, and that verse thirteen is the writer's own composition; for Jesus had not ascended to heaven and was not in the bosom of the Father when he was talking to Nicodemus. But he had ascended when John wrote. Verses fourteen and fifteen refer to an incident recorded in Num. 21: 4-9. The Israelites were not pleased with their lot, "and the people spake against God, and against Moses." To punish them, "Jehovah sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." Instead of taking away the serpents according to their prayers, Jehovah had Moses to make a serpent of brass and erect it on a standard, that the people might look at it and be healed. In like manner Jesus was lifted up on the cross, "that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life." If any refused to look at the serpent of brass, he died; if any refuse to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, he perishes. But why did God provide such a remedy for sin? The next verse answers. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15: 13.) Man would not die for his enemies; "but God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5: 8, 10.) Christ died for sinners—for his enemies. God's love was without limit—he so loved that he gave his only begotten Son, and in so doing made it possible for all men to be saved. The "whosoever" includes all men who will by faith accept salvation through Christ. Peter's vision on the housetop and the words of the Spirit, together with what Cornelius told him about his experience with an angel, convinced him that salvation was within the reach of all men. "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10: 34.) As God so loved us that he gave his Son, so also must we so believe in him that we will give ourselves wholeheartedly into his service. "For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world." Jesus came to save the world, not to judge it. When he comes again, he will come to judge the world. (Matt. 25: 31-46.) The sinners will be condemned to eternal punishment; the righteous will be received into eternal life. The people were lost when Jesus came. "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." If Jesus had not come, no one would have been saved.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

In saying, "Ye must be born anew," Jesus put the responsibility on man. If man was wholly passive in the new birth, it would be useless to tell him that he must be born again.



Jesus came to save sinners, not to make sinners. People were sinners before Jesus came; and they would have continued to be sinners had not Jesus come. If people do not believe in him they continue sinning just as they would have done had he not come.

People like mysteries. They like to wonder how people are born again, how they are created anew, and how dead sinners are made alive. But it is more important that they study the cases of conversion under the preaching of inspired men, and find out how people were saved from sin. To be saved is what the Savior meant by being born anew.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The religion of the Pharisees.

How the conversions in the Acts illustrate the new birth.

Jesus came to save, not to condemn.

At his second coming, what?

The brazen serpent—what lesson to us?

## QUESTIONS

### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the probable time.

Does it seem possible that the conversation with Nicodemus occurred the same year Jesus was baptized?

What feast was Jesus attending?

What time of the year did this feast occur?

Give the place of this lesson.

Give in their order the events between last lesson and this.

### *Verses 1, 2*

Who was Nicodemus?

On what other occasions did John mention Nicodemus?

Can we know why he came to Jesus by night?

How did he know that Jesus was a teacher come from God?

Why did Jesus and his inspired men perform miracles?

### *Verses 3-7*

What startling statement did Jesus make to Nicodemus?

What idea did the Jews have about the expected kingdom?

The new birth introduces a person into what?

Give other words and expressions that are used to describe the process of becoming a Christian.

Show how we may err in stressing too much such figurative terms as creation and the new birth.

How may we find out what the new birth is?

What is it to be born of water and the Spirit?

### *Verses 8-12*

Discuss verse 8.

Was Jesus speaking of how one is born again or what is born again?

Give reason for your answer.

What is born again?

Why did the whole matter puzzle Nicodemus?

How can you teach an ignorant man who thinks he knows?

### *Verses 13-17*

Why does it seem that the speech of Jesus ended with verse 12, and verse 13 begins John's own composition?

Tell about Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness.

What application does Jesus make of that incident?

How was God's love manifested?

In what way was it greater than man's love?

Who may be saved?

When Jesus comes again, what will he do?

Discuss "Some Reflections."

Lesson III—January 17, 1937

## JESUS THE WATER OF LIFE

John 4: 7-26

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8 For his disciples were gone away into the city to buy food.

9 The Samaritan woman therefore saith unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman? (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his sons, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

17 The woman answered and said unto him, I have no husband. Jesus saith unto her, Thou saidst well, I have no husband:

18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: this hast thou said truly.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father.

22 Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.” (John 4: 14.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rom. 8: 26-32.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

January 11.	M.	.....	The Water of Life (John 4: 7-15)
January 12.	T.	.....	Wells of Salvation (Isa. 12: 1-6)
January 13.	W.	.....	The Gracious Invitation (Isa. 55: 1-7)
January 14.	T.	.....	Come and Drink (John 7: 37-44)
January 15.	F.	.....	The Nourishing Christ (John 6: 52-59)
January 16.	S.	.....	“Whosoever Will” (Rev. 22: 16-21)
January 17.	S.	.....	True Worship (John 4: 16-26)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, A.D. 27; according to Hales, A.D. 28. It seems more likely that A.D. 28 is the correct date. See time in last lesson. At the time Jesus visited Sychar it was yet four months to the harvest. (Verse 35.) It was, therefore, about the middle of December, for the harvest began about the middle of April. About eight months had passed since the events of the last lesson.

*Place.*—Sychar, a city of Samaria, about forty miles north of Jeru-



salem. This is generally understood to be the ancient Shechem, now called Nablus. Shechem was one of the most ancient cities of Canaan, dating back beyond the time Jacob returned from Paddan-aram. (See Gen. 37.) It was in the narrow pass between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. Here Joshua read the law to the assembled tribes of Israel. (Josh. 8: 30-35.) Here also Jeroboam set up his government after he revolted from Rehoboam. (1 Kings 12: 25.) On Mount Gerizim stood the temple of the Samaritans.

*Persons.*—Jesus, his disciples, the Samaritan woman, and the people of Sychar. When Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, conquered the kingdom of the ten tribes, it seems that he carried the entire population into captivity. He then introduced colonies in their place from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim. (2 Kings 17: 6, 23, 24.) From the days of Nehemiah great enmity had existed between the Jews and Samaritans.

*Lesson Links.*—After the conversation with Nicodemus, which we studied in our last lesson, Jesus went out into the country, and spent some time teaching and baptizing. (John 3: 22.) Jesus baptized in the sense that he authorized his disciples to do it. It appears that John's friends became jealous when they learned that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John. To allay such feelings, Jesus left Judea to go into Galilee; "and he must needs pass through Samaria." When he arrived at Jacob's well, he "being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the well," while his disciples went into the city to buy food.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Jesus Asks a Favor of a Samaritan Woman (Verses 7-9)

While Jesus was waiting for the disciples to return from the city with food, a Samaritan woman came to the well for water. Such tasks fell to the lot of women in those days. Jesus, being weary and thirsty, said to the woman, "Give me to drink." By asking a favor of her he could establish such friendly relations with her as would give him an opening to teach her. It is evident that his request both astonished and pleased her. She knew how the Jews hated the Samaritans, and was astonished that one should ask a favor of her. The Jew might, as the disciples were then doing, purchase a necessity from a Samaritan, but would ask of them no favors. No proud Jew wanted to be under obligations to a Samaritan. The marginal note in the American Standard Version says, "Some ancient authorities omit For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans." It was, perhaps, an explanatory note added by a copyist. If not that, then it was an explanatory note added by John to give the attitude of the Jews toward the Samaritans. The expression, to fit the occasion, means that Jews had no social dealings with the Samaritans—no exchange of courtesies between the two peoples. Jesus knew that his request would surprise the woman—his speech and clothing would reveal to her that he was a Jew. Too surprised to answer his request immediately, she asks how it is that a Jew asks drink of a Samaritan woman.



### The Living Water (Verses 10-15)

To the woman Jesus was just a thirsty Jew—one who did not mind asking a Samaritan woman for a favor. Having broken the ice, so to speak, he now sought to teach her about spiritual things. "If thou knewest." She knew not who was talking to her, nor the gift he had to offer. So often people are "alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them." (Eph. 4: 18.) This ignorance may be due to a lack of opportunity to know, as was the case with this woman; or it may be due to the fact that people refuse to consider the evidence, as was the case with those who crucified Jesus. Ignorance, willful ignorance, crucified Jesus. "And now, brethren, I know that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." (Acts 3: 17.) Contrasting his disciples with those who were willfully ignorant, Jesus said, "But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." (Matt. 13: 16.) Had the woman known him and asked of him understandingly, he would have given her living water. There is an inner thirst that only this living water can satisfy. "Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." (John 7: 37.) "He that believeth on me shall never thirst." Just as Jesus is the bread of life, so also is he the water of life. There is a longing in man, which the man himself may not be able to interpret, but which Jesus alone can satisfy. He gives living water to the thirsty, the bread of life to the hungry, and rest to the weary. The woman was slow to learn. She did not see how Jesus could give her living water when he had nothing with which to draw. "Art thou greater than our father Jacob?" She did not think any man could be greater than Jacob, though she had very little, if any, right to call him father. The Greek language uses certain particles, which, when used in questions, indicate whether an affirmative or a negative answer is expected. The one the woman used in her question showed that she expected a negative answer; at least, John's interpretation of her question shows that she expected a negative answer. The sign cannot be translated into English, but we can give its significance by recasting the question like this: You are not greater than our father Jacob, are you? But Jesus was not willing to be turned aside to discuss Jacob. The woman needed to know about the living water. The water which the woman had in mind was necessary to physical life, but it quenched the thirst for only a limited time. But Jesus would give living water, water that would satisfy the soul and spring up into eternal life. The woman was so materialistic in her thinking that she still thought Jesus was talking about material water. She wanted this water, which, if a man drank, he would thirst no more, so that she would not have to come to the well and draw water. But no earthly thing can satisfy the longings of the soul.

### The Woman Decides That Jesus Is a Prophet (Verses 16-19)

Since the woman's mind seemed to be wholly on material things, and would not grasp the idea of spiritual drink, Jesus would try her out further by talking about her home affairs. Jesus knew her life, but he wanted her to know that he knew it. As yet the woman did not know that Jesus knew her life; later she would know. "Go, call thy husband." It was better for her to confess than for



him to accuse. When she confessed that she had no husband, Jesus astonished her by telling her of her many marriages. Whether these five husbands had all died, or she had been divorced from some or all of them, we know not. "He whom thou now hast is not thy husband." This does not necessarily mean that she was living with this man; she might have been engaged to him. If she were an impure woman, it is strange that the people of the city listened so readily to her report of the man she had met at Jacob's well and believed what she said. But be that as it may, when Jesus told her about her family affairs, she knew he was a prophet.

### Worship in Spirit and Truth (Verses 20-26)

Knowing Jesus to be a prophet, the woman felt that she had an opportunity to have settled an age-old controversy between the Jews and Samaritans as to the place where men ought to worship. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain," referring to near-by Mount Gerizim. Their temple stood on that mountain, and there she thought men ought to worship. Her interest in the matter is to her credit. In using the plural "ye" she was including all the Jews with Jesus. A Jew might engage in his private devotions anywhere; but his offerings and sacrifices were made at the temple in Jerusalem, and their annual feasts were observed in Jerusalem. In reply to the woman's question, Jesus made an earnest appeal. "Woman, believe me." He would have her to rise above her local prejudices; but he would not affront her by defending Jerusalem as the place of worship. His religion would not be national. Under his reign there would be no central place of worship. The hour was coming when neither this mountain of Gerizim nor the city of Jerusalem would be more sacred than any other place. It is implied in the statement of Jesus that Jerusalem would never again be the designated place of worship. Jerusalem is not now the Holy City. The Samaritans worshiped God after a fashion; but, rejecting all the Old Testament except the five books of Moses, they were ignorant of much that they should have known. The Jews had clearer ideas of God and the worship. In addition to that, salvation was of the Jews. They gave the world a Savior, and then rejected him.

*True Worship.*—There is such a thing as ignorant worship. The Samaritans worshipped in ignorance. Paul said to the Athenians, "What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you." (Acts 17: 23.) And there is vain worship. "But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." (Matt. 15: 9.) And there is will worship—self-appointed worship. In reality, these are all vain worship, empty of any benefits, and displeasing to God. But there is a true worship, and true worshippers. "The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers." Only true worship is acceptable to God. "God is a Spirit." The marginal reading is better: "God is spirit." It is an affirmation as to God's nature; he is spirit, not flesh and blood. "And they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth." Must—no word can be more binding. To worship in spirit is to put heart and soul into the worship. It has always been a weakness among God's people to drift into lifeless formalities, to go through the form of worship while the heart is on



other things. Of the Jews, who were God's people, the Psalmist said, "But they flattered him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongue. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they faithful in his covenant." (Psalm 78: 36, 37.) "Flattered him." Flattery is insincere praise. Their heart was not right with him—they were not sincere in what they said. With hearts full of hypocrisy, they could not be faithful in his covenant. Jesus quotes from Isaiah as follows: "This people honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." (Matt. 15: 8.) Not only must the worship be sincere, but it must be in truth. To worship in truth is to worship as the truth directs. Paul said, "For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son." (Rom. 1: 9.) If a person is sincere, he will want to worship as the Lord directs. No man can improve on God's way; and for a person to think so is to show a lack of faith in God. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

*The Messiah.*—"I know that Messiah cometh." On this point the woman spoke very positively, and as one very much interested in the Messiah's coming. Where did she get her knowledge? The Samaritans rejected the Old Testament prophets with the exception of Moses. Moses had said, "Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." (Deut. 18: 15.) Viewed in the light of other and fuller prophecies, we can see that this refers to the Messiah; but standing alone, it does not seem plain enough to enable the woman to say, "I know that Messiah cometh." Likely the Samaritans, without really being conscious of the source, had imbibed many of their Messianic ideas from the Jews. The woman felt that, though the man before her was a prophet, he could not tell her all she wanted to know, but that the Messiah, when he came, would "declare unto us all things." The statement of Jesus must have astonished her yet more, though her report in the city shows that she was still somewhat in doubt. "I that speak unto thee am he." Among the Jews Jesus had not avowed his Messiahship. To have done so would have raised such a storm of protest from the Pharisees as to interfere greatly with his teaching. But if the Samaritans did not accept him, they would not do much about it. To see how the people of the city received him, the student should read verses 39-45.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

All systems of religion have some form of worship. It does not seem possible to keep any religion alive without a stated place where people come to worship, or, at least, stated times for people to meet for worship. Religion does not stand alone; it needs the fellowship of kindred worshippers.

People do not need the Bible to make them religious; they are religious where they have never heard of the Bible. But they do need the Bible to teach them the right kind of religion. Man-made religions of civilized people are as worthless to them as the man-made religions of heathens are to them.

Neither do men need the Bible to cause them to worship, for heathen lands are full of worshippers. But we do need the Bible to teach us whom to worship and how to worship; otherwise our worship is vain. Will worship is man-made worship, and is worthless.



## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The Samaritans.  
True religion.  
How to worship God today.  
The water of life.  
The Lord's visit to Sychar.

## QUESTIONS

Repeat the Golden Text, and give its meaning.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give probable date and time of year.  
Give the place.  
Give some important events connected with Shechem.  
Who were the persons of the lesson?  
Who were the Samaritans?  
What feelings existed between Jews and Samaritans?  
After the conversation with Nicodemus, where did Jesus go and what did he do?  
Did Jesus in person do the baptizing?  
Why did Jesus depart from Judea?  
At what point did he stop, and why?

*Verses 7-9*

Where had the disciples gone, and why?  
How did Jesus astonish the woman who came to draw water?  
As the disciples had gone into the city to buy food, how do you reconcile that fact with the statement that Jews have no dealings with Samaritans?

*Verses 10-15*

Discuss what ignorance does for people, and the different causes for ignorance.  
Why were the leaders who crucified Jesus ignorant?

What did Jesus say to the woman about living water?  
What did Jesus say to the thirsty?  
What sort of thirst was he talking about?  
What did the woman say that shows she was slow to learn?  
What did she think about the relative greatness of Jesus and Jacob?  
Discuss the need of spiritual drink and spiritual food.

*Verses 16-19*

How did Jesus proceed to make himself known to the woman as a prophet?

*Verses 20-26*

What did the woman seem to want Jesus to settle?  
Why did the Jews worship in Jerusalem?  
What part of the Old Testament did the Samaritans regard?  
What kinds of worship are not acceptable?  
What is true worship?  
Discuss each part of, true worship—in spirit and truth.  
What did the woman say about the Messiah?  
Where did she get her ideas about the Messiah?  
Discuss the items under the heading, "Some Reflections."

*Lesson IV—January 24, 1937*

## TWO MIRACLES OF MERCY

John 5: 2-9; 6: 8-15

2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porches.

3 In these lay a multitude of them that were sick, blind, halt, withered.

5 And a certain man was there, who had been thirty and eight years in his infirmity.

6 When Jesus saw him lying, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wouldest thou be made whole?

7 The sick man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Arise, take up thy bed, and walk.

9 And straightway the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked. Now it was the sabbath on that day.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, who hath five barley loaves, and two fishes: but what are these among so many?

10 Jesus said, Make the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 Jesus therefore took the loaves; and having given thanks, he distributed to them that were set down; likewise also of the fishes as much as they would.

12 And when they were filled, he saith unto his disciples, Gather up the broken pieces which remain over, that nothing be lost.

13 So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with broken pieces from the five barley loaves, which remained over unto them that had eaten.

14 When therefore the people saw the sign which he did, they said, This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world.

15 Jesus therefore perceiving that they were about to come and take him by force, to make him king, withdrew again into the mountain himself alone.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"The very works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." (John 5: 36.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Col. 1: 9-18.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

January 18.	M.	Christ Heals the Sick (John 5: 2-9)
January 19.	T.	Christ Feeds the Hungry (John 6: 8-15)
January 20.	W.	One with the Father (John 5: 19-29)
January 21.	T.	The Compassion of Jesus (Matt. 9: 32-38)
January 22.	F.	Heavenly Manna (John 6: 22-33)
January 23.	S.	The Spirit of Helpfulness (Matt. 25: 31-40)
January 24.	S.	God's Goodness (Psalm 146: 5-10)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—Probably A.D. 29 and 30. If we could determine what feast Jesus was attending when the man was healed at the pool of Bethesda, we could be reasonably sure as to the time of the first part of lesson. (See verse one.) It seems that most of the commentators and critics understand it to be the Passover, the second Passover of the public ministry of Jesus. Whether this feast was the Feast of the Passover, or the Feast of Pentecost, or the Feast of Tabernacles, the next Passover Feast would come the next year, that is, A.D. 30. As the Feast of the Passover was drawing nigh when Jesus fed the five thousand, that event came in A.D. 30—in the early spring of that year.

**Place.**—Jerusalem and a desert place on the northeast side of the Sea of Galilee. It was near a village called Bethsaida. There seems to have been two villages by that name—one on either side of the river Jordan. The feeding was done out in the open country, but near the Sea of Galilee. A desert place was an uninhabited place.

**Persons.**—Jesus, the helpless man, the disciples, and the five thousand. All we can know of the helpless man and the five thousand can be learned in the body of the lesson.

**Lesson Links.**—Our last lesson left Jesus at Jacob's well, near Sychar. The woman's report concerning Jesus brought many out from the city to see him. At their earnest invitation he spent two days in their midst, and many believed on him. Then he journeyed on into Galilee, where the people received him gladly. He soon visited Cana, where he had turned the water into wine. Here a nobleman came to him from the lower parts of Galilee to ask him to come and heal his son. Jesus said to him, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." Soon thereafter Jesus went up to Jerusalem to attend the feast mentioned in John 5: 1. The healing mentioned in the first part of our lesson was on the Sabbath. For healing on the Sabbath he was persecuted by the Jews, who became more bitter toward him when he claimed God as his Father. Jesus then returned to Capernaum.



John's record of this part of the ministry of Christ is very brief. Matthew, Mark, and Luke mentioned many events of this period, which are not mentioned by John. The feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle recorded by the four writers. (See Matt. 14: 13-21; Mark 6: 30-44; Luke 9: 10-17.) From Matthew we learn that John had recently been beheaded. The people were enraged at the murder. To get away from the multitude Jesus crossed to the east side of the Sea of Galilee.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### The Pool Called Bethesda (Verses 2, 3)

The sheep gate is supposed to have been a gate in the wall through which animals for sacrifice were brought into the city. By this gate was the pool Bethesda, the waters of which were regarded by the people as having healing power. Connected with it were five porches to shelter those who came to be healed. Many scholars consider the latter part of the third verse and the fourth verse as an interpolation. The American Standard Version leaves that portion out of the text, but has this note: "Many ancient authorities insert, wholly or in part, waiting for the moving of the water: for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole, with whatsoever disease he was holden." This seems to fit in with the story, and to give force and meaning to verse seven. Numbers of people thought the waters had healing power, and that belief itself would help those whose troubles were more or less imaginary. But it is possible that real cures were effected.

### A Miracle of Healing (Verses 5-9)

Among that group of afflicted people was one who had been in his infirmities thirty-eight years. On a Sabbath day Jesus went to that pool. He knew what he would find, and what he himself would do. This man had been so long practically helpless that people generally knew him, or knew of him. To heal him would be an outstanding miracle, a miracle that would be widely known. Perhaps for this reason Jesus singled him out for this miracle of mercy; for he healed people, not simply to relieve suffering, but to convince the people that he was sent of God. Had he been healing people merely to relieve suffering, he could have healed all the sick in the world. The man must have thought it strange for Jesus to ask him, "Wouldest thou be made whole?" He was there for that purpose. However, had Jesus cured him without saying anything, no one would have known whence the power came; not even the man himself would have known. The question would gain the attention of the man, and also the people. The man did not give a direct answer to the question, but merely stated his difficulties in seeking a cure. He was so afflicted that he could move but slowly, and he had no one to help him into the water. Always some one beat him to the water. Thirty-eight years he had suffered, and still had hopes. In determination and persistence he was no weakling. What is stated in the omitted verse four is implied in verse seven, namely, that the first to enter the pool after the water was troubled was cured. Whether the people were right or wrong in their belief about this pool is of no special im-



portance to us. The point of interest is this miracle of healing. In a very striking way it showed the power of Jesus over disease. Perhaps nothing else could have so astonished the helpless man as the command of Jesus: "Arise, take up thy bed, and walk." But strength came to him with the command; "and straightway the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked." And so his long desire for health was gratified in a way he had never dreamed of. But Jesus is able to save the sinner from a worse disease than that which afflicted this man, and does so when the sinner, like this man, promptly obeys the Lord's commands. He came to seek the lost, died to save sinners, and "became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation."

### Preparing to Feed the Multitude (John 6: 8-10)

The student should not fail to read the first seven verses of chapter six, and also the following parallel passages: Matt. 14: 13-21; Mark 6: 30-44; Luke 9: 10-17. From Matthew we learn that word had just reached Galilee that Herod had beheaded John the Baptist; from Mark and Luke we learn that the twelve apostles had just returned from their first preaching tour. They made their report to Jesus of what they had done and taught. "And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while." (Mark 6: 31.) In New Testament usage a desert was not what we now call a desert, but merely an uninhabited place. It was not a dry, waterless region, destitute of vegetation. The student will notice that Jesus and his disciples went to this desert place in a boat, and that there was much green grass in the place.

*The Multitude Follow.*—The Passover was at hand, and throngs of people from the northern part of Galilee were passing through Capernaum on their way to Jerusalem. Jesus and his disciples went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee to escape these crowds; "for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat." (Mark 6: 31.) These people wanted to see Jesus, and be cured of their ailments. When they saw Jesus and his disciples going to the other side of the sea in a boat, they went around on foot. They did not mean to let him slip from them. When Jesus saw them coming to him, he had compassion on them, and healed those who were sick and preached to them the kingdom of God.

*The Food Question.*—As the day drew toward the close, the disciples began to wonder how this vast multitude would be fed. Jesus said to Philip, "Whence are we to buy bread, that these may eat?" He was testing Philip, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip replied that two hundred shillings would not buy enough that each one might have a little. The disciples thought the multitude should be sent into the villages and country round about, so that they might buy food. But practical Andrew had a report to make: "There is a lad here, who hath five barley loaves, and two fishes: but what are these among so many?" This lad had an eye to business, for it is not likely that he brought five loaves for his own use. It might be interesting, if we could follow up the history of that youngster. Jesus commanded them to bring the loaves to him.

*An Orderly Arrangement.*—Jesus commanded his disciples to arrange the people in companies with about fifty in each company. This orderly arrangement prevented confusion, and made it easier



for the disciples to distribute the food. It seems to have been a quiet and orderly multitude, for they readily arranged themselves as requested, though the multitude numbered about five thousand, besides the women and children.

### The Multitude Fed—The Fragments Saved (Verses 11-13)

"Jesus therefore took the loaves; and having given thanks, he distributed to them that were set down; likewise also of the fishes as much as they would." All Christians should follow the example of Jesus, and give thanks before they eat. Once Jesus refused to make bread to satisfy his own hunger. At that time either or all three of the following reasons may have caused his refusal: (1) The devil had suggested that he make bread, and he was not minded to follow the devil's suggestions in anything; (2) he would not use his miraculous powers to satisfy his own hunger; (3) he was not seeking to convince the devil that he was the Son of God, and there was no one else present to be convinced. The circumstances were entirely different on this occasion. There was a hungry multitude, and they had come because of him. Here was a great opportunity to prove his power, and by that miracle to make these people his friends.

*Wastefulness Wrong.*—It appears that as the bread was broken into fragments, and also the fishes, the volume increased till all had food in plenty, and there were fragments of bread and fish left. Jesus was not willing to throw away good food, so he said to his disciples, "Gather up the broken pieces which remain over, that nothing be lost." This is a fine lesson against waste. To save is not stinginess; wastefulness is a sin. People are sometimes wasteful because they are too careless or lazy to be otherwise. But if Jesus did not want anything to be wasted, why did he make more than was needed? He wanted it to be apparent to every one that a great miracle had been wrought. Had every one eaten enough with nothing left over, the people might have thought it strange that all had enough when the supply was so meager, and thought no more about it; but when more was taken up than the original supply amounted to, every one knew that Jesus had wrought a great miracle.

### The Multitude Would Make Him King (Verses 14, 15)

This miracle stirred the people as no other miracle had. They decided that Jesus was the prophet foretold by Moses—their long-expected deliverer. The Roman yoke was galling to them, and they had just heard that John the Baptist had been beheaded. They were stirred to anger. Jesus seemed to be the ideal leader, for he could feed an army anywhere. The food problem was settled to begin with. They wanted to make him king by force of arms. Had Jesus been so minded he could have called for speeches, made one himself, and at once started with an army of five thousand men, which would have been swelled by other thousands in a short time. But that sort of war, and that sort of crown and kingdom, had no place in his plans. To allow this excitement to subside, he "withdrew again into the mountain himself alone."

## SOME REFLECTIONS

Jesus healed the sick and fed the hungry, but that was not the end and aim of his coming to the earth. He came to heal sin-sick souls, and to feed those who hunger for righteousness. But he does no forced feeding.

People think too much about their physical needs and desires. When the multitude, having been fed, returned to Capernaum seeking Jesus, he rebuked them for seeking him because they ate and were filled. He then exhorted them to labor for the food that endures to eternal life.

Nothing that Jesus said or did indicated that he came to be such a king as the Jews expected and desired, or that he ever would be such a king. He refused to be such a king. "My kingdom is not of this world," said he. It is a vain hope—this idea that Jesus will some day return to earth, and be such a king as the Jews had in mind.

Most of the miracles of Jesus were miracles of mercy and helpfulness. Such miracles served a twofold purpose; they showed that God was with him and that his mission was a mission of mercy and helpfulness.

Some have tried to prove affusion for baptism on the grounds that the place where Philip baptized the eunuch was desert. But desert in the Bible is not a barren waste, but an uninhabited place. Jesus went in a boat to the desert place where he fed the five thousand. And John says, "Now there was much grass in the place." So Jesus went in a boat to a desert place where there was much grass.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The Passover.

The mission of Christ a mission of mercy and helpfulness.

The enmity of the Pharisees toward Jesus.

The purpose of the miracles wrought by Jesus and inspired men.

The sin of wastefulness.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject of the lesson.

Repeat the Golden Text.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give the time.

How do you reason that the second part of our lesson was a year later than the first part?

Name the persons.

Where was Jesus in our last lesson?

What two things in the life of Christ occurred at Cana?

What one miracle is mentioned by the four writers?

What word had come about John the Baptist?

*Verses 2, 3*

Tell about the pool of Bethesda.

On what day did Jesus go to that pool?

Tell about the people's belief concerning the pool.

*Verses 5-9*

Tell about the afflicted man and his efforts to be cured.

Why should Jesus speak to him before healing him?

What did Jesus say to the man, and what was done?

What great thing can Jesus do for sinners?

Who receives these benefits?

*John 6: 8-10*

What report did the disciples make to Jesus?

What did he propose that they do?

In New Testament usage, what is a desert?

Why were so many coming and going at this time?

What did the multitudes do?

What shows that Jesus did not get to rest?

Tell about the conversation concerning the food question.

Who made a report, and what did he report?

How were the people arranged, and why?



## Verses 11-13

What first did Jesus do?  
 On what occasion had Jesus refused to  
 make bread, and why?  
 Why should he do so now?  
 How much food was left over?  
 Why should Jesus make more than was  
 needed?  
 Why should we be saving?

## Verses 14, 15

Who did the people think Jesus was?  
 What was unpleasant then in a lot of  
 the Jews?  
 Why did they want to make Jesus king  
 by force?

## Some Reflections

Discuss these.

## Lesson V—January 31, 1937

## THE FINANCIAL COST OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Prov. 21: 17; 23: 20, 21; Matt. 24: 45-51; John 6: 26, 27, 35

- 17 He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man:  
 He that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.
- 20 Be not among winebibbers,  
 Among gluttonous eaters of flesh:
- 21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty;  
 And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.

45 Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath set over his household, to give them their food in due season?

46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he hath.

48 But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord tarrieth;

49 And shall begin to beat his fellow-servants, and shall eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled.

27 Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him the Father, even God, hath sealed.

35 Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?” (Isa. 55: 2.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Prov. 23: 29-32.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

January 25.	M.	.....	The Unprofitable Servant (Matt. 24: 45-51)
January 26.	T.	.....	The Price of Intoxication (Hab. 2: 12-17)
January 27.	W.	.....	Belshazzar Sells His Kingdom (Dan. 5: 17-28)
January 28.	T.	.....	Defeat through Drunkenness (1 Kings 20: 1, 16-21)
January 29.	F.	.....	Alcohol and Race Degeneracy (Isa. 5: 22-24)
January 30.	S.	.....	Woe upon Excesses! (Isa. 5: 11-17)
January 31.	S.	.....	The Law of Recompense (Gal. 6: 1-10)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

Time.—Solomon began his reign 1014 B.C. and reigned forty years. Some time during that period he wrote his Proverbs. The selection from Matthew was spoken by Jesus during the week in which he was crucified, A.D. 30 or 31. The selection from John was spoken by the Lord A.D. 29 or 30. If Jesus, as seems probable, began his ministry

in the latter part of A.D. 27, then the next Passover he attended was in the spring of A.D. 28. (John 2: 23.) The next (John 5: 1) was A.D. 29 and the next (John 6: 4) A.D. 30, at which time Jesus spoke the words of John 6: 26, 27, 35.

*Places.*—Jerusalem and Capernaum. Solomon reigned in Jerusalem. Jesus was in Jerusalem when he spoke the words found in Matt. 24: 45-51. He was in Capernaum when he spoke the words of the selection from John.

*Persons.*—Solomon and Jesus. When Solomon became king, God granted him wisdom in answer to prayer, so that his "wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt." (1 Kings 4: 30; 1 Chron. 1: 7-12.) Jesus, being God manifested in the flesh, spoke with all the wisdom of heaven.

*Lesson Links.*—The part of the lesson found in John 6: 26, 27, 35 is closely connected with the feeding of the five thousand, which we studied in our last lesson; the other passages have no direct connection with any of the lessons so far studied. But the entire lesson does have close connection with the needs of the present time. From the days of Noah to the present time strong drink has been a moral and economic curse. As the people of this country have made the manufacture and sale of intoxicants legal, the only restraining influence now is moral suasion. We need to realize that strong drink promotes nothing that is worth while. Study the question, and teach others the evils of strong drink.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Strong Drink Impoverishes (Verse 17)

Solomon calls attention to two sources of poverty: (1) "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man." It is not good for any one to desire and struggle to be rich, for they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition." (1 Tim. 6: 9.) People usually give little heed to that warning. But the Christian must work to supply his own needs (2 Thess. 3: 7-12) so as to be able to live an honest life, and be able to help the needy. (Eph. 4: 28.) It is a sin, therefore, to bring ourselves into poverty in the pursuit of pleasure. Besides, to such a one, the ordinary pleasures of life soon grow stale. He then turns to seeking thrills, and this often leads to crimes of violence, or to strong drink, or to both; and that is not the road to a comfortable and happy life. He that devotes his life to the pursuit of pleasure will eventually become a burden to others, either as an object of charity or as a criminal. (2) Our text mentions this second source of poverty: "He that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich." Spending money for strong drink is a waste, for strong drink never added anything worth while to a man's life. Strong drink also lessens the earning power of the drinker. The drinker of intoxicants therefore wastes his money for that which makes him less capable to make more. The drink habit is a robber; it robs the drinker of his health, his money, his earning capacity, his friends, his own self-respect, and robs his family of food, clothing, peace, and happiness. The drinker, therefore, reaches the point where he is poor indeed, for he is rich in nothing.



### Three Great Sins (Prov. 23: 20, 21)

*Drunkenness.*—"Be not among winebibbers." Webster defines the winebibber as one who drinks to excess; but Solomon here uses the winebibber and the drunkard interchangeably. "Be not among winebibbers, . . . for the drunkard . . . shall come to poverty." Wine was then their strong drink; now the main source of drunkenness in this country is distilled liquors. The drunkard wastes his money for liquor, and in his drunken condition he wastes his money on other useless things. The liquor may bring prosperity to the maker and seller, but it brings poverty and moral wretchedness to the buyer. If there were no buyers, there would be no makers and sellers. If it were not for the moral weakness of drinkers, buying would cease; for the drunkard proves the folly of drinking. The liquor bill in the United States is enormous. During 1917, the last year before the prohibition amendment went into effect, the people in the United States drank 1,884,500,000 gallons of beer, 43,000,000 gallons of wine, 85,248,000 gallons of whisky.

*Gluttony.*—Gluttony is eating to excess. To keep well and active a person must eat, but that is no excuse for eating too much. To be a glutton is to be intemperate, for temperance is self-control. A person who exercises self-control abstains from hurtful things, and indulges moderately in the things that are good for him. The glutton eats for the sake of eating, with no care for the needs and limitations of his body. Apparently he lives to eat. His appetite is his master, driving him to eat food that he does not need. Such gormandizing is expensive, and destroys his health, thus making him poor in purse and poor in health. "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as a robber, and thy want as an armed man."

### The Lord Rewards According to Service (Matt. 24: 45-51)

Jesus had been telling his disciples of the calamities that were to come upon the Jews of Jerusalem and Judea. The charges Jesus made against them in Matt. 23: 13-38 show that they had about reached the full measure of corruption. Their corruption was soon to culminate in the murder of Jesus, and then an effort to destroy his church. But such national corruption comes only through individual corruption; and all reformation likewise must come through individual reformation. In the parable that we are now to study Jesus teaches personal responsibility—that every person must give account for his own conduct.

*The Faithful and Wise Servant.*—This servant evidently had shown some capability and honesty in some less responsible position; otherwise his master would not have set him over his household, "to give them their food in due season." His master had in view greater responsibilities for this servant, but he must first be tested in this smaller service. Besides, in this service he would receive training that would fit him for a greater work. When by honesty and industry he had proved himself worthy of a higher trust, his master set him over all he had—made him general manager of all his business affairs. And thus it is seen that this wise servant had a wise master. It is a mistake to elevate a man to a position of great responsibility before he has been trained and tested in a smaller service. Many



churches have made sad mistakes in failing to heed Paul's admonition in appointing elders—"not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil." In the church, as in business, people should be trained and tested before being elevated to positions of great responsibility. Many a person who might have been developed into a character of great usefulness has been spoiled by putting him into a position of great responsibility before he was sufficiently seasoned; and in his exaggerated idea of his own importance, he becomes a menace to the church. As the church is the most important body of people, its actions should be guided by the greatest wisdom. The Lord promises blessings upon the faithful and wise servant.

*The Evil Servant.*—"My lord tarrieth," said the evil servant, and then took advantage of the delay to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken. He was an unprincipled wretch. It is an inexcusable perversion of this parable to so explain it as to make it appear that this servant was evil because he thought his lord tarried his coming. He merely took advantage of the apparent delay to express the evil that was in his heart. It is not said that the other servant of the parable was faithful and wise because he expected his lord's return at any moment. But this evil servant was an evil man in a place of responsibility, and thought he had plenty of time to follow the dictates of his evil heart. He spent his time in abusing his fellow servants and in drinking and carousing, because that sort of conduct suited him. Had he been honest and sincere, as was the other servant in the parable, he would have faithfully discharged his duty, no matter how long he thought his master might delay his coming. The imagined delay had nothing to do with making him an evil servant. The faithful and wise servant lived a clean, sober life, and did his duty without being spurred to do so by the fear that his master might return at a time not expected. He was really faithful and wise, not merely cringing and fearful. With him, to be honest and faithful was a principle, and not mere policy. He was neither cruel at heart nor a drunkard. But the evil servant cared nothing for his master's interests; honesty and faithfulness had no place in his thinking. Cruelty to others is a vicious sin. Drinking and carousing utterly unfit one for any position of responsibility. Such conduct is not only sinful, but it is against one's own interests. This evil servant was unfit for useful service, and his master cut him off.

*The Application.*—The faithful servant of the Lord is moved by a conviction of personal responsibility to the Lord, and discharges his duty faithfully and wisely whether he thinks the Lord will come soon or late. The evil servant may think he can indulge in drunkenness and other crimes and reform before it is too late. The thought itself is sinful and degrading. The faithful servant of the Lord does what he can to help his fellow man. The thought of drinking and carousing is repulsive to him. He is master of his appetites and passions, and leads a clean life. The influence of such a man is worth much to any community.

### The Food and Drink That Satisfy (John 6: 26, 27, 35)

After feeding the five thousand, as related in last Sunday's lesson, Jesus returned to Capernaum. The next day the multitude returned to Capernaum seeking Jesus. When they found him, he reproved



them, saying, "Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled." But those people were not unlike people of today. Announce a great barbecue with other entertainments, and a great crowd will gather. Announce a great gospel feast, and most of that same crowd are not interested. We pamper the flesh and starve the spirit, and fail to realize that material things can never satisfy the longings of our never-dying souls. Of course, we must take care of the body, but that which dwells in the body is far more important, and our most earnest efforts should be directed toward its care and development. To emphasize this truth Jesus used a figure of speech that is not now used so much. This figure of speech consists in denying or prohibiting the less important so as to emphasize the more important. "Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you." Of course, Jesus was not prohibiting our working for food, for we must have food, and are commanded to work for it. (Eph. 4: 28; 1 Thess. 4: 11; 2 Thess. 3: 10-12.) We are to work to supply our own needs, and to have something to give to him who needs; and if a man will not work, he should not be allowed to eat. The Savior's thought is: Do not work mainly for the food that perishes, but rather for the food that abideth unto eternal life. But people frequently kill their bodies by strong drink and overeating, and in so doing starve their souls. Many take no spiritual food; others feed their souls on the worthless doctrines of men. But the only food that abides unto eternal life is that which the Lord gives. "I am the bread of life." We feast our souls on him by learning, loving, and obeying him. "He that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." He is both food and drink—food and drink that satisfy. In the language of our Golden Text, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" Not many things are more puzzling than for an intelligent person to be a drunkard—to deliberately spend his money for that which robs him of what sense he has. Would he deliberately choose to be an idiot? But a drunk man is more senseless than the half-wit. And unless the drunkard repents, he is as certain to be lost as that God has spoken to men.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

It is folly to say that drinking alcoholic liquors injures no one but him who drinks. Drinking is a grief to the drinker's friends, and a positive injury to his family.

Often the drinker says, "It is nobody's business what I do." But facts are against him. Does he think it would be nobody's business if he fired a machine gun in all directions on a crowded street? If he drives a car, what he does concerns everybody on the highway. The drunken driver is a possible murderer.

A man may not have taken enough alcohol to show in either his walk or his talk, and yet be a dangerous driver. A small amount puts a sort of don't-care spirit into a person, makes him less able to judge distances, and renders muscular reaction slower—all of which makes a dangerous driver. If you will drink, let the other fellow drive.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- How strong drink injures the drinker.  
 How strong drink does injure, and may injure, the innocent.  
 How strong drink causes economic loss.  
 What the Bible says about the destiny of the drunkard.

## QUESTIONS

Give subject of lesson.  
 Repeat the Golden Text.

*The Lesson Settings*

- Give approximate time of the writing of each section of our lesson.  
 Give places and persons.  
 What part of our lesson connects with another lesson?  
 Show how the lesson connects with the needs of the times.

*Verse 17*

- What sources of poverty does Solomon mention?  
 What are the dangers of struggling for riches?  
 Why must Christians work?  
 What evils come from seeking pleasures?  
 How does strong drink bring poverty?

*Prov. 23: 20, 21*

- What is a winebibber?  
 To whom does strong drink bring prosperity?  
 What figures can you give on the amount of liquors drunk?  
 Give the latest available figures.  
 What is gluttony?  
 What is temperance?  
 Name some evils of gluttony.

*Matt. 24: 45-51*

- Give some of the calamities that were to come upon the Jews, as told in Matt. 24.  
 Why were these calamities coming upon them?  
 How does national corruption come?  
 What is said of the faithful and wise servant?  
 Why did his lord promote him?  
 What did the evil servant do, and why?  
 Did the thought of his lord's delay make him evil?  
 How does this parable apply to us today?

*John 6: 26, 27, 35*

- What incidents led to this lesson?  
 What did Jesus say to the multitude?  
 Show how people are not different today.  
 What should we be most concerned about?  
 How did Jesus emphasize this truth?  
 What shows that he did not prohibit work?  
 What did the Lord say of himself?  
 How do we eat this bread?  
 Can you figure out why an intelligent man becomes a drunkard?

*Some Reflections*

Discuss these reflections.

*Lesson VI—February 7, 1937*

## JESUS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

John 8: 12, 31, 32; 9: 1-11

12 Again therefore Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.

31 Jesus therefore said to those Jews that had believed him, If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples:

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

- 1 And as he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth.
- 2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?
- 3 Jesus answered, Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.
- 4 We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.
- 5 When I am in the world, I am the light of the world.
- 6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed his eyes with the clay,
- 7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went away therefore, and washed, and came seeing.



8 The neighbors therefore, and they that saw him aforetime, that he was a beggar, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

9 Others said, It is he: others said, No, but he is like him. He said, I am he.

10 They said therefore unto him, How then were thine eyes opened?

11 He answered, The man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to Siloam, and wash: so I went away and washed, and I received sight.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8: 12.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 27: 1-6.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

February 1.	M.	.....	A Blind Man Healed (John 9: 1-11)
February 2.	T.	.....	The Healed Man's Testimony (John 9: 24-38)
February 3.	W.	.....	The Spiritually Blind (Eph. 4: 17-24)
February 4.	T.	.....	The Light of the World (John 3: 17-21)
February 5.	F.	.....	Receive the Light (John 12: 32-36)
February 6.	S.	.....	Walking in the Light (1 John 1: 5-10)
February 7.	S.	.....	Children of Light (1 Thess. 5: 5-11)

### THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—According to Usher, A.D. 29; according to Hales, A.D. 30. From 1809 to 1814 William Hales, D.D., published in three volumes a "New Analysis of Chronology," which is said to be far superior in learning and elaboration to either Usher or Calmet. From facts presented in former lessons, it would seem that Hales is correct. The events of our lesson occurred at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, which began on the fifteenth day of Tisri. Tisri answers to the moon of September.

**Place.**—Jerusalem.

**Persons.**—Jesus, the blind man, and those who knew the blind man. The remaining part of the chapter shows that the Pharisees became active in trying to counteract the influence of the miracle, and in seeking to make out a case against Jesus for curing a blind man on the Sabbath.

**Lesson Links.**—There is no close historic connection between this lesson and our last lesson. Matthew, Mark, and Luke record many things that occurred during this period, but John records very few. But as we are studying the book of John, and not a harmony of the gospels, it is perhaps best that we notice only those things recorded by John. After the discourse, from which the last section of our last lesson was taken, Jesus went up to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, and began to teach in the temple. The Pharisees were still enraged at him, partly because he had healed a man on the Sabbath day during his last visit to Jerusalem. The Sanhedrin sent officers to take him; but they did not, and gave as their excuse for failing to bring him to court, "Never man so spake." What he taught then is recorded in chapters seven and eight.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### How to Have the Light of Life (Verse 12)

Jesus was teaching in the temple. Apparently the scribes and Pharisees interrupted his speech by bringing before him the woman charged with adultery. When that case was disposed of, as related

in verses 3-11, he resumed his speech with this startling statement: "I am the light of the world." As the sun is the source of light for our material world, so Christ is the source of light for our moral and spiritual world. Christ came to banish the darkness of sin and ignorance. But some, preferring darkness, reject his light. "Men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reproved. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God." (John 3: 19-21.) Jesus calls us out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Pet. 2: 9), and says to us, "He that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." To follow Christ is to follow his example and his teaching. The only light we have from him comes to us through his gospel, and the gospel gives light only to those who learn it. Thick darkness enshrouds those who are ignorant of the gospel. We cannot have fellowship with Christ, or with his followers, if we walk in darkness. "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1: 6, 7.) "Come ye, and let us walk in the light of Jehovah." (Isa. 2: 5.) People today are groping in darkness, longing for light, and know not where to find it. Jesus came into the world to give light to all men. (John 1: 9.)

### Truth Makes Us Free (Verses 31, 32)

By the term Jews John generally, if not always, means the officers. While the majority of the officers were bitter enemies of Christ, some of them believed on him. Whether any of the Sanhedrin but Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea believed on him we are not told. To those who believed on him, Jesus said, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples." To be truly a disciple of Christ requires more than just to believe; it requires that the believer abide in the word of Christ. And to abide in his word is to continue to learn and to do what he says, and not to go beyond its limits. "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.) To these Jews Jesus points out the way to be free.

*What Is Freedom?*—People long for freedom, but know little of what it is; neither do they know how to obtain it. An illustration or two may help us to see what real freedom is. A machine runs free when every part performs as its designer and maker intended that it should. A living thing is free when it moves unhampered in the element in which God intended it to live. A fish in the water, not in a net or otherwise confined, is free; for there is where God intended it to live. Out of its element it is not free. Contrary to speculative theology, man's natural element is righteousness. That is the element in which he was intended to live, and in which he was originally placed. He is not free anywhere else, any more than a fish is free on dry land. By sin man brings himself into bondage. "Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Every one that com-



mitteth sin is the bondservant of sin." (John 8: 34.) While living in sin, men are under the most servile slavery, from which there is only one way of escape. "But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness." (Rom. 6: 17, 18.) Obedience to the truth is the Lord's way of making us free from the bondage of sin. "If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (Verse 36.) But Jesus forces freedom on no one.

### A Man Born Blind (John 9: 1-3)

To those present it seemed mere chance that brought Jesus into contact with the man who had been born blind, but evidently Jesus knew where the blind man was and what he himself would do. From verse eight we learn that the blind man was a beggar. It is impossible for those who have good eyes to realize how dark the world is to one who has never seen anything; neither can such a one imagine how things appear to those who can see.

*The Disciples' Question.*—"Rabbi, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" They seemed to share the idea that all human sufferings come upon people because of their own sins or the sins of their parents. In many cases that is true; but the sufferings of infants, of Jesus, of the martyrs, and of irresponsible people prove that it is not always true. When Adam and Eve sinned, they were driven out of the garden and away from the tree of life, and suffering has been the common lot of humanity ever since. But the disciples asked a peculiar question. One wonders how they thought the man might have sinned before he was born so as to be born blind as a result of that sin. There was, and yet is, the doctrine of the transmigration of spirits—the notion that when a man dies his spirit enters into another person at birth, and that, if the former had sinned, afflictions as punishment were visited upon the latter. That doctrine was prominent in India and Egypt. Their question does not prove that the disciples held to that doctrine; but they likely had heard of it, and desired to learn whether it were true. If that was not in their mind, they asked a loose and thoughtless question; for they certainly knew that an unborn child had not sinned so as to cause himself to be born blind. Jesus made no comment on the peculiarity of their question; but simply stated that this man's blindness had not been caused by his own sins or the sins of his parents. Jesus did not mean that his parents had never sinned, but that their sins had not caused their son's blindness. This blindness, like the ailments of many others, gave opportunity for the works of God to be made manifest. All these various cures and healings proved the benevolence of the mission of Christ and the presence of God with him.

### Work While It Is Day (Verses 4, 5)

"We must work the works of him that sent me." The we includes you and me. It is not enough that we work; we must do the works of God. God's works are the works he authorizes. God had sent Jesus to accomplish certain works. His enemies were seeking an occasion against him. The Pharisees, who forbade any healings on the Sabbath, were watching him; and if Jesus gave sight to this



blind man, he would break their traditions, for that day was the Sabbath. (Verse 14.) God had sent him to do a work, and he must do it while it was called day. Day here represents life; darkness represents death. The earth life of Jesus was rapidly drawing to its end; before the end came, he must finish the work which God had given him to do. This should remind us that we, too, must be busy in the Lord's work while life's short day lasts; for our work will cease when the night of death closes in on us.

*Jesus the Light of the World.*—"I am the light of the world." Many times this truth is set forth in the book of John. Light dispels darkness, and enables people to see how to move about. In darkness we grope our way, bump into things, and stumble over lesser objects, and may fall into the ditch or pit. The moral and spiritual life is like that. We experience many hurts, and bump into many disagreeable things, when we fail to walk in the way lighted up by Jesus, the light of the world. To those who have not this light, or refuse to walk in it, life's way is dark, and the end even darker. Our moral and spiritual sight is usually so dimmed by ignorance, selfishness, prejudice, and other sins that we see but dimly even when we make some effort to walk in the light.

### Jesus Opens the Eyes of the Blind Man (Verses 6, 7)

Every one present knew that the clay which Jesus put on the blind man's eyes had in it no power to restore sight, and yet that seemingly useless act would serve to attract attention. Sight was to be given to the blind man, not merely for his sake, but that the works of God might be made manifest. It was to prove that God was with Jesus. Anointing the eyes with clay would start talk, and focus attention on Jesus and the blind man. The purpose of the anointing must have been a mystery to the blind man; for if Jesus told him why he was doing it, the record does not tell. Neither does it appear that Jesus told him why he was being sent to wash in the pool of Siloam. The whole performance would be as mysterious to the people as to the blind man. It was a test of the man's willingness to render unquestioning obedience. To go and wash without any promise of results was a severe test, but obediently the blind man made his way to the pool and washed, and came away seeing. He who had never seen anything now saw clearly. That a man born blind should be suddenly enabled to see was such an unheard-of thing that the miracle was bound to attract much attention.

### Doubts and Questionings (Verses 8-11)

When the blind man, now able to see, returned from Siloam, his neighbors and those who knew him began questioning among themselves. Some were in doubt as to whether he was the blind beggar; others were positive that it was he; others thought he was some one who was like the beggar. The blind man said, "I am he." But that brought forward another question: "How then were thine eyes opened?" In his great joy at receiving his sight, the beggar had not calmed down sufficiently to think clearly about the matter. He knew that "the man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to Siloam, and wash: so I went away and washed, and I received sight." It is interesting to note how this



man's faith advanced along as he had time to think. At the first he referred to Jesus as "the man that is called Jesus." When his controversy with the Jewish officials began, he said of Jesus, "He is a prophet." But even so, he did not know whether or not he was a sinner. (Verse 25.) Farther on in the controversy he said, "We know that God heareth not sinners." (Verse 31.) But a moment later he said, "If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." After this controversy was over and Jesus had again met the man, and identified himself to the man as the Son of God, he said, "Lord, I believe." But he would not have known who Jesus was if Jesus had not told him. The miracle prepared him to listen favorably; the words of Jesus produced the faith.

## SOME REFLECTIONS

The traditions of the elders, to which the Pharisees were so devoted, were nothing more than the commandments of men which had been added to the law. These traditions allowed no effort at healing on the Sabbath. Jesus had no respect for these traditions of men, and healed on the Sabbath, as on any other day.

With some religionists of today custom and tradition have greater weight than the plain word of God. Assail baptism, a thing positively commanded, and they applaud; assail their unscriptural teachings and practices, and they become greatly offended. Some churches of Christ have had troubles over customs and traditions.

God has always tested man's willingness to do his will. To be a real test the thing commanded must be such that the person can see no connection between the thing commanded and the result to be obtained. Examples: The brazen serpent (Num. 21: 4-9); Naaman's dipping in the Jordan (2 Kings 5: 1-19); and the case in our lesson. Baptism is such a test.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Why the Pharisees bitterly opposed Jesus.

The traditions of the elders.

How religious customs now influence us.

How ignorance, prejudice, and selfishness blind people.

## QUESTIONS

Name the subject of our lesson.  
Repeat the Golden Text.

### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time.

Give place and persons.

Give the events between this lesson and the last, as recorded by John.

### *Verse 12*

Where was Jesus teaching?

How was his speech interrupted?

Repeat verse 12.

Why do some people prefer darkness?

What is said of the one who does the truth?

How does light come to us from the Lord?

By walking in the light, we have fellowship with whom?

### *Verses 31, 32*

Who of the Sanhedrin are known to have believed in Jesus?

How may we be true disciples?

How do we abide in his word?

What does John say about going beyond the word?

What is freedom? Illustrate.

How do we become bond servants of sin?

How gain freedom from sin?

### *John 9: 1-3*

What information is given about the blind man?

What question did the disciples ask?

What seems strange about that question?  
What answer did Jesus give them?

### Verses 4, 5

What are the works of God?  
Why did the Pharisees object to healings on the Sabbath?  
What did Jesus mean by working while it is day?  
Who is the light of the world?  
Why do we need the light of Jesus?

### Verses 6, 7

How did Jesus go about opening the eyes of the blind man?

How was the matter a test of the blind man's willingness to do as told?

### Verses 8-11

What dispute, or questioning, was there among the people?  
What expressions show that the man's faith grew along as he had time to think on the matter?  
How did he know who Jesus was?

### Some Reflections

Discuss these reflections.

Lesson VII—February 14, 1937

## JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10: 1-16

- 1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.
- 2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.
- 3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.
- 4 When he hath put forth all his own, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.
- 5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.
- 6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.
- 7 Jesus therefore said unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.
- 8 All that came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.
- 9 I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture.
- 10 The thief cometh not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy: I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.
- 11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.
- 12 He that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them, and scattereth them:
- 13 He fleeth because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep.
- 14 I am the good shepherd; and I know mine own, and mine own know me,
- 15 Even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.
- 16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep."* (John 10: 11.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ezek. 34: 11-16.

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

February 8.	M.	Our Divine Shepherd (Psalm 23: 1-6)
February 9.	T.	The Good Shepherd's Care (John 10: 1-10)
February 10.	W.	Good Pasture (Ezek. 34: 11-16)
February 11.	T.	False Shepherds (Ezek. 34: 1-6)
February 12.	F.	The Law of Sacrifice (John 10: 11-15)
February 13.	S.	The Joy of Finding (Luke 15: 3-10)
February 14.	S.	The Heavenly Fold (Rev. 7: 9-17)



## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—The same time as our last lesson, A.D. 29 or 30. It seems that the speech which we study in this lesson was delivered soon after sight was given to the blind beggar.

*Place.*—Jerusalem.

*Persons.*—Jesus and the Jews, as is shown by what is said in verses 19-21. These Jews were the official class in Jerusalem. Again there was a division among them. Perhaps again Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea took his part.

*Lesson Links.*—After Jesus gave sight to the blind man, as told in our last lesson, some busybodies brought the man to the Pharisees. They thought the matter of sufficient importance to require an investigation. Because the man contended that the man called Jesus was a prophet of God, and not, as they said, a sinner, they cast him out. When Jesus heard that they had cast the man out, he found him, and said to him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" He answered, "And who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him?" Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and he it is that speaketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe."

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## The Parable of the Good Shepherd (Verses 1-6)

In Palestine many sheep were grazed in the open country and in the fields. For protection against animals, thieves, and robbers they were kept overnight in a sheepfold, an uncovered enclosure in the open country, large enough to accommodate all the sheep that might be near enough to be led to it as night approached. At the gate an armed porter stood guard to keep out animals and all persons who had no business inside. His responsibility was great; and a coward would have been worthless. He had to remain wide-awake and alert, lest robbers pounce on him unawares, or sneak thieves or animals succeed in getting over the walls. Thieves had no credentials to prove they had a right to any of the sheep inside the fold, and therefore they could not enter by the door. If they got any sheep, they had to climb up some other way. The good shepherd entered by the door, for it was the porter's duty to open the door to the true shepherd of the sheep. The sheep knew the voice of their own shepherd, and readily answered his call, and would answer the call of no one else. People in those days and in that country gave their sheep names, as we give names to our horses and cows; and each sheep answered to his own name, and followed the shepherd; but would not answer the voice of a stranger. In that country the shepherd led his sheep; in this country sheep are driven. Verse six shows that the things said in the first five verses constitute one complete parable.

*The Application of This Parable.*—In studying a parable there is danger that we try to make it mean more than Jesus intended it to mean. A parable is a figure of speech, and any figure of speech can be pressed too far. Each parable presents a distinct lesson, and we become confused when we try to mix the facts of two, or more, parables. In verses 1-5 Jesus presents one parable. He begins it in a most solemn way—"Verily, verily," or most assuredly.



*The Thieves and Robbers.*—The thieves and robbers do not represent those who through false pretense gain fellowship in churches. Such people come in apparently in the regular way, under pretense of being sheep, that is, followers of Christ. Thieves and robbers did not come claiming to be sheep, but to take the sheep from their shepherd. The Pharisees were thieves and robbers, for they had just tried to take from following Jesus the man whose eyes he had opened. For selfish ends they wanted him to follow them. There are such characters today. These Pharisees had no credentials to prove their right to be leaders. Any man today who seeks to gain followers for his own selfish ends is a thief and a robber, for he steals men's souls, and robs them of salvation here and hereafter.

*The Sheepfold and the Porter.*—The sheepfold suggests protection and security. Many think the sheepfold represents the church, but that involves difficulties. It cannot be, as some think, that John the Baptist was the porter. Certainly John the Baptist does not stand guard at the door of the church. It is more likely that the sheepfold and the porter were mentioned to complete the figure, for it is evident that the point of emphasis in the parable is the shepherd, and his care for his sheep. The sheepfold, guarded by an armed porter, was a method then employed to care for the sheep.

*The Shepherd and the Sheep.*—We need not expect each point in a parable to have some exact counterpart in the church, or in Christianity. In this parable Jesus is the shepherd, and his followers are the sheep. And he cares for his sheep as tenderly as the ancient shepherd cared for his; but he does not have to resort to the same means that shepherds then employed. It is interesting to note how carefully the shepherd then looked after his sheep, and also their disposition to follow absolutely his guidance. It illustrates the close relationship that exists between Christ and his followers. He is the true shepherd; he knows his own, and they trust his guidance. His sheep, his followers, hear his voice, and follow him. Jesus does not drive his sheep; he leads them. He goes before, and they follow him in unquestioning obedience. The true disciple of Jesus does not try to go his own way. He knows that it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps. Neither will he follow the voice of the stranger. If Jesus is really your shepherd, if you really belong to him, then any many who seeks to lead you his way is to you a stranger, and you will not follow him. Here is where we need acquaintance with Jesus and his teaching, so that when we hear any false idea advanced we know that it is not true, even though we have no certain passage of scripture in our mind. It is true also that some members of the church are ready to follow the preacher whom they admire. The true disciple follows no man, for he knows the voice of his shepherd, and therefore he also knows the voice of the stranger. In Palestine a man put on the shepherd's clothing to see if he could fool the sheep, but the familiar voice was lacking, and they would not follow. Appearance did not deceive the sheep. True disciples are not deceived by appearance; they walk by faith, and not by appearance. They recognize no leadership, save the Lord Jesus Christ.

*The Jews Did Not Understand.*—"They understood not what things they were which he spake unto them." They could easily understand the words he used and the facts he presented. The whole business



of the shepherd with his sheep was familiar to them. Hence, the literal import of his words was plain enough; but they had no idea as to what his little parable meant. As they did not grasp his meaning, they could not use what he said to make trouble for him.

### Jesus the Door (Verses 7-9)

"Jesus therefore said unto them again," that is, he said what follows because they did not understand his parable of the shepherd and the sheep. "I am the door of the sheep." It should not be thought a strange thing that Jesus is both the door of the sheep and the shepherd of the sheep, for his relations to us are as many-sided as our needs. Various descriptive names and titles are applied to these various relations. In verse nine he says, "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Through him, and through him alone, may we enter into God's favor and protection, and thus into salvation from sin. The truth that in Christ alone may we enter into salvation is stated in various words in many passages of the New Testament. To these same persecuting Jews to whom Jesus was talking, Peter later said, "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." (Acts 4: 12.) Jesus himself said, "No one cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14: 6.) "Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand." (Rom. 5: 1, 2.) It is through Christ that we have peace with God—through him we have access to the favor of God. The expression, "shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture," does not mean that one must go out of Christ to find pasture, or spiritual food, for there are no blessings out of Christ. An important truth is so worded to keep the picture true to Oriental life, and it illustrates the abundance of spiritual food that our good shepherd provides for his followers.

*A Difficulty.*—Verse eight presents a difficulty. It cannot be that Jesus meant that all the people, nor even all the prophets, who lived before he came into the world were thieves and robbers. Nor does it seem that he referred to false Christs; for if any had appeared before Jesus came into the world we have no account of them. What then did he mean? The word before, both in the Greek and the English, sometimes has the sense of superiority or pre-eminence. The Jews who constantly antagonized Jesus put themselves forward before him; they assumed to be his superiors. They thrust themselves before him in every possible way, and on all occasions, when he was seeking to render real service to the people. Jesus must have referred to the leaders then living, to those who selfishly put themselves forward as the shepherds of Israel, for he used the present tense—"are thieves and robbers." While none of these Jewish rulers claimed to be the Messiah, they did put themselves forward as the true leaders and guides, the real shepherds of Israel, but they cared not for the sheep. Of them Jesus said, "Yea, they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger." (Matt. 23: 4.) They were not true shepherds, for their interest in the people was a selfish interest. As such, they were thieves and robbers, for they conducted affairs for their own profit. Any religious leader now who



looks to his own interests instead of the good of the people is a thief and a robber. But the true servant of God, who is rooted and grounded in the faith, is never led astray by these thieves and robbers who parade themselves as leaders and guides.

### The Good Shepherd in Contrast with Thieves and Robbers (Verses 10-15)

The thief seeks to appropriate other people's property to his own use. He comes to steal, to kill, and to destroy. The religious thieves, such thieves as Jesus was talking about, must show great interest in the people in order to succeed. The more completely the religious thief gains the confidence and good will of the people, the more completely he can rob them of their cash for himself and their souls for his master, the devil. Jesus the good shepherd came to give his own life that he might give life to others. All religious leaders must imitate him in unselfish devotion to the good of others; otherwise they are mere thieves, seeking their own profit. In verses 2-5 Jesus gives us the characteristics of the good shepherd; now he tells us who the good shepherd is. "I am the good shepherd." He is the door into God's favor and the shepherd over God's people. The thief takes the life of the sheep; the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. The good shepherd would defend his sheep even unto death. The hireling was not much better than the thief. He would not steal the sheep and kill them; but when danger came, being interested only in his wages, he would leave the sheep to the wolf, rather than to endanger his own life. But if a man were paid wages to care for a flock, he would not be considered a mere hireling so long as he recognized his responsibility, and did what he could for the welfare and protection of the flock. But the hireling "careth not for the sheep." The good shepherd knows his own sheep, and they know him. They know him by his voice. Jesus our shepherd speaks to us through his revealed will, as recorded in the New Testament. In it his voice is heard, and in nothing else. The true disciple knows his teaching, and recognizes his authority, and therefore will not follow a stranger. But ignorance on the part of the people is the greatest asset the false teacher has; it is his capital and the source of his profit. Through Isaiah the Lord said to his people of old, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." (Isa. 1: 3.) The Lord was not here speaking of ignorant heathens, but of his own people Israel.

### One Flock—One Shepherd (Verse 16)

The other sheep were those who among the Gentiles would obey the gospel. God sometimes speaks of things that are not as though they were. (Rom. 4: 17.) He so speaks because of the certainty of the things mentioned. The honest-hearted Gentiles were his in prospect; they would become his in reality when the gospel call was extended to them. See also Acts 18: 8, 9.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Peter speaks of Jesus as the chief Shepherd. (1 Pet. 5: 4.) Elders are under shepherds; as such, they are exhorted to feed the flock. (Acts 20: 28.) They should imitate the chief Shepherd in earnest



and watchful care for the church, for they must give account to God. (Heb. 13: 17.)

The task of the elder is great; and every elder, worthy of the name, feels his responsibility. The true Christian realizes this, and will do what he can to make the work of elders easier. To that end he will obey the elders. No trouble arises where all members and elders do their duty.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The Palestine shepherd and his flock.

Christ the chief Shepherd.

Elders as under shepherds.

In the church who can now be called a hireling?

The one flock.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject of the lesson.  
Repeat the Golden Text.

### *The Lesson Settings*

Give time and place.

Name persons.

What class were the greatest enemies of Jesus?

How came the authorities to take notice of the giving of sight to the blind man?

Why did they cast the blind man out?

Relate what occurred when the Lord again met him.

### *Verses 1-6*

Tell about the manner of caring for sheep in ancient Palestine.

What was the porter's business?

How did the shepherd manage his sheep?

How did the sheep know their shepherd?

What danger is there in studying a parable?

Why do not the thieves and robbers represent people who become members of churches by pretense?

In what sense were the Pharisees thieves and robbers?

Who today are like these thieves and robbers?

Who is the shepherd, and who are the sheep?

What of the close relationship between the shepherd and his sheep?

Why do we need to be acquainted with Jesus and his teaching?

Why will the true disciple not follow a man?

What was it the Jews did not understand?

### *Verses 7-9*

In what sense is Jesus the door?

Show that only through him may we be saved.

Who were the thieves and robbers of verse 8?

In what way were they thieves and robbers?

### *Verses 10-15*

How do such thieves as Jesus mentioned succeed in stealing people away?

How far would the good shepherd go in protecting his sheep?

Who is the good shepherd?

What is said of the hireling?

Who in religion would be regarded as such a hireling?

What is the greatest asset of the false teacher?

Repeat what the Lord said through Isaiah about his people.

### *Verse 16*

Who were the other sheep?

In what sense were they the Lord's sheep?

### *Some Reflections*

Discuss these reflections.

Lesson VIII—February 21, 1937

## THE POWER OF JESUS OVER DEATH

John 11: 23-28, 32-44

- 23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.  
 24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.  
 25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live;  
 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?  
 27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I have believed that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, even he that cometh into the world.  
 28 And when she had said this, she went away, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Teacher is here, and calleth thee.  
 32 Mary therefore, when she came where Jesus was, and saw him, fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.  
 33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping who came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,  
 34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see.  
 35 Jesus wept.  
 36 The Jews therefore said, Behold how he loved him!  
 37 But some of them said, Could not this man, who opened the eyes of him that was blind, have caused that this man also should not die?  
 38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it.  
 39 Jesus saith, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time the body decayeth; for he hath been dead four days.  
 40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou believedst, thou shouldst see the glory of God?  
 41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me.  
 42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the multitude that standeth around I said it, that they may believe that thou didst send me.  
 43 And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.  
 44 He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"I am the resurrection, and the life."* (John 11: 25.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Job 14: 13-15; 19: 23-27.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

- February 15. M.-----The Resurrection and the Life (John 11: 17-28)  
 February 16. T.-----The Raising of Lazarus (John 11: 32-44)  
 February 17. W.-----Testimony of Witnesses (John 12: 12-19)  
 February 18. T.-----The Resurrection of Christ (Matt. 28: 1-10)  
 February 19. F.-----Our Resurrection Assurance (1 Cor. 15: 19-26)  
 February 20. S.-----Triumphant over Death (1 Cor. 15: 50-58)  
 February 21. S.-----The Price of Redemption (Isa. 53: 1-6)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Probably the early part of A.D. 30 or 31. The speech recorded in chapter ten, a part of which we studied in our last lesson, was delivered in Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication. (Verse 22.) That feast came on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month of their sacred year, that is, the twenty-fifth day after the new moon of our November. It might therefore come during the last week of our November, or during the first three weeks of December. After this feast Jesus spent some time beyond the Jordan before he returned to Judea to raise Lazarus from the dead. This must have been early in the new year, perhaps in January or February.



*Place.*—Bethany. "Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off." It was located on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, near the road leading from Jerusalem to Jericho. It was the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, the devoted friends of Jesus; and in this home Jesus was often a guest during his visits to Jerusalem. Because of these facts, Bethany has an undying place in the literature and the hearts of Christians. But it is now a miserable village of about twenty poverty-stricken families.

*Persons.*—Jesus, his disciples, Martha, Mary, Lazarus, and the Jews. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus—two sisters and a brother. It appears that the house in which they lived belonged to Martha. (Luke 10: 38-42.) For that reason Martha naturally took the lead in that home, as is seen in the reference in Luke. Again we find Martha taking the lead in a feast made for Jesus at Bethany. (John 12: 1-8.) The Jews of our lesson were leaders in Jerusalem, who were acquainted with Martha and Mary and had come out to comfort them.

*Lesson Links.*—After the speech of our last lesson, and because of the increasing hostility of the Jews in Jerusalem, Jesus, with his disciples, left Jerusalem, "and he went away again beyond the Jordan into the place where John was at the first baptizing; and there he abode." (John 10: 40.) While there a messenger came from Martha and Mary, bearing the message, "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." Evidently they thought this simple announcement would bring the Lord, and that he would heal their sick brother; but Jesus, having his own plans about the matter, remained two days where he was. Then, knowing that Lazarus had died, he announced to his disciples that he was going back to Judea. They protested, saying, "Rabbi, the Jews were but now seeking to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?" Then Thomas, believing that the Jews would certainly kill Jesus, said to the others, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." When he neared Bethany, Martha, having learned of his approach, met him outside the village, and said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." It had not occurred to her that the Lord could have healed Lazarus without being present; but there is faith and hope in these words: "And even now I know that, whatsoever thou shalt ask of God, God will give thee."

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Jesus the Resurrection and the Life (Verses 23-28)

Jesus assured Martha that Lazarus would rise again, though she did not grasp the idea that Jesus would raise Lazarus at that time. She knew that he would rise, together with all the dead, at the last day. This she had learned from such passages as Dan. 12: 2 that the dead would be raised. It is likely that Jesus had taught her more about the resurrection at the last day than she had learned from the scriptures. In saying that he was the resurrection, Jesus was using a figure of speech in which the cause is put for the effect. Jesus is the one who raises the dead—he causes the resurrection. In a similar sense he is the life—all life comes from him. Life inheres in him, and our life is derived from him. "He that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live." This statement was made about the believer; nothing is here said about the unbeliever. But the unbeliever's resurrection is definitely assured in other passages. "The hour



cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." There is a sense in which the believer never dies. He dies, and yet he does not die. "Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?" That is not the doctrine of materialism. The body dies; the spirit lives on. To the question, "Believest thou this?" Martha answered, "Yea, Lord." She also expressed her faith in him as the Christ, the Son of God, "even he that cometh into the world." And so, in a seemingly incidental way, two fundamental gospel truths are stated, namely, that the spirit of the true believer never dies, and that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus sent Martha back to Mary with the message, "The Teacher is here, and calleth thee." This message she delivered to Mary secretly, so that Mary might slip away from the throng of mourners and have a private talk with Jesus. Jesus had not yet entered into the village.

### Jesus Wept (Verses 32-35)

When Mary came to Jesus, she fell at his feet, weeping; it is not said that Martha did either. Mary did not weep silently; the marginal reading says the Greek word means wailing. It may be that Martha was as emotional as Mary, but more restrained. Some people are more expressive of their grief, or of any other emotional state, than others. The silent sufferer may suffer most. Mary made the same statement Martha had made: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Likely they had frequently made this statement to one another, and to others, during the four days since Lazarus died. And they had wondered why the Lord had not come when they sent for him and averted this tragedy. The Jews who followed Mary were not weeping silently, but were wailing, as the marginal reading shows. If these were professional mourners, their wailing was mere pretense. Likely they—some of them—were professional mourners, and were wailing after the fashion of such pretenders. Because of all this wailing, Jesus "groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." For "groaned in the spirit" the marginal reading has, "was moved with indignation in the spirit." The marginal reading seems better, for "groaned in the spirit" does not convey any clear meaning. There was a cause for indignation on the part of Jesus. These Jews who were wailing, as if in deep sorrow at the death of Lazarus, were of the ruling class in Jerusalem, for such is John's use of the term Jews. Jesus knew that this same class would soon be plotting to put Lazarus to death so as to destroy a living witness of the power of Jesus over death. (See John 12: 9-11.) Such hypocritical pretense stirred Jesus to indignation. He was also troubled because of the sorrowing of his friends, and because of the evil hearts of the Jews. To stop their wailing by getting them interested in doing something, Jesus said, "Where have ye laid him?" His friends in the crowd said, "Lord, come and see." His enemies would not have addressed him as Lord. Then follows the shortest verse in the Bible: "Jesus wept." He wept silently, for so the word in the original indicates. This is about the only verse in the Bible that some church members can repeat, and all they see in it is the bare fact that Jesus wept; the significance of that weeping escapes them. The sufferings and sorrows of others touched the heart of Jesus. Sin, with its consequent



suffering, also caused him to weep. About a week before his crucifixion, as he came in sight of the city of Jerusalem, he "wept over it." (Luke 19: 41.) He wept because of the incurable wickedness of the people of that city, and because of the unparalleled sufferings that were coming upon them. And now, at the tomb of Lazarus, he wept with those who wept. He was not ashamed to weep; weeping, when there is a reason for weeping, is not a cause for shame. We are exhorted to weep with those that weep. (Rom. 12: 15.)

### What the Jews Said (Verses 36, 37)

From the fact that these officers from Jerusalem had come out to Bethany to be with Martha and Mary in their sorrow, we gather that this family was well known and in good financial circumstances. With the exception of a few like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, these officers were bitter enemies of Jesus. But recently they had sought to kill him. (See John 10: 31-39; 11: 7, 8, 16.) Now he had an opportunity to demonstrate in their presence his power over death in a way that they could not help but see. These Jews began to talk among themselves. Some said, "Behold how he loved him!" They knew that Jesus was no professional mourner, but that his grief was real. Others said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of him that was blind, have caused that this man also should not die?" They knew that he had opened the eyes of a blind man, for they had had quite a discussion with the man as to how his eyes were opened. The form of their question shows that they expected an affirmative answer. They were puzzled—why was he now weeping over what he could have prevented? They thought he was weeping for Lazarus; whereas, he was weeping because of the sorrow of Martha and Mary and because of the hardness of heart of some of these Jews. There was no reason for his weeping for Lazarus, for he was soon to raise him up, but these Jews did not know that.

### Jesus Prayed (Verses 38-42)

As Jesus approached the tomb, he again groaned in himself, or, was moved with indignation in himself. He knew that some of these Jews would not believe in him no matter what proof he gave, and that they would soon be again plotting his death and also the death of Lazarus. They had no interest in him, nor any real sympathy for Martha and Mary. Such wickedness and hypocrisy moved the Son of God to indignation. But he would give them one more proof of his power even over death, and he would have them take some part in what he was about to do. "Take ye away the stone." Jesus could with a word have moved that stone from the mouth of the cave in which Lazarus was buried, but it has always been God's plan that the people do what they can. Jesus would have even his enemies to have a part in what he was about to do. Martha protested, "Lord, by this time the body decayeth." There would be odors from the corpse. Perhaps this was the very thing Jesus wanted these Jews to discover—he wanted them to know the condition of the body, so that the greatness of the miracle would be the more manifest. To Martha Jesus replied, "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou believedst, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" The unbelieving Jews would not see in this miracle the glory of God. It would only stir their hatred the more, and cause them to renew their determination to put him to death.

(See verses 47-53.) But to the one who weighed the evidence, and therefore believed, the raising of Lazarus would be a glorious manifestation of the power of God. Jesus had the stone rolled away before he prayed. He would give these Jews time to know that death and decay were in that tomb, and he would have their thoughts lifted to the highest degree of expectancy. It was a dramatic moment. Then with eyes uplifted toward heaven, he prayed to his Father. He first thanked the Father that he had during the past heard him. He knew that the Father always heard him; but he had spoken to the Father at this time so that the multitude might hear, and know that God had sent him and was working through him.

### Lazarus Raised (Verses 43, 44)

Jesus would have the people know that Lazarus came from the tomb at his bidding; so he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." And Lazarus came forth, "bound hand and foot with grave-clothes." The decaying body became sound, the spirit returned to the body, and rich lifeblood again circulated through the once decaying body. Both believers and unbelievers saw Lazarus come from the tomb. Such a sign of God's presence with Jesus was convincing to any reasonable person that Jesus was what he claimed to be. Many did believe (Verse 45), but others, though recognizing the power of Jesus to work miracles, determined to put him to death. (Verses 47, 48; 12: 10, 11.) With a word Jesus could have released Lazarus from his graveclothes, but he would have the people do what they could. Hence the command: "Loose him, and let him go."

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Death is an awful reality, even though the bereaved hope for a resurrection. Without this hope death would be a plunge into eternal darkness, or, rather, into eternal nothingness. In life the infidel has no sure guide; in death he has no comforting hope.

In our lessons so far we have learned that Jesus is the light of life, the water of life, the bread of life, the door into God's favor, the good shepherd, and the resurrection and the life. It is both interesting and profitable to study the various names and descriptive titles applied to Jesus.

Jesus was human as well as divine, and like other human beings, he had his special friends. He delighted in the company of his friends, and enjoyed their hospitality. It was restful and refreshing to visit them, and likely no home was more pleasant to him than the home of these Bethany friends. And what an honor and blessing it was to this home to have him as a guest.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Jesus the friend.

How we may be friends of Jesus.

The Bible teaching on the resurrection.

The ideal home life.

### QUESTIONS

Give subject and repeat the Golden Text.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the year and the probable time of the year.

Name the place, and give what information you can about the place.

Name the persons, and give what information you can about them.

Where was Jesus in our last lesson?



Where did he then go, and why?  
 Why did he decide to return to Judea?  
 What did his disciples say about it?  
 When he neared Bethany, who met him,  
 and what did she say?

### Verses 23-28

What did Jesus say to Martha?  
 What did she understand him to mean?  
 From what scriptures might she have  
 learned about the resurrection?  
 In what sense is Jesus the resurrection  
 and the life?  
 What is said of the resurrection of both  
 the good and the evil?  
 How is it true that the believer never  
 dies?  
 How does the language of Jesus contra-  
 dict materialism?  
 How did Martha express her faith both  
 in what Jesus said and in who he was?  
 What message did Martha take back to  
 Mary?

### Verses 32-35

What difference in the dispositions of  
 Martha and Mary?  
 What caused Jesus to be indignant in  
 the spirit?

What incident showed the lack of sin-  
 cerity on the part of some?  
 How did Jesus stop their wailing?  
 Why did Jesus weep?  
 On what other occasion did Jesus weep?

### Verses 36, 37

What was the attitude of these Jews  
 toward Jesus?  
 What did these Jews say among them-  
 selves?  
 What miracle did they mention?  
 Why was there no reason for Jesus to  
 weep for Lazarus?  
 Why, then, did he weep?

### Verses 38-42

What command did Jesus give, and why  
 the command?  
 What protest did Martha make?  
 Why would Jesus want the Jews to  
 open the tomb?  
 Why did Jesus have the stone rolled  
 away before he prayed?  
 Give the substance of his prayer.

### Verses 43, 44

Describe the resurrection.

## Lesson IX—February 28, 1937

### THE NEW COMMANDMENT

John 12: 20-33; 13: 34, 35

20 Now there were certain Greeks among those that went up to worship at the feast:

21 These therefore came to Philip, who was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: Andrew cometh, and Philip, and they tell Jesus.

23 And Jesus answereth them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit.

25 He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will the Father honor.

27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour.

28 Father, glorify thy name. There came therefore a voice out of heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

29 The multitude therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it had thundered: others said, An angel hath spoken to him.

30 Jesus answered and said, This voice hath not come for my sake, but for your sakes.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself.

33 But this he said, signifying by what manner of death he should die.

34 A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” (John 13: 34.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Cor. 13: 1-13.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

February 22.	M.	.....	The Beauty of Brotherhood (Psalm 133: 1-3)
February 23.	T.	.....	The New Commandment (John 13: 31-35)
February 24.	W.	.....	Love, the Way of God (1 John 4: 18-21)
February 25.	T.	.....	Love in Daily Life (Col. 3: 12-15)
February 26.	F.	.....	The Proof of God's Love (1 John 4: 7-17)
February 27.	S.	.....	Grateful Love (Luke 7: 36-50)
February 28.	S.	.....	The Supreme Expression of Love (John 15: 12-17)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 30 or 31. The Passover came on the fourteenth of the first month of the Jews' sacred year, and that month began with the first new moon after the vernal equinox. Hence, there would be a full moon at the time of the Passover. But Jesus came to Bethany six days before his last Passover. (John 12: 1.) This was likely near the end of Friday. It seems that he spent the Sabbath among his friends in Bethany. On the next day, Sunday, occurred what is generally known as the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. At night he returned to Bethany. But the incident narrated in the first part of our lesson seems to have occurred on Tuesday. It is generally understood that the words of the second part of our lesson were spoken the night in which Jesus was betrayed. But if we cannot be certain about all these dates, what matters it? As the writers of the New Testament concerned themselves very little about dates, why should we? Dates are sometimes interesting, but what was said and done are the important matters.

*Place.*—Jerusalem. It is probable that the Greeks were in the temple, that is, in that part of the temple called the Court of the Gentiles, when they asked to see Jesus. The words of the latter part of our lesson were spoken in the upper room where Jesus and his disciples ate the Passover.

*Persons.*—Jesus, his disciples, and certain Greeks. “Among those who came to worship were Greeks, members of the great Gentile division of the race which embraced all that were not Jews. These were not Jews who spoke the Grecian language and lived in Greek countries; those are called in the original Greek *Hellenistoi*. We find the latter in the Jerusalem church in large numbers. (See Acts 6: 1.) These who sought to visit Jesus were *Hellenes*, a term only used of the Greek race. It is probable that they belonged to the large class of ‘devout Greeks,’ met everywhere by Paul, who were sick of heathenism and were attracted by the grand Hebrew revelation of the unity of God.”—Johnson. The fact that there was a part of the temple called the “Court of the Gentiles” shows that large numbers of Gentiles did attend these annual feasts of the Jews.

*Lesson Links.*—Raising Lazarus from the dead caused so many to believe on Jesus that official Jerusalem was greatly stirred. They decided that something had to be done, else all men would believe on Jesus. The Sanhedrin immediately met and decreed the death of Jesus. “Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews, but departed thence into the country near to the wilderness, into a



city called Ephraim; and there he tarried with the disciples." It seems certain that he went from this place into Galilee, for Matthew represents him as leaving Galilee when he started on his last journey to Jerusalem (Matt. 19: 1), and Luke represents him as passing along the borders of Galilee and Samaria. (Luke 17: 11.) He then crossed the Jordan, traveled down its east side, and recrossed near Jericho. He must have spent many days on this journey, for Matthew, Mark, and Luke recorded much that was said and done on this journey. He reached Bethany six days before the Passover. On Sunday, as is generally understood, he made his so-called triumphal entry into Jerusalem. On Monday he cleansed the temple; on Tuesday the incident of the first part of our lesson occurred. The nights of this week, up to the night of his arrest, were spent in Bethany.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Some Greeks Desire to See Jesus (Verses 20-22)

Certain Greeks that had come up to worship at the feast desired to see Jesus. The curiosity of these Greeks is not to be condemned, for people have always wanted to see famous men. Not infrequently curiosity has led to good results. Example: Curiosity brought a great crowd together on Pentecost. Not one of them came to hear preaching, or to receive any benefit whatever; and yet see what wonderful results followed. (Acts 2: 1-41.) Many people now go to preaching through curiosity, and are convinced by what they hear. The name Philip is Greek, as is also the name Andrew. These Greeks must have known Philip, else they would not have known that he was a disciple of Jesus, for Jesus was not at that time present. When these Greeks told Philip that they wanted to see Jesus, he first conferred with his brother Andrew about the matter. We are not told that Jesus answered the request of the Greeks, but there appears to be no reason why he would not do so. The speech that follows seems to have been made to these Greeks in the presence of Philip and Andrew.

#### Death Necessary to Fruit Bearing (Verses 23-26)

"The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified." He would be glorified when he ascended to heaven and was crowned King. From John 7: 38, 39, we learn that, when Jesus was glorified, the Holy Spirit would be given. As the Holy Spirit came on the first Pentecost after his resurrection, he had certainly then been glorified. Peter states this truth in his sermon on that day: "Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear." (Acts 2: 33.) But he must first suffer the shame and agony of the cross. In a striking illustration he sets forth the truth that death must come first: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." If a man saves his wheat by keeping it in the granary, it bears no fruit. But as the planted grain begins to decay, the seed germ springs into life, and at first feeds off the decaying grain. By this process much fruit comes from one seed. The glory of the planted grain is seen in the quality and the abundance of its fruitage. By this illustration Jesus impressed on his



hearers the truth that he must die in order to produce life in abundance. We need not worry if we do not understand how his death brings life to others, for we do not understand how fruit results from the death of a planted grain. There is in this illustration a lesson to us. Jesus himself applies the principles to us. If a man loved his grain too well to sow it, he would eventually lose it. So, if a man loves his life too well to give it in service to the Lord, he will lose it. He must die to the world in order to live unto God. "He that loveth his life loseth it." The Christian, like Paul, must not hold his life of any account, as dear unto himself. (Acts 20: 24.) By giving our lives to God, we gain spiritual life here and eternal life in the world to come. And if we would follow Christ, we must follow him even unto death, if need be. He must have meant this, for he had just illustrated how it was necessary for him to die. If we follow him, we will certainly go where he is. The world may despise the faithful follower of Christ, but the Father knows him, and honors him in this life by claiming him as his son, and will honor him in the world to come by giving him a home in heaven. The world can offer no such honors as that.

#### A Voice from Heaven (Verses 27-30)

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?" He had much to trouble him. The world's sins were like a mighty weight upon his soul. The Jews were plotting his death; such wickedness troubled his soul. The pain and the shame of the cross, then only about three days off, pressed upon his sensitive soul. The misguided people, who should be his devoted friends, would cry, "Crucify him, crucify him," and then mock him and jeer at his sufferings on the cross. His disciples would forsake him, and Peter would deny him. No wonder that his soul was troubled, and that he prayed to be delivered from it all. "Father, save me from this hour." But within the moment, gaining the mastery of himself, he added, "But for this cause came I unto this hour." He therefore would not fail to carry out the purpose for which he came into the world. This prayer shows that the main thing that troubled his soul was the horrors of death on the cross. Compare this with the scene in the garden of Gethsemane. Here his soul was troubled; there it was so troubled that he sweat as it were great drops of blood. Here he prayed to be saved from the hour of the cross; there he prayed that the cup might pass from him. Here he said resignedly, "But for this cause came I unto this hour"; there he said, "Not my will, but thine be done." But here he advanced a step farther, and prayed, "Glorify thy name." The Father's name would be glorified by the redemption of man through the death of Jesus on the cross. For this he prayed. In answer to that prayer there came "a voice out of heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." God's name is glorified in all his works, even in the destruction of his enemies and rebellious sinners. For examples see Ex. 9: 15; 14: 18; Lev. 10: 1-3. And in glorifying the name of his Son he was also glorifying his own name. On two former occasions God had given his approval of his Son by speaking so that those who were present could hear. At the baptism of Jesus the Father said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." On the mount of transfiguration he said, "This is my beloved Son: hear ye him." One marvels at the stubbornness and



hardness of heart of those who would not be convinced by such testimony. Some of those present on this occasion thought an angel spoke to Jesus; others, not hearing distinctly, thought it thundered. This shows that those who want to hear a voice from heaven speaking to them might not recognize such voice if they heard it. And this voice from heaven had not come for the sake of Jesus, but for the sake of those who stood by. It should have banished all doubts from the minds of those who heard it.

### The Crucifixion and Its Results Foretold (Verses 31-33)

"Now is the judgment of this world." This expression, considered by itself, might mean the judgment the world pronounces or the judgment pronounced upon the world; but joined with the statement that "now shall the prince of this world be cast out," it must mean the judgment that is passed upon the world. The world is condemned, and Satan shall be cast out, for he is the prince of this world. In giving his Son to die for the sins of the world, God judged the whole world as guilty and worthy of death. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him." (Isa. 53: 5.) The manner of death he should suffer is set forth in the statement that he would be lifted up. But some have so misunderstood and perverted what Jesus said as to the manner of his death that they have exhorted Christians in sermon and song to lift Christ up! Professed Christians are likely enough to crucify the Son of God afresh without being exhorted to do so! John makes plain what Jesus meant by being lifted up: "But this he said, signifying by what manner of death he should die." Verse thirty-four shows that even the unbelieving Jews understood Jesus to be speaking of death on the cross. They thought that their scriptures taught that the Messiah would not be put to death, but would abide on earth forever.

### A New Commandment (John 13: 34, 35)

The words of these verses were spoken on the night in which Jesus was betrayed into the hands of his enemies. Judas had just left to carry out his wicked purpose. In the midst of plottings and betrayal Jesus spoke of love. The commandment to love was not a new commandment. Moses had said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Lev. 19: 18.) "Love ye therefore the sojourner." (Deut. 10: 19.) And Jesus had taught them to love even their enemies. (Matt. 5: 44, 45.) But such love as Jesus now enjoins had never been commanded. He commands us to love one another, even as he loved us; and he so loved us that he died for us. Such love is the mark of the true disciple. "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren." (1 John 3: 14.) Jesus laid down his life for us, "and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3: 16.) It is a truth that love leads to sacrifice, and our own observation and experiences teach us that. But let no one think that love is sentimental gush; if it is not helpful, it is not love. Love seeks the ultimate good of the object loved.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

The scattered Jews had great influence over some of the people among whom they lived. They did not gain this influence by com-

promise, nor by joining in any of the idol worship. They condemned everything pertaining to the worship of idols. It is a lesson to Christians.

The fact that Christ died for us has led many people to die for their faith in him. Yet the crucifixion would have been powerless, had not Jesus been raised from the dead; hence, Paul speaks of the power of his resurrection. (Phil. 3: 10.)

To love the brethren as Christ loved us is a high ideal; perhaps few of us ever fully attain to that ideal. Yet there is uplifting power in an ideal, even if we never fully attain it. A life without an ideal is a failure.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The weakening influence of compromise.

Saving or losing our life.

The power of an ideal.

The new commandment.

What is love?

## QUESTIONS

### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time.

Give what seems to have been the order of events up to Tuesday, including the time Jesus arrived at Bethany.

Give the places of our lesson.

What persons were concerned?

Who were the Greeks?

How did the raising of Lazarus stir official Jerusalem?

Where did Jesus go?

From what place does it seem that Jesus started on his last journey to Jerusalem?

### *Verses 20-22*

Name some good results that have come from curiosity.

Why would the Greeks make their request to Philip?

### *Verses 23-26*

When would Jesus be glorified, and what is the proof?

What illustration does he give to show that death must come first?

The glory of the planted grain is seen in what?

What lesson does Jesus impress upon us?

How does God honor the faithful follower of Christ?

### *Verses 27-30*

Why was the soul of Jesus troubled?

For what did he pray?

How did he show his resignation?

Compare this prayer with the scene in Gethsemane.

How would the Father's name be glorified?

On what other occasions had a voice from heaven endorsed Jesus?

What did the people standing by on this occasion say of this voice?

For whose sake had this voice come from heaven?

### *Verses 31-33*

What was meant by "the judgment of this world"?

How did the death of Jesus show condemnation of the world?

Quote Isa. 53: 5.

What does he mean by being lifted up?

Would you be guilty of singing that song, "How to Reach the Masses"?

### *John 13: 34, 35*

When were the words of these verses spoken?

What was new about this commandment to love?

How much should we love the brethren?

What does love seek to do?

### *Some Reflections*

Discuss these reflections.



## Lesson X—March 7, 1937

## LIFE HERE AND HEREAFTER THROUGH CHRIST

John 14: 1-15

- 1 Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me.
- 2 In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.
- 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
- 4 And whither I go, ye know the way.
- 5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way?
- 6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.
- 7 If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.
- 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.
- 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father?
- 10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me doeth his works.
- 11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.
- 12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father.
- 13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.
- 14 If ye shall ask anything in my name, that will I do.
- 15 If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me."* (John 14: 6.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Eph. 3: 14-21.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

March 1.	M.	Abiding in Christ (John 15: 1-7)
March 2.	T.	The Life (John 10: 22-29)
March 3.	W.	The Truth (John 8: 31-40)
March 4.	T.	The Way (Heb. 10: 19-25)
March 5.	F.	None Other Name (Acts 4: 1-12)
March 6.	S.	The Crown of Life (2 Tim. 4: 1-8)
March 7.	S.	The Heavenly Home (John 14: 1-15)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—A.D. 30 or 31. The words of this lesson were spoken during the night in which Jesus was betrayed, a short time before he went out of the city into the garden of Gethsemane. Evidently Jesus made this speech after the supper was instituted.

*Place.*—An upper room in Jerusalem. Jesus had sent Peter and John to make ready the Passover, and had told them how they would find a large upper room in which they would eat the Passover. (Matt. 14: 12-16; Luke 22: 7-13.)

*Persons.*—Jesus and the eleven apostles. Judas had already gone out to head the band which was to seize Jesus and take him to the Sanhedrin.

*Lesson Links.*—Only two days intervened between our last lesson and this. On the day in which the events of the first part of our last lesson occurred, Jesus did much teaching in the temple, and

engaged in sharp controversy with the Jews. As the day drew to a close he departed from the temple for the last time. The Jewish leaders were hopelessly stubborn and sinful, and he left them to their doom. As he departed from the temple, the disciples, with pardonable pride, pointed to the greatness of the temple; but Jesus told them that it would be completely destroyed. On their way to Bethany he delivered the speech recorded in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew. It is not certain that Jesus returned to Jerusalem on Wednesday. Thursday also he spent at Bethany. On this day he sent Peter and John into the city to prepare the Passover. At the close of the day he and the apostles came into the city. When they were all gathered about the table, Jesus washed the disciples' feet. At the close of the Passover supper, Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. Whether Judas left the room before the supper was instituted or after has been a matter of dispute. Luke 22: 19-23 seems to prove definitely that Judas was present when the supper was instituted, but left immediately thereafter. Jesus then told the others that he must leave them, and that they could not at that time follow. Peter affirmed that he was ready to follow Jesus even unto death. Jesus then said, "The cock shalt not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice."

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled (Verses 1-3)

The words of these verses have been a source of comfort to unnumbered thousands in all ages since they were uttered. The disciples needed comfort. Jesus had told them that he must be put to death, that they would be scattered from him, and that Peter would deny him. They were bewildered and full of sorrow. And though Jesus was all but crushed with the thought of what he himself was to suffer, he seeks to comfort his distressed disciples. They were his chief concern. "Believe in God, believe also in me." The marginal reading has, "Ye believe in God." The truth is, both verbs may be either indicative or imperative. The circumstances alone must determine which it should be. To make them imperative, as in the American Standard Version, would carry this idea: Instead of being troubled, believe in God and in me; trust us to bring things out for the best. Or if we adopt the equally correct translation, "Ye believe in God, and ye believe in me," it would carry this idea: You believe in God and in me; you should not therefore be troubled. And besides this, my going away is for your benefit. There are many mansions in my Father's house, and I go away to prepare a place for you. No matter which translation we adopt, it amounts to this: Faith in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ should banish all trouble from our hearts concerning their plans and purposes. Had they trusted God and the Lord Jesus Christ as fully as they should have, they would not have worried about what he had told them.

*To Prepare a Place.*—"In my Father's house"—that is, in heaven—"are many mansions." "I go to prepare a place for you." This is another reason why they should not be troubled at his going. Also, he would come again; and when he comes again, he will receive his faithful followers unto himself. "And so shall we ever be with the Lord. (1 Thess. 4: 17.)"



### Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life (Verses 4-6)

"And whither I go, ye know the way." He was going to the Father's house of many mansions. He had frequently told them the way he was to go. He would go by the way of death by crucifixion at the hands of his enemies and a resurrection from the dead—by the way of a cruel crucifixion and a glorious resurrection. He had told them so much that they should have known it. But they had had their minds too full of the idea that Jesus would not die, but would be an earthly king forever, to think seriously on his statements about being crucified; and now they were too bewildered to think clearly. So Thomas, including the others with himself, said, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way?" Jesus did not give him a direct answer; he had told them often enough the way he was to go, and they seemed never to understand him. Now they needed to know the way they were to go. "I am the way." He is the way, both in the example he set and in the teaching he did; there is no other way for man. "And the truth." All truth centers in him, and radiates from him; and there is nothing in his life and teaching but truth. "And the life." "In him was life." Life inheres in him, and the life we have comes from him. Some one has paraphrased this verse in this way: I am the true way to life. He is the only way to life; for he says, "No one cometh unto the Father, but by me." He is our way of approach to the Father, the one, and the only, mediator between God and man. "For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." (1 Tim. 2: 5, 6.) The one God has appointed the one way of approach to himself. "He that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me." (Luke 10: 16.) To reject this one way of approach to the Father is to leave one in sin; "for except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." (John 8: 24.) He is therefore our only way of escape from sin. It is through him that we have access into the grace, or favor, of God. (Rom. 5: 1, 2.)

### The Unity of the Father and Son (Verses 7-10)

"If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father." Jesus was called Immanuel, "which is, being interpreted, God with us." (Matt. 1: 23.) He is the effulgence of the Father's glory, "and the very image of his substance." (Heb. 1: 3.) To see him and know him was to see and know the Father, for he fully represented the Father. *Philip's Request.*—"Show us the Father." Moses had said to Jehovah, "Show me, I pray thee, thy glory." Jehovah replied, "Thou canst not see my face; for man shall not see me and live." (See Ex. 33: 17-23.) The disciples saw Jesus, and he was divinity veiled in human flesh, "the image of the invisible God." (Col. 1: 15.) "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2: 9.) So Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." But even the apostles did not really know Jesus; for had they known him, they would have known the Father through him. Even now, with a fuller revelation than they then had, we do not fully know him, nor can we fully know how he is in the Father and the Father in him; but we can believe these things are so, on the testimony of Jesus. To fully know the Father and the Son, we would have to be as wise as they. Jesus gave them to understand that he was not then speaking on his

own authority, but that the Father abiding in him was doing his own work through him. Only a short time before this Jesus had said, "For I spake not from myself; but the Father that sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life eternal; the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto me, so I speak." (John 12: 49, 50.) If we imitate Christ, we will speak only the things which we are commanded to speak.

### The Greater Works of the Believer (Verses 11, 12)

Jesus had done many mighty works. They were his credentials, the proof that he was what he claimed to be. Any man could make great assertions about himself, but no deceived person or deceiver could do such works as Jesus had done. If the disciples could not believe what he had said about his oneness with the Father, they should, for the very works' sake, believe that the Father was with him. Here he staked all his claims on the works he had done. "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake." Earlier in his ministry he had said, "The works which the Father hath given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." (John 5: 36.)

*The Greater Works.*—At the first reading, it seems incredible that the apostles would do the works that Jesus did, and even greater works. He had cured the sick, healed the lame, given sight to the blind, cast out demons, calmed the storm, and raised the dead. We can see how the apostles by the Holy Spirit did all these things; but how and when did they do greater works? Certainly no miracles they did were greater in degree than those Jesus did. What then? They performed miracles over a wider scope of territory; their miracles were greater in their influence over the minds of the people; and their preaching resulted in a much greater number of conversions to Christ. And it is a greater work to cure sin-sick souls than to cure physical ailments. Jesus states why they would do greater works: "Because I go unto the Father." He does not here tell them why his going to the Father would enable them to do these greater works; but later in the same speech he did tell them. "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John 16: 7, 8.) The Holy Spirit with them would enable them to preach the gospel in its fullness, and to confirm their preaching by miracles. (Heb. 2: 3, 4.)

### Prayer and a Test of Love (Verses 13-15)

To do the great works he had mentioned, they must pray to the Father in his name. In their own strength they would be helpless. Apart from him they could do nothing. (John 15: 5.) Jesus would grant to them whatever they asked in his name. It is true that all Christians are to pray, but it seems that the instructions given here apply specially to the apostles in their great work. God had inaugurated this plan of salvation, and in its success he would be glorified. But the gospel was to be put to the test before an unbelieving world. The apostles would need constantly to pray for help.



Jesus was soon to send them out to preach this plan of salvation to the whole world, and Jesus was promising to help them in their work.

*"In My Name."*—Jesus is our Mediator, our go-between, our High Priest. We approach the Father through him. We do not go to God in prayer in our own name, but in the name of Jesus the Christ as our representative. He is our Advocate. (1 John 2: 1.) In carrying out the commands of Christ in extending his kingdom, to do a thing in his name is to do it by his authority, or, rather, as his agent. But to pray to God in his name is different; it is to approach God in his name as our High Priest, our Mediator.

*A Test of Love.*—We want to please those whom we love; we like to comply with their wishes. If we love Jesus, we will do what he commands. Those who fail to do his will do not love him, no matter how much they profess to love him.

## SOME REFLECTIONS

People spend much time and energy in worrying about things that are entirely in the hands of God. We worry about the weather; and we worry about how God will work out his plans in the final windup of all earthly matters. If we believe in God and in Christ, why worry?

That Jesus is coming again is plainly taught, and our hopes center in his coming at the last day. But not every coming of the Lord that is mentioned refers to his final coming. This will be clearly seen by reading such passages as John 14: 18, 23; Rev. 2: 5, 16.

Perhaps the greatest thing in the life of the Christian is the truth that God is his Father, for it includes about everything else. A Father would be disappointed if his son never asked him for anything. We may be sure that our heavenly Father is pleased with the sincere prayers of his own sons, though he may not grant every request.

The child who loves his parents obeys them. Obedience is really such a test of love that John says, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." (1 John 5: 3.)

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The uselessness and hurtfulness of worry.

The second coming of Christ.

The way of salvation.

Prayer.

Obedience and love.

## QUESTIONS

### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time of our lesson, also place.

Give the persons.

Why was Judas missing?

Give some incident between the last lesson and this.

### *Verses 1-3*

Repeat verses 1-3.

Why were these verses spoken?

Why should they not be troubled?

What is the Father's house?

### *Verses 4-6*

By what way would Jesus go to his Father's house?

Why had they not understood what he had told them about his death?

Discuss "way," "truth," "life."

Discuss the expression, "No one cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Give the meaning of mediator.

### *Verses 7-10*

How does knowing the Son enable one to know the Father?

What request did Philip make?  
 Who had made a similar request?  
 What was the source of the works and words of Jesus?  
 Give proof.

### Verses 11, 12

On what grounds did Jesus call on them to believe him?  
 What, therefore, was the purpose of his miracles?  
 What did Jesus say about the works the apostles would do?  
 In what way were these works greater than what Jesus did?

Why would his going to the Father enable them to do these greater works?

### Verses 13-15

To do these great works, what must they do?  
 In what way would the Father be glorified?  
 Discuss the meaning of the phrase, "in the name of Christ," as it relates to prayer.  
 How is obedience a test of love?

### Some Reflections

Discuss these reflections.

## Lesson XI—March 14, 1937

### JESUS PRAYING FOR HIS DISCIPLES

John 16: 5-7; 17: 14-26

5 But now I go unto him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

6 But because I have spoken these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.  
 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.

20 Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word;

21 That they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me.

22 And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one;

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me.

24 Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, the world knew thee not, but I knew thee; and these knew that thou didst send me;

26 And I made known unto them thy name, and will make it known; that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"That they may be one, even as we are one." (John 17: 22.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 17: 1-11.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

March 8.	M.	-----	The Comforter Promised (John 16: 5-7)
March 9.	T.	-----	The Farewell Prayer (John 17: 1-10)
March 10.	W.	-----	Jesus Prays for His Disciples (John 17: 11-19)
March 11.	T.	-----	Jesus Prays for All Believers (John 17: 20-26)
March 12.	F.	-----	A Living Intercessor (Heb 7: 19-25)
March 13.	S.	-----	God Revealed in Christ (Luke 10: 17-24)
March 14.	S.	-----	One in Christ (Gal. 3: 20-29)



## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—A.D. 30 or 31. All the events and teaching recorded in the thirteenth chapter to the end of the seventeenth chapter of John occurred during the night in which Jesus was betrayed into the hands of his enemies; and this was most likely on Thursday night.

*Place.*—Jerusalem, in the upper room where Jesus with his disciples had eaten the Passover, and where Jesus had instituted the Lord's Supper.

*Persons.*—Jesus and his disciples. Judas Iscariot was not present, having already gone to lead the band of officers to seize Jesus.

*Lesson Links.*—The first part of our lesson is a part of the speech from which our last lesson was taken. Jesus was going away, but would not leave them desolate. "Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth me no more; but ye behold me." Judas (not Iscariot) said, "Lord, what is come to pass that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" He thought Jesus meant that he would appear to them in the body, as he had always done. He could not see how that could be, and yet the world not be able to see him. Jesus replied, "If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him." And what he then said about the Holy Spirit shows that he and the Father would come to them in the person of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would teach them all things, and bring to their remembrance all that Jesus had said unto them. And then to show them the close relationship that would still exist between him and his followers, and how they might bear fruit, and the necessity of bearing fruit, he spoke to them the parable of the vine and the branches. Their continued union with him depended on their bearing fruit. Jesus told them then that they were more than servants; they were his friends, if they did the things he commanded them to do. Again he spoke to them of the Holy Spirit, whom he would send to them. Because they would meet up with persecutions, he spoke these things to them, so that they might not be caused to stumble.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## The Comforter (Verses 5-7)

Jesus repeats to them what he had often told them, namely, that he was going to the Father who had sent him. And now they do not ask him, "Whither goest thou?" Only a few moments before this, Thomas had said, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way?" They were now too bewildered to ask any more questions. Jesus immediately said, "But because I have spoken these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart." In chapter 14, verse 28, he had gently rebuked them for being so troubled at the prospect of his leaving them: "If ye loved me, ye would have rejoiced, because I go unto the Father: for the Father is greater than I." That is, if they had loved him as they should, instead of being filled with sorrow at the thought of his leaving them, they would have rejoiced at the prospect of his returning to the bliss and glory of heaven and to intimate association with the Father. But to give them some measure of comfort, he repeatedly told them that, when he went away, the Holy Spirit would be sent to them to abide with them. (See 14: 16-18; 15: 26.) Of course they could not then understand

all that the coming of the Holy Spirit would mean to them. John the Baptist had called this coming of the Holy Spirit upon them a baptism of the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 3: 11.) It was all-bewildering to them. And they must have been more astonished than ever when Jesus said, "It is expedient for you that I go away." To be expedient is to be helpful, to be of advantage. The personal presence of Jesus had meant so much to them and their association with him had been so delightful, they could not then understand how his leaving them would be to their advantage, or in any way be helpful to them. But if he did not go away the Holy Spirit would not come to them, and they, therefore, could not fulfill their mission as apostles without the presence and the help of the Holy Spirit. If Jesus went away, he would send them the Holy Spirit.

*The Holy Spirit a Helper.*—The word translated "Comforter" seems not to have an exact equivalent in English. The classic meaning of the word, as given by Liddell and Scott, is "called to one's aid, assisting, especially in a court of justice; Latin, *advocatus*: hence, as a substantive, a legal assistant, advocate, . . . generally, a helper." Many commentators think the term "helper" comes nearer to being the correct translation, or, rather, comes nearer to covering the full meaning of the original word. Perhaps the best way to arrive at its meaning is to find out what the Holy Spirit did when he came to the apostles. It is certain that he did more for the apostles than merely to comfort them. Paul said, "And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity." (Rom. 8: 26.) The Spirit helps wherein we need help. The Holy Spirit gave whatever help the apostles needed. They would not be able to remember all Jesus had taught them; the Holy Spirit would bring his words to their remembrance. (John 14: 26.) He would guide them into all truth. (John 16: 13.) He would enable them to speak in other tongues (Acts 2: 1-4), and to preach the gospel (1 Pet. 1: 12). The Holy Spirit would enable them to work miracles to confirm the word. (1 Cor. 12: 4-11; Heb. 2: 2-4.) And so, the Holy Spirit, working through them and in them, would enable them to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. And when they were troubled, he would encourage and comfort them. So he was their ever-present help in time of need—a real helper. It was therefore expedient for the apostles that Jesus go away and send the Holy Spirit to them to help them in preaching the gospel to all nations. Without this helper they could not have preached the gospel to all nations.

### Jesus Prays That the Apostles Be Kept from Evil (John 17: 14-17)

When Jesus finished the speech, a part of which we have been studying, he began to pray. It was a solemn hour. He was soon to go through a mock trial, in which justice and right would play no part. He would then suffer the shame and horrors of the cross. And yet in this, the longest of his recorded prayers, only one short petition did he make for himself. "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (Verse 5.) Then he prayed for his apostles. "I have given them thy word." During his personal ministry Jesus did not claim to be speaking his own word, but only the words which the Father had given him. "For I spake not from myself; but the Father that sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I



should say, and what I should speak." (John 12: 49.) "The world hated them." The term "world" here refers to the disobedient part of humanity. The apostles were not a part of this class. They had been chosen out of the world, and were not, therefore, following worldly ways and worldly wisdom. As Jesus was not of the world, so also were his disciples not of the world. In a physical sense, they were in the world, and were surrounded by all the temptations and allurements of the world. They had a work to accomplish—a work for which Jesus had trained them and to which he would soon assign them. Because of this, he did not pray the Father to take them out of the world, even though they were both tempted and hated by the world. The world would hate them because they would condemn the sins of the world. Jesus prayed that, while they were in the world, the Father would keep them from the evil that is in the world. To that end he prayed the Father to sanctify them in the truth, or by the truth, and immediately added, "Thy word is truth." People are to be sanctified by the truth, and not by a direct work of the Holy Spirit. To sanctify a person is to separate him from the world, for sanctification means "not of the earth." That the man himself has something to do in the matter of his sanctification is plain from the following: "I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye presented your members as servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now present your members as servants to righteousness unto sanctification." (Rom. 6: 19.) Hence, to forsake sin and become servants of righteousness is to become sanctified, and the Lord accomplishes that in us by the influence of his word.

### The Apostles Sent into the World (Verses 18, 19)

"As thou didst send me into the world." Repeatedly Jesus spoke of being sent into the world by the Father. He mentioned the fact six times in this prayer, and on other occasions. This you can see by consulting your concordance, or by following the marginal references. As the Father sent him into the world, even so he himself sent the apostles into the world. An apostle is one sent, and the Savior here speaks as if he had already sent them into the world, for their sending was as certain as if it had already been done. Things in God's plans that were sure to be done were sometimes spoken of as if they had already been done. "For their sakes I sanctify myself." The marginal reading has "consecrate" instead of "sanctify." Jesus did not live a worldly life, but a life wholly devoted, or consecrated, to the service. In doing so he set them an example, not only in teaching faithfully God's will, but also in living it faithfully.

### Jesus Prays for the Unity of Believers (Verses 20-23)

Jesus had been praying for his apostles. In going out to face a world of enemies, they would need God's help and encouragement. But now he prays for their converts—for all who would believe on him through their word. His special petition for all believers was that they might be one. In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians he rebuked them severely because of the divisions that were springing up among them. (1 Cor. 1: 10-13; 11: 18, 19.) David said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell to-



16 Then therefore he delivered him unto them to be crucified.  
 17 They took Jesus therefore: and he went out, bearing the cross for himself, unto the place called The place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha:  
 18 Where they crucified him, and with him two others, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

25 These things therefore the soldiers did. But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold, thy son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold, thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home.

28 After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the scripture might be accomplished, saith, I thirst.

29 There was set there a vessel full of vinegar: so they put a sponge full of the vinegar upon hyssop, and brought it to his mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up his spirit.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us.*” (1 John 3: 16.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 53: 1-6.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

March 15.	M.	Christ Stands Trial (John 19: 4-9)
March 16.	T.	The Crucifixion (John 19: 23-30)
March 17.	W.	The Voluntary Death (John 10: 7-18)
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March 20.	S.	The Perfect Pattern (1 Pet. 2: 20-25)
March 21.	S.	The Cost of the Cross (Matt. 10: 34-42)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—A.D. 30 or 31. Only a few hours intervened between the prayer of Jesus, a part of which we studied last Sunday, and the events of this lesson. The most of the Bible students understand that the events of this lesson occurred on Friday.

*Place.*—Jerusalem. The particular places of interest in this lesson are the Prætorium and Golgotha. The Prætorium was any place where a military governor made his headquarters. In Jerusalem it was the building in which Pilate resided when he came up to Jerusalem. It was most likely the palace built by Herod the Great, though some think it was the fortress Antonia. Golgotha was the place of crucifixion. Its location is not now definitely known. It was outside the walls of Jerusalem, but certainly near the city.

*Persons.*—Jesus, Pilate, the Jews, certain women, and the apostle John. Pilate was the Roman governor of Palestine, having been appointed to that position four or five years before the crucifixion. The governor regularly resided at Casarea, but came up to Jerusalem at the annual feasts of the Jews so as to preserve order. By the term Jews, John refers to the Jewish officers. It was these officers that were so determined to have Jesus put to death.

*Lesson Links.*—At the conclusion of the prayer from which the latter part of our last lesson was taken, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city to Mount Olivet into the garden of Gethsemane, where he prayed to be delivered, if possible, from the agony of the cross. Here he was seized by a band of officers led by Judas Iscariot, and was led to Annas first, who had been high priest. Annas sent him bound to his son-in-law Caiaphas, who was then high priest. It



## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

How the Holy Spirit helped the apostles.  
 In what sense are Christians not of the world?  
 How the truth sanctifies people.  
 Unity, and how maintained.  
 The evils of division.

## QUESTIONS

*The Lesson Settings*

Give time, place, and persons.  
 Mention events between this lesson and the last.

*Verses 5-7*

What statement, often repeated, did Jesus make?  
 What filled their hearts with such sorrow?  
 To comfort them, what promise had he made as to his going?  
 What astonishing statement did Jesus now make?  
 Give the meaning of expedient.  
 Why was his going away expedient for the apostles?  
 In what ways was the Holy Spirit a Comforter, or, rather, a helper?

*John 17: 14-17*

What sort of trial and death confronted Jesus?  
 What one petition did he make for himself?  
 What did Jesus say he had given his disciples?  
 What did he claim was the source of his teachings?  
 Who would hate the apostles?  
 In what sense were the apostles not of the world?

Why did he not pray for the Father to take them out of the world?  
 How did he pray that they be sanctified?  
 What is it to sanctify a person?  
 What is our responsibility in the matter of sanctification?

*Verses 18, 19*

What did Jesus repeatedly say about being sent into the world?  
 Who was he sending into the world?  
 Why did Jesus sanctify, or consecrate, himself?

*Verses 20-23*

After praying for his apostles, for what did Jesus then pray?  
 What was his prayer for believers?  
 Give some passages that condemn divisions among believers.  
 What did David say about unity?  
 Why is unity desirable?  
 What was the glory Jesus gave the apostles?  
 What can we do toward promoting unity?

*Verses 24-26*

What petition did Jesus now make for his disciples?  
 Could he mean that he wanted God to take them to heaven at that time?  
 How may we know God?  
 Study and discuss the reflections.

*Lesson XII—March 21, 1937*

## THE TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

*John 19: 4-9, 14-18, 25-30*

4 And Pilate went out again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him out to you, that ye may know that I find no crime in him.

5 Jesus therefore came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold, the man!

6 When therefore the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him! Pilate saith unto them, Take him yourselves, and crucify him: for I find no crime in him.

7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

8 When Pilate therefore heard this saying, he was the more afraid;

9 And he entered into the Pretorium again, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

14 Now it was the Preparation of the passover: it was about the sixth hour. And he saith unto the Jews, Behold, your King!

15 They therefore cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him! Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

16 Then therefore he delivered him unto them to be crucified.  
 17 They took Jesus therefore: and he went out, bearing the cross for himself, unto the place called The place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha:  
 18 Where they crucified him, and with him two others, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

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27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold, thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home.

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## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—A.D. 30 or 31. Only a few hours intervened between the prayer of Jesus, a part of which we studied last Sunday, and the events of this lesson. The most of the Bible students understand that the events of this lesson occurred on Friday.

*Place.*—Jerusalem. The particular places of interest in this lesson are the Prætorium and Golgotha. The Prætorium was any place where a military governor made his headquarters. In Jerusalem it was the building in which Pilate resided when he came up to Jerusalem. It was most likely the palace built by Herod the Great, though some think it was the fortress Antonia. Golgotha was the place of crucifixion. Its location is not now definitely known. It was outside the walls of Jerusalem, but certainly near the city.

*Persons.*—Jesus, Pilate, the Jews, certain women, and the apostle John. Pilate was the Roman governor of Palestine, having been appointed to that position four or five years before the crucifixion. The governor regularly resided at Cæsarea, but came up to Jerusalem at the annual feasts of the Jews so as to preserve order. By the term Jews, John refers to the Jewish officers. It was these officers that were so determined to have Jesus put to death.

*Lesson Links.*—At the conclusion of the prayer from which the latter part of our last lesson was taken, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city to Mount Olivet into the garden of Gethsemane, where he prayed to be delivered, if possible, from the agony of the cross. Here he was seized by a band of officers led by Judas Iscariot, and was led to Annas first, who had been high priest. Annas sent him bound to his son-in-law Caiaphas, who was then high priest. It



was during this hearing before Caiaphas that Peter denied Jesus. Before the Sanhedrin he was accused of blasphemy, because he said he was the Son of God. He was then carried before Pilate, and there he was charged with treason in that he claimed to be a king. After examining him, Pilate announced, "I find no crime in him." But the Jews demanded that he be crucified. Pilate then scourged him, or had him scourged. The Roman scourging was extremely severe. Pilate thought this would satisfy the Jews, for he showed in every way that he desired to release Jesus.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### "Behold, the Man" (Verses 4-6)

After the soldiers had mocked and abused Jesus, Pilate went out to the Jews again. The Jews would not go into the Prætorium, "that they might not be defiled, but might eat the passover." (John 18: 28.) For that reason, when Pilate wanted to say something to the Jews he had to go outside the Prætorium. They would not defile themselves by going into the house with a Gentile, but they were determined to have an innocent man put to death. They were very religious, but worse sinners than the corrupt governor. When Pilate brought Jesus before them, bleeding from the Roman scourging, clothed in a purple garment, and wearing a crown of thorns, he said, "Behold, the man!" He did not say this in a spirit of mockery; he was in no humor for that sort of thing. He had no use for these bloodthirsty Jews, and knew that envy was moving them against Jesus. (Matt. 27: 17, 18; Mark 15: 9, 10.) But his wife's plea (Matt. 27: 19), together with the fact that he had found no crime in Jesus, but to be a righteous man (Matt. 24: 27), had excited both his interest and his fears. And there was in his mind the thought that Jesus might be some divine being. It is likely that he wanted to emphasize that truth when he said, "Behold, the man!"—THE MAN. It is likely that he thought it possible that the sight of Jesus in his suffering condition would excite their pity; but instead of modifying their feelings against Jesus, the sight of him served only to intensify their rage. And like the howling mob they were, these members of the Sanhedrin, the High Court of the Jews, cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Perhaps never in the history of the world did the High Court of any other nation become such a howling mob.

"*No Crime in Him.*"—Pilate tried to shift the responsibility to others by telling the Jews to take Jesus and crucify him themselves, for he found no fault in him. But even that was a sort of mockery of the Jews in their helplessness, for he well knew that they could not inflict the death penalty. Pilate then delivered his judgment—"I find no crime in him."

### The Jews' Charge to Pilate Against Jesus (Verses 7-9)

Luke records the accusation the Jews made against Jesus before Pilate: "We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king." (Luke 23: 2.) This was hypocrisy, for they despised the Roman government, and would have revolted and set them up a king any moment they saw a chance to succeed. They were charging



Jesus with treason, but they were not able to convince Pilate that their charge was true. Before their own court they had charged Jesus with being guilty of blasphemy. If he had not been the Son of God, he would have been guilty of blasphemy in so claiming. Though they knew that Pilate had no right under Roman law to consider their charge of blasphemy, they thought to influence Pilate by reminding him that, according to their law, Jesus should be put to death for blasphemy, "because he made himself the Son of God." When Pilate heard that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, he became more afraid. He understood that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God in some special sense. The superstitious heathen thought their gods might appear in the form of men. Thinking this possible in the case of Jesus, Pilate went in, and asked Jesus, "Whence art thou?" He was not trying to find out from what place Jesus came, but his origin. Was he a god or a man? But Jesus answered him not; he had said enough.

### Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified (Verses 14-16)

The student should read verses 10-13, for they show why Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified. When Pilate tried to gain the consent of the Jews to release Jesus, they made a statement, recorded in verse twelve, that shows they intended, if he did release Jesus, to bring charges against Pilate before Cæsar; and that would mean the loss of his position, and perhaps his life. Tiberius, who was then emperor, was cruel and suspicious. Pilate would rather sign the death warrant of an innocent person than to face charges before Tiberius. Besides, Pilate had very little regard for the life of any of the Jews. Verse fourteen has given commentators no end of trouble. Mark 15: 25 says they crucified Jesus the third hour of the day, which, according to Jewish count, was nine o'clock; yet John tells us that it was the sixth hour when Pilate delivered Jesus up to be crucified. But John wrote long after Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Jews were scattered. The Jews' method of counting was not recognized over the world; hence, he used the Roman method. With them the day began at midnight, as with us. Hence, it would seem that the death warrant was signed at six o'clock and Jesus was crucified at nine. But as Jesus and his disciples had eaten the Passover, how could this day be the day of the preparation for the Passover? From John 18: 28 we learn that the Jews had not eaten the Passover. It seems likely therefore that Jesus and his disciples ate the Passover one day before the regular time to eat it. Perhaps this was done so that Jesus, "our passover," might be killed on the same day the regular Passover lamb was killed. The foregoing seems to be the most likely explanation of a difficult matter. When he decided to have Jesus crucified, Pilate brought him out to the Jews, and said, "Behold, your King." They did not then know Pilate's decision, and could not know but that he meant to release him as their king. He evidently found some pleasure in tantalizing them before letting them know his decision. But again they demanded that Jesus be crucified. But Pilate still kept them in suspense and vexed them still more. "Shall I crucify your King?" Since they had condemned Jesus as a blasphemer, and were determined on his death, it was extremely vexing to them for the hated Pilate to place Jesus before them as their king. They hated



the Roman government and longed for freedom from it, but were willing to profess loyalty to Rome in order to accomplish their purpose. "We have no king but Cæsar." Thus, without planning to do so, Pilate had succeeded in getting the Jewish officers to avow publicly their loyalty to Rome. "Then therefore he delivered him unto them to be crucified." This does not mean that Pilate gave Jesus into the hands of the Jews for them to crucify him, for the Roman soldiers did that. It means that he complied with their demands by passing the sentence of death on Jesus. Some of these who hypocritically vowed allegiance to Rome must have lived to see the utter destruction of their city and nation by this same Roman government.

### Jesus Crucified (Verses 17, 18)

Jesus "went out, bearing the cross." The victim carried his cross to the place of crucifixion. From the other writers we learn that, as they came out of the city, they met Simon of Cyrene, whom they compelled to bear the cross. It is likely that Jesus had become so exhausted by the scourging and other things through which he had passed that he gave way under the weight of the cross. He was crucified outside the city. "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered without the gate." (Heb. 13: 12.) The place of crucifixion was called Golgotha, the place of a skull. Why it was so named is purely a matter of conjecture. Two others were crucified with him, one on either side of him. The other writers tell us that these two were thieves. In so arranging the crosses they made it to appear that Jesus was the chief of a low class of criminals.

### Jesus Arranges for a Home for His Mother (Verses 25-27)

"These things therefore the soldiers did." This refers to the things recorded in verses twenty-three and twenty-four. It appears that the clothes of the victims belonged to the soldiers. These soldiers divided the clothing of Jesus among themselves; but the coat was without seam, woven from top to bottom. For this coat they decided to cast lots to see whose it should be. These soldiers had not the least idea that they were fulfilling a prophecy recorded in Psalm 22: 18, which says, "They part my garments among them, and upon my vesture do they cast lots."

*The Women by the Cross.*—Luke tells us that as Jesus went to the place of crucifixion "there followed him a great multitude of people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him." John mentions four who stood by the cross. From Mark 15: 40, 41 we learn that there were many other women present. They drew near enough to the cross for Jesus to speak to his mother. John does not mention the name of his own mother, but Matthew and Mark do. (Matt. 27: 56; Mark 15: 40, 41.) These women were all faithful followers of the Lord. In the agonies of the cross Jesus did not forget his mother. Seeing her and John standing near, he said to her, "Woman, behold, thy son!" By a look or a nod he directed her attention to John. Then to John, "Behold, thy mother!" Mary's husband Joseph must have been dead, for it is written that John took her to his own home.

### "It Is Finished" (Verses 28-30)

The personal ministry had come to a close. He had finished the great work the Father had given him to do. Death was upon him. The torture, the loss of blood, and the accompanying fever brought intense thirst. "I thirst," said he. Near by was a vessel full of vinegar; it was a sort of sour wine, which the soldiers used for drink. "So they put a sponge full of the vinegar upon hyssop, and brought it to his mouth." This was the fulfillment of another prophecy written by David: "They gave me also gall for my food; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." (Psalm 69: 21.) "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished." Then his head fell forward, and his spirit took its departure. He had paid with his own life the price of man's redemption from sin.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Religious bigotry and prejudice are ruinous emotions. The Jews knew that Jesus worked great miracles, and also spoke as never man spoke; yet in their bigotry and prejudice they would not consider the evidence.

The Sanhedrin, the High Court of the Jews, should have been the calmest, the fairest-minded, and the most just body of men on the earth. They professed to believe in God, the judge of all; they were familiar with the scriptures; and they professed great piety. Yet their hatred of Jesus transformed them into an unreasoning, howling, fanatical mob. Beware of a religious mob.

In the midst of all the turmoil, the mock trials, the false witnesses, Jesus was the calmest, the most self-possessed person in the whole affair. None but a divine person could have been calm and serene under such circumstances. It behooves us to seek to imitate him.

The death of Jesus should deeply impress us with two things: (1) the great love of God in giving him to die for us, (2) the enormity of sin, for he died that we might be redeemed from sin. These facts should stir in our own hearts profound love for him.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Jesus in Gethsemane.

Jesus before Ananias and Caiaphas.

Jesus before Pilate.

The words of Jesus while on the cross.

Other significant occurrences while he was on the cross.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject of the lesson and repeat the Golden Text.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the probable year and day of week. Name the places of interest in the lesson, and give information about them.

Give what information you can about the persons.

Where was Jesus when seized by the officers?

Name in order the persons before whom Jesus was taken.

Where did the Roman governor regularly reside, and why was he in Jerusalem at this time?

#### *Verses 4-6*

Why did Pilate have to come out of the palace to confer with the Jews?

How had Pilate afflicted Jesus?

When he brought Jesus out, what did he say?

What opinion did Pilate have of these Jews?

What word had Pilate's wife sent him?

What judgment had Pilate rendered?



## Verses 7-9

What charge had the Jews made against Jesus before their own court?  
 What was the charge before Pilate?  
 When they failed to convince Pilate, what plea did they then make?  
 How did this charge affect Pilate?

## Verses 14-16

What did the Jews intend to do, if Pilate refused their demands?  
 Who was then emperor, and what was his character?  
 How did the Jewish and Roman methods of reckoning the time of day differ?  
 How did Pilate tantalize the Jews?  
 What hypocritical avowal did they then make?

## Verses 17, 18

How was the cross taken to the place of crucifixion?

Where was Jesus crucified?

Quote Heb. 13: 12.

Who else was crucified, and how were the crosses arranged?

## Verses 25-27

To whom belonged the victim's clothing?  
 How did the soldiers dispose of the clothing of Jesus?  
 What prophecy was fulfilled?  
 What women were present?  
 What arrangement did Jesus make for his mother, and how?

## Verses 28-30

Tell about the thirst, and how it was quenched.  
 What prophecy was fulfilled?  
 Repeat some of the words of Jesus while on the cross.  
 According to John, what did he say last?  
 What then occurred?

## Lesson XIII—March 28, 1937

## THE RISEN LORD

John 20: 19-29; 21: 20-24

19 When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

20 And when he had said this, he showed unto them his hands and his side. The disciples therefore were glad, when they saw the Lord.

21 Jesus therefore said to them again, Peace be unto you: as the Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit:

23 Whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

28 Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

20 Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; who also leaned back on his breast at the supper, and said, Lord, who is he that betrayeth thee?

21 Peter therefore seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?  
 22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

23 This saying therefore went forth among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, that he should not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?

24 This is the disciple that beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his witness is true.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore.” (Rev. 1: 17, 18.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Pet. 1: 3-12.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

March 22.	M.	.....	The Resurrection Foretold (Matt. 12: 38-45)
March 23.	T.	.....	Alive Forevermore (John 20: 1-10)
March 24.	W.	.....	Thomas Convinced (John 20: 19-29)
March 25.	T.	.....	The Risen Christ and His Workers (John 21: 1-14)
March 26.	F.	.....	Fruits of the Resurrection (1 Cor. 15: 12-22)
March 27.	S.	.....	Peter's Restoration (John 21: 15-22)
March 28.	S.	.....	The Message of the Risen Christ (Rev. 1: 10-20)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—A.D. 30 or 31. Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week—the third day from the day he was crucified. On the evening of that day, after having been seen by different disciples, he appeared to the assembled apostles, Thomas being absent. On the first day of the next week he appeared to them again, Thomas being present. Some days later he appeared to a group of them as they were fishing in the Sea of Galilee.

*Places.*—The apostles were in Jerusalem the evening of the day of the resurrection, when Jesus appeared to them. Likely they were still in Jerusalem eight days later when Jesus appeared again to them, though they could have been with friends at Bethany. The events of the last section of our lesson occurred at the Sea of Tiberias, called also the Sea of Galilee.

*Persons.*—Jesus and his disciples. It appears that Jesus did not appear to any but his disciples after his resurrection. "Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead." (Acts 10: 40, 41.)

*Lesson Links.*—It is said that sometimes a victim might remain alive on the cross several days. As the Jews did not want any one hanging on the cross so near the city on the Sabbath, they petitioned Pilate to have the legs of Jesus and the two thieves broken so as to hasten death. The soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves, but found that Jesus was already dead. But to make sure that he was dead a soldier pierced his side with a sword, "and straightway there came out blood and water." Then Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man and a member of the Sanhedrin, who was a secret disciple of Jesus, now came boldly to Pilate and asked permission to bury the body of Jesus. Nicodemus, who was also a member of the High Court, assisted Joseph in the burial. He had brought about a hundred pounds of a mixture of myrrh and aloes to be bound up with the body of Jesus. Of course, neither of these had consented to the death of Jesus. At the request of the Jews Pilate placed a guard at the tomb, and sealed it with the government seal. Certain women came to the tomb early the first day of the week, bringing spices with which to anoint the body of Jesus. They did not know that the tomb had been sealed and a guard placed over it. But the spices, the guards, and the seal were all useless, for they found the tomb open and the body gone. There is some difficulty in determining the order of the events of that day; but we are told that on that day he appeared to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16: 9), to Simon Peter, and to two disciples on their journey to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-34).



## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## Jesus Appears to the Apostles (Verses 19-21)

The apostles had seen what befell their Master, and they feared for their own lives. They were assembled in a room with the doors shut for fear of the Jews. From Luke we learn the two disciples who had seen Jesus on their journey to Emmaus had returned, and were telling the group assembled in that room how Jesus "was made known to them in the breaking of bread," when Jesus suddenly stood in their midst, and said, "Peace be unto you." They were too terrified to speak. "But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit." (Luke 24: 37.) To convince them that it was he, and thus to allay their fears, he said, "See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having." (Luke 24: 39.) From this incident we learn that the apostles did not hold with the materialistic school of the Sadducees—they believed in the existence of spirits, which the Sadducees did not believe. Jesus also taught that a spirit could exist apart from flesh and bones. Jesus and his disciples were not materialists. When Jesus showed them the wounds in his hands, in his feet, and in his side, their fear gave way to faith and gladness. Their Lord, whom they so loved, was with them again. Having quieted their fears, Jesus again said to them, "Peace be unto you." This and similar expressions are often found in the Bible. It was a sort of combined salutation and prayer—a prayer for God's peace to be with them. Paul speaks of the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." (Phil. 4: 7.) "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." He would send them out to preach the gospel to all nations.

## The Great Commission (Verses 22, 23)

The last clause of verse twenty-one and verses twenty-two and twenty-three is John's record of the Great Commission. During the forty days between his resurrection and ascension, Jesus often appeared to his disciples, "speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God." We are too prone to think that Jesus, in a few words, announced on one occasion the Great Commission, and then said no more about it. But in speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God he was saying the very things contained in the Great Commission in a condensed form. John's record of the Great Commission is the substance of a speech made on the night after he rose from the dead. Matthew records briefly what he said on a mountain in Galilee. What Mark and Luke record seems to have been spoken in Jerusalem on different occasions. A little reflection will convince any one that the speeches he made during the forty days must have been an elaboration of the things contained in the Great Commission.

*The Holy Spirit.*—When Jesus breathed on the apostles, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit," it does not necessarily follow that they immediately received the Holy Spirit; for in Luke's record of the

commission, Jesus told them to tarry in Jerusalem till they were endued with power from on high. And in Acts 1: 4, 5, Luke records Jesus as saying that they would be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence. And we learn from Acts 2: 1-4 that the Holy Spirit came to them on the day of Pentecost. Hence, they did not receive the Holy Spirit the moment Jesus breathed upon them.

*Apostolic Authority.*—When Jesus promised Peter the keys of the kingdom, he added, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16: 19.) But in John's record of the Great Commission the same authority is conferred upon all of them. "Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose sins ye retain, they are retained." They forgave sins by announcing the terms upon which sins would be forgiven, and leading people to comply with those terms. Whosoever would not comply with these terms, their sins were retained. Paul, though called to be an apostle out of season, had the same powers the others had. (2 Cor. 11: 5.) But they could do this only as guided by the Holy Spirit.

### Thomas Disbelieves the Other Apostles (Verses 24, 25)

Thomas, one of the twelve, was not present when Jesus first appeared to the assembled group. When they met up with Thomas, they told him that they had seen the Lord, and that he was alive, but he did not believe them. There is no indication that he accused them of falsehood. He thought they had been too ready to believe, and were therefore deceived; but he would not be deceived—he would have to have evidence that could not be mistaken. He would not, so he thought, accept the evidence of his eyes. He must not only see the wounds in the hands and side of Jesus, but he would have to put his fingers in the nailprints in the hands and thrust his hand into the wound in his side; otherwise, he would not believe. He is called "doubting Thomas"; but he did not doubt, he positively disbelieved. But even so, he was about like the others; for when Jesus appeared to them, they thought they saw a spirit. He had to show them his wounds, and ask them to handle him and see that it was he, and not a spirit. (Luke 24: 36-43.) It seems unfair to Thomas to make him out worse than the others.

### Thomas Is Convinced (Verses 26-29)

In the language of the Jews, after eight days meant on the eighth day. When the people begged King Rehoboam to make their burdens lighter, he said to them, "Come again unto me after three days." (2 Chron. 10: 5.) But verse twelve tells us that they came to him the third day, "as the king bade, saying, Come to me again the third day." Hence, after eight days was the eighth day, or the first day of the next week. At this appearing Thomas was present. Jesus invited Thomas to make the test that he had said he would have to make before he would believe, and added, "Be not faithless, but believing."



But Thomas was not so hard to convince as he thought he would be, for he immediately said, "My Lord and my God." And so it is not true that faith is lost in sight, as we so often hear; for Jesus said, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed." But many must believe on the testimony of those who did see. Hence, Jesus adds, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

### Peter Rebuked (John 21: 20-23)

*The Connection.*—Before Jesus was crucified he appointed a meeting to take place on a mountain in Galilee after his resurrection. After his resurrection the disciples spent some time in Jerusalem, where he appeared to them on different occasions. They then went down into Galilee to be at the appointed meeting. (See Matt. 26: 32; 28: 7, 16; Mark 16: 7.) But he met with some of the disciples in Galilee before the appointed meeting in the mountain. Peter could not be idle while awaiting the appointed meeting. So he said to a group of six other apostles, "I go a fishing." The others also went. A night's fishing brought no results. At the break of day, Jesus appeared on the shore, but they did not recognize him. By following his directions, they caught a great many fishes. By this time John had recognized Jesus. Then they all came ashore, and found that Jesus had already prepared food for them. After they had eaten, there then followed the well-known conversation between Jesus and Peter concerning Peter's love for him. At the conclusion of questions about Peter's love, Jesus revealed to him that, when he was old, he would be put to death. Then he said to Peter, "Follow me."

*John Follows.*—When Jesus invited Peter to follow him, he did not then mean that as an invitation to Peter to be his disciple, but to follow him aside from the others. As they started away Peter discovered that John was following. John refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved, and as the one "who also leaned back on his breast at the supper, and said, Lord, who is he that betrayeth thee?" It is likely that John refers to this freedom and intimacy with the Lord as a sort of justification for Peter's irritation for his following uninvited on this occasion. Peter thought John was taking too much for granted. His question, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" shows that he was not pleased at John's following them. The Lord's reply does not necessarily mean that John would live till Jesus came again, though Johnson in his comments takes the statement of Jesus as an affirmation, or promise, that John would live till Jesus came again, and that it was fulfilled when Jesus appeared to John on the Isle of Patmos. (Rev. 1: 9-20.) But the statement seems to be merely hypothetical, and was intended to remind Peter to attend to his own affairs. If John wanted to follow Jesus, it was none of Peter's business; even if Jesus had willed that John should never die, he could have kept him alive, and it would have been none of Peter's business. Hence, it seems that the statement was merely meant as a rebuke to Peter. However, the other disciples present thought Jesus meant that John should never die, and the saying that

John would never die was circulated among the brethren. But John did not so understand Jesus; but what he repeats about the matter shows that he understood that Jesus was reminding Peter to attend to his own affairs.

### John's Testimony (Verse 24)

In this verse John identifies himself as the one who followed Jesus, as just mentioned. In speaking of bearing witness, he was referring to his entire book, and not merely the last incidents mentioned. All that he had written was true.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

The first day of the week is peculiarly the Lord's day, just as the commemorative supper is peculiarly the Lord's Supper. Both are devoted to him.

The apostles were practical men. Some were fishermen; one, a tax collector. Both callings teach a person not to believe all he hears. The fact that it took the clearest evidence to convince them that Jesus had risen makes their testimony absolutely reliable.

The apostles were with Jesus so much before and after his resurrection that they could not have been mistaken. And the fact that they gave up their lives for their testimony proves their absolute sincerity.

John states the purpose of his writings: "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." (John 20: 30, 31.)

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The appearances of Jesus after he arose.

The apostles as witnesses.

The keys of the kingdom.

The Great Commission.

The Lord's Day and the Lord's Supper.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject of the lesson and repeat the Golden Text.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time.

The two first appearances to groups of disciples occurred on what day or days? Give the places of the occurrences of events of this lesson.

To whom did Jesus appear after his resurrection?

What was done to hasten the death of the victims on the cross?

What did they do to Jesus?

Give some information about the two men that buried Jesus.

Who came to the tomb early on the first day of the week?

#### *Verses 19-21*

What precautions did the apostles take, and why?

Who was making a report to them?

Tell of the appearance of Jesus, and what he said.

What effect did his appearance have on the apostles, and why?

What did Jesus do to convince and quiet them?

#### *Verses 22, 23*

Give John's record of the great commission.

What did Jesus talk to the disciples about during the forty days he was with them after his resurrection?



What relations did these talks have to the great commission?

When were the apostles to receive the Holy Spirit?

What authority was given to the apostles?

How did they forgive and retain sins?

By what power did they do this?

### *Verses 24, 25*

What did Thomas tell the other apostles about his believing?

Was he harder to convince than the others?

### *Verses 26-29*

What is meant by "after eight days"? Give illustration of the Jews' method of reckoning time.

Tell how Thomas was convinced.

Is faith lost in sight?

What does Jesus say of those who believe on the testimony of others?

### *John 21: 20-23*

Why did the apostles go down into Galilee?

While waiting, what did Peter decide to do?

Tell how Jesus was made known to this group?

Give the incident about John's following Jesus and Peter.

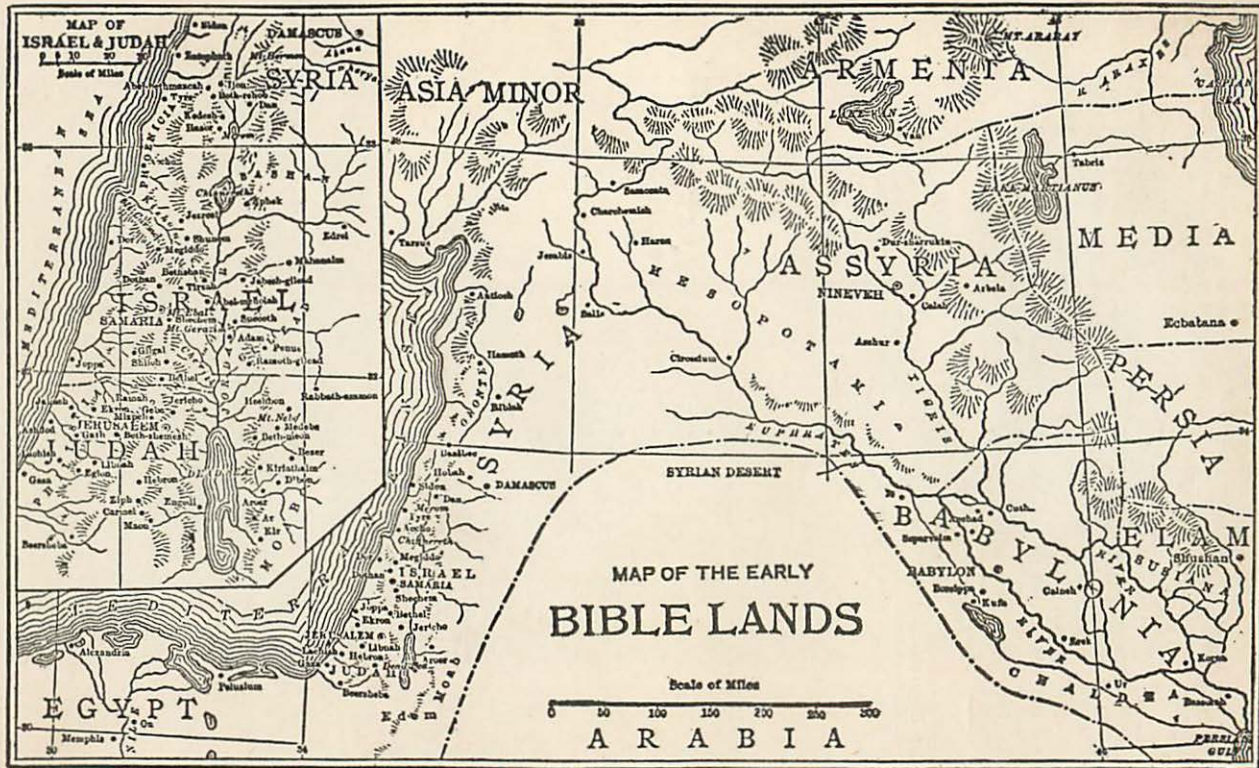
How did Jesus rebuke Peter, and why?

What did the other disciples think Jesus meant?

### *Verse 24*

What does John say of his own testimony?

Discuss the reflections.





## SECOND QUARTER

### MESSAGES FROM GENESIS

*AIM: To lead the student to understand and appreciate the practical significance of Genesis with particular reference to God as the Creator, to the lives of outstanding personalities, and to the establishment of moral and social standards.*

*Lesson I—April 4, 1937*

### GOD THE CREATOR

Gen. 1: 1-5, 26-31

- 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- 2 And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.
- 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.
- 4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.
- 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.
- 26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
- 27 And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them.
- 28 And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.
- 29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food:
- 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food: and it was so.
- 31 And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* (Gen. 1: 1.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 8.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

March 29.	M.	Creation of Matter (Gen. 1: 1-5)
March 30.	T.	Creation of Man (Gen. 1: 26-31)
March 31.	W.	Christ in Creation (John 1: 1-5)
April 1.	T.	Preeminence of the Creator (Isa. 40: 12-17)
April 2.	F.	Creation and the Doctrine of Man (Isa. 45: 8-13)
April 3.	S.	Creation an Index to Worship (Acts 17: 24-29)
April 4.	S.	Praise to the Creator (Psalm 8: 1-9)

### THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—According to Usher's chronology, 4004 B.C.; according to Calmet, 4000 B.C.; but according to William Hales, who is described as "far superior in Biblical knowledge and elaboration to either of the

preceding," it was 5411 B.C. But it is impossible to know the date of the six days of creation; and the creation of the heavens and the earth goes back beyond the six days, how far no one knows.

*Place.*—The heavens and the earth. The exact location on the earth where vegetable and animal life was created is not known, but it was most likely in some part of the Euphrates valley.

*Persons.*—The Godhead—the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit—and the first pair of human beings, Adam and Eve. Such passages as John 1: 1-3, 10; Col. 1: 16, 17; Heb. 1: 1, 2 show clearly that in all the work of creation the Father designed, or planned, and that the Son executed the plans. The following passages show that the Holy Spirit also had a part in the creation: Gen. 1: 2; Job 26: 13; Psalm 104: 30. He brought order out of chaos, and made things usable.

*Lesson Links.*—As this lesson goes back to the beginning of all created things, no lesson goes beyond it. But this lesson does have a close connection with all the lessons that follow it. Genesis, the first book of the Bible, is aptly named; for the word "genesis" means "origin," or "coming into being." Genesis is a book of origins, or beginnings. It records the beginning of the heavens and the earth, vegetable and animal life, the human race, the family, sin, animal sacrifice, human governments, the Hebrew race, the plans concerning human redemption, the covenant of circumcision. It was written by Moses, and is the only authoritative history of that period.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### In the Beginning (Verses 1, 2)

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The greatest work known to man is here related in one brief sentence. The statement itself bears the stamp of inspiration, for uninspired men use many words in telling of the beginning of anything about which they write. This beginning goes back of the six days of creation. So far as we know, measured as we now measure time, it might have been thousands, or even millions, of years before the six days of creation began. Solomon represents wisdom as saying, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the beginning of the dust of the world. When he established the heavens, I was there." (Prov. 8: 23-27.) Of the Son Jehovah said, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands: they shall perish; but thou continuest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a mantle shalt thou roll them up, as a garment, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." (Heb. 1: 10-12.) When we turn away from the Bible account of creation, we have no reliable information as to how things began. Without the Bible men guess and speculate, but come to no definite conclusion. True science deals with the heavens and the earth as they now are, and not how they came to be. Scientific men sometimes speculate, but speculation is not science.

*God Is.*—Back of all created things is God, self-existent, all wise, and all powerful. Admit that God is, and it is easy to account for the



existence of all other things. If you do not admit that God is, you have to create in your mind some original first cause that caused all things. Every made thing has a maker. Our experience and observation prove this. Even so small a thing as a match did not just happen to be. But the most complicated machine made by man is but a tiny toy compared with this great universe. Such a vast and complicated a machine as this universe could not have been made and operated by chance.

*Waste and Void.*—Before the six days of creation began, the earth was waste and void, or, as some translations have it, "without form and void." Whether it was in this condition when created, or had become so, we cannot determine. It was waste—not suited for habitation; and it was void, or empty; and it was enshrouded in darkness. There was no living thing on the earth. "The Spirit of God moved upon [marginal reading, was brooding upon] the face of the waters." This statement, together with verse nine, shows that water covered the whole face of the earth. There was purpose in the Spirit's moving, or brooding, upon the face of the waters. "By his Spirit the heavens are garnished." (Job. 26: 13.) "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the ground." (Psalm 104: 30.) It seems to have been the Holy Spirit's work to bring order out of chaos, to beautify the earth, and to give life. "It is the spirit that giveth life." (John 6: 63.)

### Let There Be Light (Verses 3-5)

"And God said, Let there be light; and there was light." Before this the earth had been enveloped in darkness. From what is said in verse one, it would seem that the sun, moon, and stars had already been created, for certainly they are a part of the heavens. If so, why was there no light? Perhaps the fog and mists surrounding the earth had been too dense to admit light, but now thinned sufficiently for light from the sun to penetrate through to the earth. But it appears from verses 14-19 that the heavenly bodies were made on the fourth day. This, however, could mean that the mist and fog having cleared away, the sun and moon were made to appear that day. However, he who has all power could have caused it to be light without the sun. All things are possible with him. But it will be noticed that God did not say, "Let us make light," but, "Let there be light." "God divided the light from the darkness." At first reading this seems to be a queer expression, for it implies that light and darkness were mixed; yet there is nothing so strange about it, for there is a mixture of light and darkness when it is neither very light nor very dark. When heavy clouds and fog cover the earth, light and darkness are mixed; so also is it at twilight. To dispel all darkness the sun must shine without obstruction. When there is a distinction made between the period of light and the period of darkness, the light is called day and the darkness night; yet when the whole twenty-four hour period is spoken of it is spoken of as a day. Both methods of expression are found in verse five. "And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day."

### The Creation of Man (Verses 26, 27)

There was order and there was system in creation. Before man was created everything necessary to his well-being was created, and made ready for his use. In fact, everything was created in a natural order;



each day's creation prepared for the thing to be created next. Vegetable life must have light; hence light came before trees and plants were created. And as animal life depends on vegetable life, vegetation was created before the animals were made. And as man is dependent on all the other things, man was created last. It is singular, yet true, that man is at once the most dependent and the most independent of all of God's creation. He is dependent on all the lower creation, and yet is master of it all. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Here the us and our show plurality of persons. The Father, the Son (whom John calls the Word), and the Holy Spirit all had a part in the creation.

*The Two Accounts of Creation.*—In the first chapter we have a general account of the creation of all things. In the second chapter Moses begins the history of God's dealings with man. This made it necessary to go back to man's creation. And so in this chapter we have more of the details of man's creation. In the first chapter we are given the bare facts that "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." In the second chapter we are told that God made man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Also in the second chapter we have the particulars of the woman's creation; but in the first chapter Moses merely tells us that God made a male and a female.

*The Nature of Man.*—So far as we know, the body of man is not different from the body of the animal as to material, but only as to form. The bodies of both return to the dust from whence they came. And yet there is a vast difference between man and animals. And there is a difference in the phraseology Moses used in describing their creation. It is said that man was created in the image of God; it is not so said of animals. The image and likeness of God was not stamped upon animals; of all of God's earthly creatures man alone bears that image. It is hardly possible that this can refer to man's physical form, for we cannot understand how a physical being and a spirit can be alike in form, and certainly they cannot be alike as to substance. "God is Spirit." Yet in some way there is a likeness. God has intelligence, will, and emotions; he knows, wills, loves, and hates. Man also has intelligence, will, and emotions; he has the power to know, to will, to love, and to hate. In this respect, and yet in a limited way, man is like God. When man was first made, he was pure and upright in character; in this respect, also, he was like God. He is also capable of exercising dominion, or rule—another point in which he possesses a Godlike trait of character. Man was created to "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." In many ways man has made poor, and sometimes cruel, use of this God-given dominion. He has needlessly slaughtered and destroyed much of that which he should have preserved and protected. He has needlessly wasted the natural resources. In his sports he is often cruel and wasteful in his treatment of animals and fowls, and boasts of the pains and deaths he has caused. In this respect the savages have used more wisdom and common sense than civilized men have; for they regarded wild life as their food supply, and conserved it.



### God's First Law to Man (Verses 28-31)

"God blessed them," the newly created couple, Adam and Eve. Because the woman was taken out of man, God, not Adam, said, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." To this couple God said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." The family was instituted for companionship, and for the propagation of the human race. And this law of God is stamped in our very nature; and human beings are happiest and most useful when they follow its lead. God commanded Adam and Eve to subdue the earth and to have dominion over it. God did not intend for man to be idle. To subdue the earth requires both mental and physical activity. The earth yields its bounty to man only as he subdues it. In the very beginning God placed upon man great power and honor, and also great responsibility. The provisions God made for man, and the power and responsibility he bestowed upon him, show how highly God regards man. If the following quotation is read as it should be, it shows the exalted position man holds in the plans of God: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet." (Heb. 2: 6-8. Compare Psalm 8.) Hence, man is but little lower than the angels. It is awful to think how far most of us have fallen from our exalted state. Everything God made was good; he himself pronounced it so. This state of affairs continued till man's sin brought God's curse upon the whole earth.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

All the powers we have are God-given, and they should all be conserved and cultivated, and given wholeheartedly into God's service.

All created things belong to God. "The earth is Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." (Psalm 24: 1.) We should realize this, and use whatever comes into our hands for his honor and glory, and for the good of humanity.

The family is a divine institution. In it is wrapped up the happiness and the welfare of the human race, the stability and the permanence of decent society, and of well-ordered government. The breaking down of the family, and therefore of family life, that has been in progress for some time is responsible for much of the crime that now curses the earth. It is time we were waking up to some realities, and try to bring back the blessings of the home.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The Godhead in creation.

The order of creation natural.

The nature of man.

How man subdues the earth.

The family and the divorce evil.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject of the lesson and repeat the Golden Text.

*The Lesson Settings*

What dates are given as to time of creation?  
 Give the persons of this lesson.  
 What light does the New Testament give as to the persons in creation?  
 Give the meaning of genesis.  
 Name some of the beginnings recorded in Genesis.

*Verses 1, 2*

Repeat the first verse of the Bible.  
 In what way does it differ from records written by uninspired men?  
 What creation was not included in the six days?  
 Give some other passages bearing on the creation.  
 What is science?  
 Give some arguments to prove that back of all made things is a maker.  
 What idea do you get from the words waste and void?  
 What is said of the Spirit?  
 Give other passages bearing on the Spirit's work in creation.

*Verses 3-5*

"Let there be light"—discuss these words.  
 How may light and darkness be mixed, or separated?  
 Give the different uses of the word day.

*Verses 26, 27*

Discuss the order followed in the creation.  
 What did God say about creating man?  
 What are the meanings of image and likeness?  
 Discuss the two accounts of the creation of man.  
 How does man differ from animals?  
 In what particulars was man created in the image of God?  
 What honor and power was given man?  
 Name some ways in which man has abused that power.

*Verses 28-31*

What marriage law did God give at the beginning?  
 Why did God institute the family?  
 Give some habits and customs that tend to destroy home life.  
 What shows that God had high regard for man?  
 How does Psalm 8: 4-8 exalt man?

*Lesson II—April 11, 1937*

## THE SIN OF ADAM AND EVE

Gen. 3: 1-15

1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat:

3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8 And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God amongst the trees of the garden.

9 And Jehovah God called unto the man, and said unto him, Where art thou?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

13 And Jehovah God said unto the woman, What is this thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.



14 And Jehovah God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."* (Ezek. 18: 4.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 1.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

April 5.	M.	-----	The Beginnings of Sin (Gen. 3: 1-6)
April 6.	T.	-----	What Sin Brought (Gen. 3: 7-15)
April 7.	W.	-----	Sin Is Universal (Rom. 3: 9-18)
April 8.	T.	-----	Sins of the Flesh (Eph. 5: 3-12)
April 9.	F.	-----	Sin Revealed by the Law (Rom. 7: 7-13)
April 10.	S.	-----	Individual Accountability (Ezek. 18: 1-4)
April 11.	S.	-----	Cleansing from Sin (1 John 1: 5-10)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, it was the year of the creation, 4000 B.C. However, we are not told how long Adam and Eve remained in the garden before they sinned. But the language of chapter two, verses eight and nine, indicates that several years elapsed between their creation and their sin. "And Jehovah God planted a garden eastward, in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made Jehovah God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food." It does not say that God created these trees large enough to bear fruit, but that he made them to grow out of the ground. We know that it takes time for trees to grow. It seems certain that no children were born to them in the garden, but Adam was a hundred and thirty years old when his third son was born. (Gen. 5: 1-3.) Hence, they might have remained in the garden more than a hundred years.

*Place.*—The garden of Eden. No one now knows the location of the garden of Eden, except that it was eastward in Eden. It was a delightful place, full of plants and fruits. It might have been where the Persian Gulf now is.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, Adam, Eve, and the serpent. We learned of the first three in the last lesson. In this lesson Satan appears in the form of a serpent. In the Bible Satan is gradually revealed to us. In 1 Chron. 21: 1 we find him standing against Israel. In the first and second chapters of Job he appears as a mocking spirit, seeking to break down the loyalty of Job. In the New Testament he comes into fuller light as the great adversary of man. In 1 Pet. 5: 8 he is referred to as "your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." He is referred to as "the evil one" (Matt. 6: 13), "the prince of the powers of the air" (Eph. 2: 2), "the prince of this world" (John 12: 31), "the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan" (Rev. 20: 2).

*Lesson Links.*—In the garden of Eden there grew two trees of special mention, "the tree of life" and "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Adam and Eve might eat of the fruit of all the trees of the garden, excepting the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; in the day they ate of that tree they would surely die. In that garden Adam and Eve were not idle—their duty was to dress the garden and keep it. But there was no toil, no weariness, in their

work, for they could eat of the invigorating, life-giving fruit of the tree of life. It is known that weariness is the result of the death of bodily cells; the fruit of the tree of life prevented this destruction, and consequent weariness.

*Note.*—In studying this lesson we should realize that Moses gives only a brief account of the things that happened on this momentous occasion. The student should read carefully the entire chapter; otherwise he will not get the full significance of the lesson.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Satan Tempts Eve (Verses 1-5)

What form the serpent then had, we know not; but he must have been upright, for the curse placed on him required him to go upon his belly. He was not repulsive in appearance, else Eve would have avoided him. He was subtle, that is, sly, cunning, crafty, more so than any beast of the field. He would, of course, come to Eve in a friendly way, and not as an enemy—not letting her know that he was seeking her downfall. No schemer advertises his real purpose. He must first get the good will of his intended victim; this he can usually do by flattery and appearing to be greatly interested in whatever is of interest to his victim. When Satan had secured Eve's attention, he asked her if God had prohibited their eating of any of the fruit of the garden, insinuating that such prohibition was a reflection on them. Perhaps Eve felt a little ashamed to acknowledge that God had restricted their liberties. They must not eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge on penalty of death. Then the devil took square issue with Jehovah, and boldly affirmed that Jehovah knew that eating that fruit would not cause death, and that eating it would make them as God, "knowing good and evil." Satan wanted her to get the notion that God was holding them in ignorance, because he did not want any one else to be as wise as he. Of course, eating the forbidden fruit did not make them as wise as God; but eating it did enable them to know good and evil, as is shown by the fact that God later said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." There was therefore enough truth in what the devil said to make his statement a most deceptive lie.

### The Sin and Shame of Adam and Eve (Verses 6-8)

In addition to any distrust in Jehovah that Satan created in Eve, the fruit of the tree of knowledge was made to appear very desirable as a food. She saw that the fruit was good for food. So far as we know this effort to get Eve to eat the fruit might have gone on at intervals for days. The fruit was also a delight to the eyes. Everybody likes to see beautiful fruit, and its beauty creates a desire to eat it. And most people like to be wise. Everything about that fruit presented a strong appeal. For the moment it was to Eve the most desirable thing in the world. The only thing to hinder her from eating that fruit was her respect for the word of God and her fear of the consequences of eating it; but Satan had almost, if not altogether, destroyed these restraints, so much so, at least, that she was now willing to follow the serpent's leading. Hence, "she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband



with her, and he did eat." Eve was deceived; Adam was not. "And Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression." (1 Tim. 2: 14.) Adam had not believed what the devil said; his act seems to have been a deliberate transgression of God's word, in so far as a man can act with deliberation in the face of strong persuasion. It is certain that he was influenced by her to eat, for the Lord said to him, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake." (Verse 17.)

*Conscious of Their Guilt.*—Their eyes were opened. This does not refer to their physical eyes. They had not been blind previous to this, for it is said that Eve saw that the fruit was a delight to the eyes. Their eyes were opened in the sense that they came to see, or realize, their guilt—realize the sin of what they had done. They also became self-conscious, and felt the shame of their nakedness; and in their feeling of shame for their nakedness they sought to hide their nakedness by making clothing of fig leaves. They also felt afraid for Jehovah to see them, and sought to hide themselves from him. They did not know that it was impossible to hide themselves from Jehovah. "Even the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." (Psalm 139: 12.) "Can any hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him? saith Jehovah. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith Jehovah." (Jer. 23: 24.) "And there is no creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. 4: 13.) But there is no indication that Adam and Eve knew these truths about God. And so they thought to hide from God. Hence, sin not only separates people from God, but seems also to create in them a desire for that separation.

### Adam and Eve Offer Excuses (Verses 9-13)

Sin produced a new feeling in Adam and Eve—they were afraid of Jehovah. While sin causes people to fear Jehovah, the sinner may by long indulgence in crime become so hardened that he ceases to fear the Lord. Of this class Paul says, "There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. 3: 18.) Jude speaks of "shepherds that without fear feed themselves." (Jude 12.) When Jehovah called Adam, he came out of his hiding place, and confessed that, on account of his nakedness, he was afraid and hid himself. To bring out a further confession the Lord said, "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" Adam made a sort of confession with an excuse as a defense. In so doing it seems that he blamed both Jehovah and the woman for what he had done: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat," as if to say, you gave me a woman, and she got me into all this trouble. When the woman was questioned, she also made a sort of confession with an excuse as a defense: "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." Instead of freely and openly confessing their sins, and pleading for mercy, they both sought to justify themselves by shifting the blame to others. Their descendants are much like them. So few



people will openly and freely confess a sin. Self-justification is an evil from which even few Christians escape. If they make any sort of confession, they are inclined to try to make it appear that their sin was caused by what some one else did. Few can confess their sins so freely as did David. "And David said unto God, I have sinned greatly, in that I have done this thing: but now put away, I beseech thee, the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly." (1 Chron. 21: 8.) And again, on account of another sin, David said, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight." (Psalm 51: 4.) We need to learn that a confession with defense is no confession at all. If a person has sinned, he has sinned; and it does not lessen his guilt to try to lay the blame on some one else or on circumstances.

### Results of the Sin of Adam and Eve (Verses 14, 15)

*To the Serpent.*—If the serpent had been as he is now, it was no curse upon him for Jehovah to tell him that he must always go upon his belly. He was thus to be cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field. The marginal reading has "from among" instead of "above" cursed from among all cattle and every beast of the field. And there would be perpetual enmity between the serpent and the woman—between the snake family and the human family. And we all know how that enmity continues to the present day. It is an undying enmity, and nothing pleases the average person much more than to bruise the serpent's head. The snake would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman. All who know poisonous snakes know that they habitually strike low. This is the literal side of this famous fifteenth verse. But the verse is usually interpreted as being prophetic of the coming of Christ, Satan's persecution of him and his followers, and the ultimate triumph of Christ over Satan. It may have this prophetic significance, although the words have their literal meaning. In Rev. 12: 9; 20: 2, John refers to Satan as the old serpent. But it is a fact that no writer of the New Testament refers to Gen. 3: 15 as a prophecy of Christ. Perhaps it has no other than a literal meaning.

*Results to the Woman* (verse 16).—When God created Adam and Eve, he told them to multiply and fill the earth. On the woman God laid the burden of bearing children. But now, because of sin, pain was added to the burden of childbearing; also her husband was to rule over her.

*To Adam* (verses 17-19).—Adam had sinned in following his wife instead of God. By their disobedience, sin entered into the world; and because of that sin, death came. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Before he sinned he was to dress the garden and keep it; now he must toil and sweat for food, for the earth would not so readily yield her fruit. He must battle against thorns and thistles and other noxious growths, and finally return to the dust from whence he was taken. Having sinned, Adam and Eve were no longer fit to dwell in the garden of delights, nor to live always on the earth. He was therefore driven from the garden,



so that he would no longer be able to eat of the life-perpetuating fruit of the tree of life. Death would be the inevitable result of that separation. He did not, as some think, become mortal as a result of sin. His body was as mortal before he sinned as after he sinned; but in the garden he could renew decay and perpetuate life by eating the fruit of the tree of life. Even after he sinned, he would have continued to live had he been permitted to eat the life-perpetuating fruit. To prevent this, God drove him from the garden, "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." And so, as sin brought death, so also does death bring to an end the earthly career of the sinner.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Sin is not a part of human nature, for Adam and Eve were as human before they sinned as after.

We do not inherit Adam's sin, but we do suffer its consequences. In many ways we suffer the consequences of the sins of other people. And we enjoy many blessings because of the good deeds of others. "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15: 22.) We die through no fault of our own, and so we are to be raised from the dead through no righteousness of our own.

Adam and Eve gave up the delights of the garden of Eden and the blessings of daily communion with God, and plunged the world into suffering and death, for the fleeting pleasure of eating the forbidden fruit. Hence, in sinning against God, they also sinned grievously against themselves and their posterity.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Freedom of the will.

The blessings of obedience.

The consequences of sin as seen in—

1. What it does for us.
2. What it cost to redeem us from sin.
3. The punishment due on account of sin.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject and repeat the Golden Text.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give some information as to the possible time.

Give the place and persons.

Give some information about Satan.

What two trees of special mention grew in the garden?

What command was given regarding one tree?

What was the duty of Adam regarding the garden?

What prevented death or weariness?

#### *Verses 1-5*

What is said of the serpent?

What is the meaning of subtle?

How would he likely approach Eve?

Repeat and discuss the conversation.

#### *Verses 6-8*

What three things about the fruit appealed to Eve?

Why did the fruit have a stronger appeal to her than God's command?

Why did Adam eat the fruit?

Did Adam believe the serpent?

What feelings did eating the fruit produce in Adam and Eve?

What two things did they do?

#### *Verses 9-13*

How hardened may sinners become?

How did Adam seek to excuse his sin?

What excuse did Eve offer?

What sort of confessions of sins do people usually make?

Tell of David's confessions.

#### *Verses 14, 15*

What curse was put upon the serpent?

Discuss verse 15.

What were the results of the sin to the woman?

What to the man?

Did he work before he sinned?

Why do people die as a result of Adam's sin?

Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson III—April 18, 1937

## THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Gen. 13: 13; 19: 23-25; Deut. 32: 31-33; Prov. 23: 29-32

13 Now the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceedingly.

23 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot came unto Zoar.

24 Then Jehovah rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven;

25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the Plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

31 For their rock is not as our Rock,  
Even our enemies themselves being judges.  
32 For their vine is of the vine of Sodom,  
And of the fields of Gomorrah:  
Their grapes are grapes of gall,  
Their clusters are bitter:  
33 Their wine is the poison of serpents,  
And the cruel venom of asps.

29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions?  
Who hath complaining? who hath wounds without cause?  
Who hath redness of eyes?  
30 They that tarry long at the wine;  
They that go to seek out mixed wine.  
31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red,  
When it sparkleth in the cup,  
When it goeth down smoothly:  
32 At the last it biteth like a serpent,  
And stingeth like an adder.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."* (Prov. 23: 32.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 5: 11-14.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

April 12. M.-----Intemperance in the Community (Gen. 13: 13; 19: 23-25)  
April 13. T.-----Intemperance in the Nation (Deut. 32: 28-33)  
April 14. W.-----Physical Effects of Intemperance (Prov. 23: 29-32)  
April 15. T.-----Wine and Wickedness (Hos. 4: 6-10)  
April 16. F.-----The Drunkard's Doom (Deut. 29: 19-24)  
April 17. S.-----The Great Destroyer (Isa. 5: 11-14)  
April 18. S.-----Victory through Christ (Eph. 5: 14-21)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, Sodom was destroyed 1897 B.C.; the song of Moses was composed about 1451 B.C.; Proverbs was written during the reign of Solomon, between 1014 B.C. and 975 B.C. When we come down to the days of Solomon, chronologists can be more accurate as to time than back in the days of the patriarchs.

*Places.*—Sodom, Zoar, the land of Moab, and Jerusalem. No one now knows where the city of Sodom was located. It is agreed that it was somewhere near the Dead Sea; some think it was at the north end of the Dead Sea, others think it was at the south end. The land of Moab lay east of the Dead Sea, and at times the territory of Moab extended as far north as the river Arnon. The Moabites were descendants of the son of Lot's oldest daughter.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, the people of Sodom, Moses, Solomon, and the people of Israel.



*Lesson Links.*—Intoxicating drinks have been a problem ever since men began to make them, and no one knows when they first began to be made. Before governments began to try to regulate the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, the problem was social and religious, and is yet so; but it is also now a government problem. The government cannot deal with the drink evil from a purely religious standpoint. The government cannot undertake to legislate people into heaven, nor can it legislate to keep people out of hell. But the government can, and should, take notice of it in so far as it affects economics, health, good citizenship, and the safety of both the user and the nonuser. The subtopic of this lesson is "The Scientific Approach to the Liquor Problem." There are some effects of alcoholic beverages that have never been reduced to a science; perhaps none, unless it is its direct effect on the person that drinks. But it affects also economics, citizenship, and safety. On these points it affects both the user and the nonuser; and its effects along these lines have never been reduced to a science.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### The Wickedness of the Men of Sodom (Verse 13)

The reason for the description of the men of Sodom, given in verse thirteen, is found in the preceding verses. Abram had become "very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold." "And Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents." Because the land about Bethel did not furnish enough grazing for the stock of both men, there developed strife between Abram's herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen. To avoid this strife, Abram proposed a separation, and generously told Lot to take his choice of the grazing lands. "So Lot chose him all the Plain of the Jordan." "Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the Plain, and moved his tent as far as Sodom." To show what Lot's selfishness had got him into, the men of Sodom are described as "wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceedingly." For the sake of gain Lot had chosen one of the wickedest of all cities for a home for himself and his family. The final outcome shows the folly of that move.

### The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19: 23-25)

The people of a whole city or country may become so wicked that they are no longer fit to live on the earth. It was so with the people before the flood. "And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Because of this, the Lord destroyed them with a flood. And when the kingdom of Judah became so corrupt that the leaders could not stand the righteous Jeremiah in their midst, the Lord had them carried into captivity. People can become so wicked that nothing can change them. When that is true, they might as well be destroyed. Sodom and Gomorrah had reached that stage of corruption, in which there was no good in them.

*Abraham's Plea.*—Read the eighteenth chapter. When the Lord revealed to Abraham his purpose to destroy Sodom, Abraham, of course, thought of his nephew Lot and his family. He began a plea for the Lord to save the city, if fifty righteous people could be found

in it, finally making his plea for the city if ten righteous people could be found in it. The ten could not be found.

*Lot Warned.*—Lot had found no pleasure in associating with the men of Sodom. It seems that Lot, though a righteous man, had no influence for good over the people of Sodom; they were too depraved to be influenced for good. The day of their reckoning had come; but the Lord would not destroy the righteous with the wicked. Lot was warned to take his family and flee from the city.

*Lot Escapes.*—At his earnest plea Lot was allowed to go to the small city of Zoar. "Then Jehovah rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire." These cities, and the people round about, were destroyed. "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, having made them an example unto those that should live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, sore distressed by the lascivious life of the wicked (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their lawless deeds)." (2 Pet. 2: 6-8.) But so far as the record shows, Lot lost all his possessions; at least, nothing is said of his taking anything with him. He also lost his wife. If Lot ever had the notion that what the people of Sodom did was no concern of his, he was sadly mistaken. A good man may suffer great loss, even his life, by the wickedness of others. These studies about Sodom are included in a lesson on "The Effects of Alcoholic Beverages," but nothing is said about intoxicants in all that is said about Sodom's inhabitants. They were extremely immoral, and wicked. They might have been drinkers of intoxicants.

### The Vine of Sodom (Deut. 32: 31-33)

This section of our lesson is a part of a song which Moses spoke in the ears of the assembly of Israel. He had led them out of Egypt and through the wilderness. They were about ready to enter Canaan, but Moses would die there in the land of Moab. With him it was a solemn hour. In the song he said to the elders and officers of Israel, "For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands." (Deut. 31: 29.) Moses knew the fickleness of the masses of people.

*A Refuge.*—The rocks of the mountains were places of refuge for a people when a superior force invaded their country. Rock therefore came to be used figuratively to represent that in which people trusted for safety when in danger. A heathen nation trusted in their god, which Moses here calls their rock. Jehovah was the Rock of Israel, in whom they would find safety. Israel would forsake Jehovah for the gods of the heathen; and then Jehovah would bring calamity upon them, and say, "Where are their gods, the rock in which they took refuge?" (Verse 37.) But Moses warned them against such folly, saying, "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." Their enemies knew how God had been with them and protected them in their journeys.

*Their Vine.*—Vine is often used figuratively to represent a nation. A nation was sometimes represented as a vine. In one of the most



striking figures of speech found in the Bible, David represents Israel as a vine brought out of Egypt, and planted in Palestine, which grew till it filled the land, and the mountains were covered by its shadow. "It sent out its branches unto the sea, and its shoots unto the River. Why hast thou broken down its walls, so that all they that pass by the way do pluck it? The boar out of the wood doth ravage it, and the wild beasts of the field feed on it." (See Psalm 80: 8-16.) Israel was a choice vine, but it degenerated. "Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate branches of a foreign vine unto me?" (Jer. 2: 21.) Foreign nations were corrupt. "Their vine is of the vine of Sodom." This does not mean a literal vine, but that idolatrous nations were of the nature of Sodom. All the fruits of such a nation were bitter like gall. Lot found that to be true, for his experiences in Sodom were bitter; and the final fruits of their corruption was their utter destruction—a bitter ending. Sodom had long ceased to be when Moses wrote this song; but a great wicked city like Sodom would influence the nations around her, and that influence would continue for ages. Moses did not say, "Their wine was poison," but "is the poison." None of Sodom's literal wine existed in Moses' day. It is not likely that their literal wine was any more poisonous than the wine made by other people.

#### What Intoxicants Do to the Drinker (Prov. 23: 29, 30)

Woe is affliction, a heavy calamity, grief, misery. Some, or even all, of these come upon the drinker of intoxicants. If the drinker alone suffered, it would be bad enough; but it is not infrequent that the innocent suffer more sorrow, poverty, and even bodily wounds than the guilty. Sorrows for deeds which he cannot undo often come to the drinker and to those whom he should love and cherish. In his sober moments he feels that he would give worlds to undo some of the things that cannot be remedied. "Who hath contentions?" Many drinkers become quarrelsome, and want to fight. Their best friends are likely to become the object of their unreasoning anger. They fancy insults, when none has been offered. "Who hath complaining?" The drinker complains at his friends, if they try to shun his company while he is drunk; he complains at ill-health caused by continued drinking; he complains at his poverty caused by squandering his money for drink and by the lessening of his earning power; and he complains because he fancies that every one is against him. The drunkard does not realize how unpleasant and tiresome, and even disgusting, a drunk man is. "Who hath wounds without cause?" In his drunken brawls, the drinker sometimes gives and receives wounds when there is no real cause for doing so. And in these days when safe driving requires soberness and good judgment, the drunken driver causes many wounds and even deaths. Solomon asks who has all these disagreeable experiences, and then answers, "They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek out mixed wine."

*What Science Declares.*—It is declared by high medical authority that alcohol is a depressant, habit-forming, narcotic drug—a poison; that it causes such diseases as psychosis, multiple neuritis, gastritis, and cirrhosis of the liver; that it causes death from acute and chronic poisoning; that it reduces resistance to infection; that it diminishes likelihood of recovery from acute infections, such as pneumonia; that

it increases liability to accidents, and delays recovery; and that even in small quantities it reduces endurance and accuracy and rapidity of muscular action. It is known also that it frequently has injurious effects on offspring.

### Abstinence Enjoined (Verses 31, 32)

In these days of drinking, it is good to read these verses often. They are a good description of both the wine itself and its effects. "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it sparkleth in the cup, when it goeth down smoothly: at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Wine is pretty to look at, and pleasant to the taste; but let not the looks and the taste deceive you. Wine is a mocker. It promises pleasure, and people who are slightly intoxicated act as if it gave pleasure, but "at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." The remainder of the chapter should have been included in this lesson. "Thine eyes shall behold strange things." This happens to the one who tarries long at the wine. He is as one "that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast." All these come to the victim of delirium tremens, "violent delirium induced by excessive and prolonged use of intoxicants, and characterized by terrifying hallucinations and by tremor of the hands and tongue," and sometimes accompanied by a jerking and twitching of all the muscles of the body.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

It is folly to say that if you let whisky alone, it will let you alone. Whisky causes damage and even death to many people who never take a drink. And there is no safety to any one on the highway when drunk people are driving.

The drunkard not only brings misery and damage to others, but he shuts the gates of heaven against himself. Paul classes the drunkard with the vilest of characters, and affirms that they shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 5: 10.)

Isaiah's reflections on the downfall of the kingdom of Israel, which is frequently called Ephraim, because Ephraim was the leading tribe in that kingdom: "And even these reel with wine, and stagger with strong drink; the priest and the prophet reel with strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they stagger with strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean." To get the full force of this quotation read all of Isa. 28: 1-8.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- How drunkenness corrupts morals and injures health.
- How it impoverishes the drinker.
- How the drunkard is a menace to others.
- The eternal doom of the drunkard.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject and repeat the Golden Text.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time of the different selections.

Give the places and what information you can about the places.

Who were the persons?

What sort of problem was alcohol at first?



When did it become a government problem?  
On what grounds can the government take notice of alcoholic drinks?

### Verse 13

What brought about a separation between Abram and Lot?  
Where did Lot locate, and why?  
What is said of the men of Sodom?

### Gen. 19: 23-25

Why were the people destroyed by the flood?  
Why were the Jews carried into captivity?  
Why was Sodom to be destroyed?  
What plea did Abram make?  
Why did not Lot and his family perish in Sodom?  
To what city did Lot go?  
What does Peter say of Lot?

### Deut. 32: 31-33

When was this section of our lesson spoken, and where?

Why was rock used to represent the God of Israel and the gods of the heathen?  
What did Moses say about their rock?  
What does vine here represent?  
Give some references to show that vine was sometimes used to represent a nation of people.  
What expression did Moses use to show that the heathen nations then were of the nature of Sodom?  
What did he say of their fruits?

### Prov. 23: 29, 30

Repeat from memory Prov. 23: 29, 30.  
Discuss each question in these two verses.  
What answer did Solomon give to his own questions?  
What does science declare as to the results of alcoholic drinks?

### Verses 31, 32

What does Solomon say of wine and its effects?  
How is wine a mocker?  
Describe the results that sometimes follow prolonged drinking.  
What is delirium tremens?  
Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson IV—April 25, 1937

### THE OBEDIENCE OF NOAH

#### Gen. 8: 20-22; 9: 8-17

20 And Noah builded an altar unto Jehovah, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.

21 And Jehovah smelled the sweet savor; and Jehovah said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done.

22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

8 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

10 And with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that go out of the ark, even every beast of the earth.

11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud,

15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." (Heb. 11: 7.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 23.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

April 19.	M.	God's Promise to Noah (Gen. 8: 20-22)
April 20.	T.	The Covenant of the Rainbow (Gen. 9: 8-17)
April 21.	W.	The Righteous Protected (Psalm 91: 1-6)
April 22.	T.	Obedience and Prosperity (Deut. 30: 6-10)
April 23.	F.	Love, the Motive of Obedience (John 14: 21-26)
April 24.	S.	Spiritual Blessings Promised (Psalm 24: 1-5)
April 25.	S.	Learning Obedience (Heb. 5: 1-9)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—According to Usher, 2347 B.C.; according to Calmet, 2343 B.C.; according to Hales, 3154 B.C. Some others give different dates. The fact that the inspired writers did not deal much in dates shows that dates were not of special importance in the development of God's plans. The figures given in the fifth chapter will enable the student to count the number of years from creation to the flood. Take the ages of each man at the birth of the son, and Noah's age at the time of the flood, and get the sum of all.

**Place.**—The district or country called Ararat. Ararat was a country, not a mountain. The ark had rested upon the mountains of Ararat, not on Mount Ararat. As the incidents of our lesson occurred soon after Noah and his family came out of the ark, it is almost certain that they were yet in the country of Ararat. (2 Kings 19: 37.) Isa. 37: 38 speaks of the land of Ararat, the refuge of the sons of Sennacherib. Jer. 51: 27 speaks of the kingdom of Ararat.

**Persons.**—Jehovah and Noah. Of course, Noah's wife, his three sons and their wives, and all the people of the earth after them, were included in the covenant made with Noah.

**Lesson Links.**—The student should read carefully all that comes between this lesson and lesson two. Cain was the first murderer. (Gen. 4: 1-8.) The remainder of the fourth chapter gives us some account of Cain and his descendants. The fifth chapter gives us a line of patriarchs down to Noah and his sons. By the time Noah lived the people of the earth had become exceedingly corrupt. "And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . . And Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground. . . . But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah." (Gen. 6: 5-8.) But Jehovah would not destroy a people without warning them of the results of their wickedness. Through Noah he warned these people; we are told that Noah was a preacher of righteousness. (2 Pet. 2: 5.) But the Lord would not bear with their wickedness indefinitely. "My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever, for that he also is flesh: yet shall his days be a hundred and twenty years." This hundred and twenty years was a period of probation; he would give them this period in which to grow better or worse.



## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## The Ark and the Flood (Gen. 6: 13 to 8: 19)

This is all included in our lesson, though not included in the printed text. Before the time arrived for the people to be destroyed by a flood, Jehovah commanded Noah to build an ark, and gave him full directions as to how to build the ark. "According to all that God commanded him, so did he." Noah believed in God—trusted his guidance. "By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." God also told Noah what to bring into the ark, besides his wife, his sons, and their wives. Animals were to be brought in by twos, the male and his female; but of clean animals seven pairs of each sort were to be brought into the ark. By comparing Gen. 6: 11-13 and 8: 14, it will be seen that Noah was in the ark twelve months and eleven days. But twelve Jewish months (and Moses most certainly counted according to the Jewish count) contained only 254 days. The eleven days added to the 254 would make a full solar year. Not only did the water destroy all things in whose nostrils was the breath of life, but it continued on the earth long enough to purify the earth of all dead flesh. It was a clean world—clean both physically and morally.

*Saved by Water.*—Peter tells us that Christ preached to the people by the Spirit, "while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 3: 18-21.) Water saved Noah and family by transplanting them from a world of sin and corruption into a world made clean and pure. And so baptism saves us by transplanting us out of sin into a new environment. Noah's deliverance from that sinful world by the flood is a striking likeness of our deliverance from sin through baptism.

## Noah Builds an Altar and Offers Sacrifices (Verse 20)

This is the first mention of an altar, though Abel must have used some kind of altar on which to offer his sacrifices; and so also Cain may have had. We know not when God first gave a law that distinguished between clean and unclean animals, but it is likely that he did so from the beginning. When Noah entered the ark, he took into the ark with him one male and one female of all sorts of unclean animals, but seven pairs of all clean animals. So when he came out of the ark he had clean animals and clean birds to offer as sacrifices to the Lord. He therefore built an altar, and offered upon it sacrifices of all kinds of clean animals and of clean birds. It was a solemn act of worship on the part of Noah for God's favors to him.

*Sacrifice of Divine Origin.*—The Bible does not say, in so many words, that God commanded the first sacrifices offered by Abel and Moses; yet how else could such an idea originate? The skeptic can give no rational explanation as to the origin of animal sacrifice. Heathen worship and sacrifices are but a corruption of the true worship and the God-appointed sacrifices. It is inconceivable that man originated the idea himself. It is a fact also that God accepted



Abel's offering and rejected Cain's. This can be accounted for only on the grounds that Abel offered the sacrifice that God commanded, and Cain did not. Also, Abel offered his sacrifice by faith, and a man does not act by faith when he is following his own opinion. Again, Cain sinned in what he did. There could have been no sin in what he did, if there had been no law on that point. Another point: It was Noah's custom to obey God. It is not reasonable to suppose that he would have turned aside from God's leading, and followed his own notions in so important a matter as offering sacrifices in worship to God.

### God's Gracious Promise to Noah (Verses 21, 22)

Jehovah was pleased with Noah's offerings—they were to him as a sweet-smelling savor. God had been gracious to Noah, but severe with the incorrigible sinners. "Behold then the goodness and severity of God." (Rom. 11: 22.) Toward the perverse and rebellious sinner God is as severe as if he were without mercy, but toward those who love and serve him he is as gracious and merciful as if he were without the severity of justice. Human nature is weak, and God is merciful to those who try to do his will, and he is longsuffering toward all men. Hence, he said to Noah, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Sin is often daring and spectacular; it therefore stirs the imagination of youth. This accounts for the downfall of many. The Lord would no more destroy everything with a flood.

*Stability Assured.*—There had been a whole year in which everything was upset. Naturally Noah and his family would wonder if this might not occur again. For a year there had been no seedtime, and therefore no harvest. Would this occur again? Had the whole course of nature become uncertain? We can see why these people needed some assurance. They had passed through an awful experience; if that experience was to be repeated, why plan anything? But nothing like that would come any more. "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." It is a blessing to man that this earth is run on schedule, that we therefore know when seedtime and harvest will come. Heat and cold, summer and winter, each in turn serve their purpose, and so with day and night. It is impossible for us to imagine what would be, if there were no order nor system about the operations of these things. The Lord guarantees their continuance so long as the earth shall last. The universe, vast beyond our wildest imaginings, runs with precision, and without noise or variation. It is a perfect timepiece. This shows design and control. This universe did not happen by chance, nor is it run by its own power.

### The Flood Covenant (Gen. 9: 8-11)

"And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." (9: 1.) This is almost an exact repetition of Gen. 1: 28. All animals, birds, and fishes were to be afraid of man. Were it not for this fear of man, man would never have been able to make use of the animals as he has done. "Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; as the green



herb have I given you all." This seems to indicate that previous to this time people were not permitted to eat the flesh of animals; yet if they were not permitted to eat flesh before this time, it is difficult to see why there had been a distinction between clean animals and unclean animals. But be that as it may, the eating of blood is here plainly prohibited, and that prohibition is repeated in the New Testament, and is therefore binding on us. (Acts 15: 29.) Another important law was announced at that time: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." This seems to have been promulgated as a fundamental and perpetual law; the death of the murderer is required because man is made in the image of God. The same reasons exist now for the law that existed then. A covenant usually is an agreement between two or more parties, with certain stipulated conditions to be performed by each party; the violation of the conditions by one party releases the other. But the covenant here mentioned seems to have been more of the nature of a pledge on the part of Jehovah. The covenant was made with Noah and his seed after him, and with beasts and birds. No conditions are named; nothing is required of man as conditions to be performed by him. The Lord covenanted, pledged, or promised that the earth would never be again destroyed by a flood. Had not Jehovah given this pledge, the people living at that time, or near that time, would have been frightened every time it began to rain. Jehovah's pledge gave them assurance and peace of mind. But the pledge does not mean that the earth will have a continued existence as it now is. In Peter's day some seemed to think so, but he gave them to understand that it would be destroyed by fire. (2 Pet. 3: 5-13.)

### The Token of the Flood Covenant (Verses 12-17)

It is interesting to note the world-lasting nature of the things God said to Noah, or that he established with him and his seed: (1) The law of the seasons, and of day and night; (2) the command to multiply; (3) permission to eat flesh; (4) prohibition against eating blood; (5) capital punishment; (6) the earth never to be destroyed by another flood; (7) and the token of the flood covenant. "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." The critics have assailed the reliability of the record here. They claim, that, as the rainbow is a natural phenomenon, it must have appeared in all previous time. But they are too anxious to find fault. There is nothing in the language to indicate that it had not been seen before. "I do set" is in the present tense, and here denotes continuous action. However, the marginal reading has, "I have set." Leeser's translation, made by a Jew and used by Jews, has, "My bow have I set in the cloud." A thing already in existence may be adopted as a token of a covenant. The rainbow, a beautiful thing, is the result of the sun's shining on falling rain. It is a singular thing that the rain, which, in part, caused the flood, should be the means of giving back a sign that there would be no more such flood.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Men are prone to form one-sided views of things. They are too much inclined to see only that which they want to see. They read

that God is love, and ignore the statement that "our God is a consuming fire." (Heb. 12: 29.) The flood shows that he is a God of vengeance, as well as of love.

By faith Noah built the ark. Faith only, that is, faith without works, is dead. Such faith never would have built the ark; neither does it ever accomplish anything, nor bring any blessings. Faith prompted and guided Noah in building the ark; and so it is said that he built the ark by faith—a faith made perfect by works.

How long Noah preached righteousness we do not know. It appears that God's Spirit had been striving with the people before he announced that a hundred and twenty years remained before man would be destroyed. But outside his own family it seems that no one paid any attention to him. But he did not fail; for he succeeded in doing his duty, and in saving himself and family. It was the people who failed.

By his faithful preaching and by his obedience in building the ark, thereby saving himself and family, Noah condemned the world. His conduct showed that people are not necessarily subject to their environment, and condemned those who are entirely controlled by their surroundings. Also the events justified Noah's actions, and condemned the others.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

How much is included in the phrase "by faith"?

How God's Spirit strives with man.

The eating of blood.

Capital punishment.

### QUESTIONS

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.  
How many years from the creation to the flood?

What and where was Ararat?

Tell about the first murder.

Tell about the wickedness of man before the flood.

What is said of Noah?

#### *Gen. 6: 13 to 8: 19*

Discuss Noah's obedience in building the ark.

How was the ark built by faith?

What was brought into the ark?

How was Noah saved by water?

#### *Verse 20*

How came Noah to have clean animals and birds for sacrifices?

What reasons can you give that animal sacrifices were of divine origin?

#### *Verses 21, 22*

What shows that Jehovah is both merciful and severe?

Why would God no more destroy the earth with a flood?

What assurance did God give as to stability of things?

#### *Gen. 9: 8-11*

What food was allowed, and what was prohibited?

What evidence that this prohibition is in force now?

What is a covenant?

What covenant did God make?

What is peculiar about this covenant?

#### *Verses 12-17*

Give the world-lasting things that God established with Noah.

What was the token of the flood covenant?

Discuss the reflections.



## Lesson V—May 2, 1937

## ABRAHAM A MAN OF FAITH

Gen. 12: 1-9; 13: 14-18

1 Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

4 So Abram went, as Jehovah had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the oak of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

7 And Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto Jehovah, who appeared unto him.

8 And he removed from thence unto the mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Ai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto Jehovah, and called upon the name of Jehovah.

9 And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South.

14 And Jehovah said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward:

15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then may thy seed also be numbered.

17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for unto thee will I give it.

18 And Abram moved his tent, and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built there an altar unto Jehovah.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance." (Heb. 11: 8.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Heb. 11: 8-10, 17-19.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**

April 26.	M.	.....	The Call of Abram (Gen. 12: 1-5)
April 27.	T.	.....	Abram's Arrival in Canaan (Gen. 12: 6-9)
April 28.	W.	.....	The Promise to Abram (Gen. 13: 14-18)
April 29.	T.	.....	False Children of Abraham (John 8: 33-39)
April 30.	F.	.....	True Children of Abraham (Gal. 3: 3-9)
May 1.	S.	.....	Justification by Faith (Rom. 3: 20-26)
May 2.	S.	.....	The Triumph of Faith (Heb. 11: 17-19)

**THE LESSON SETTINGS**

**Time.**—1921 B.C., 1920 B.C. These are Usher's dates, the first referring to the time Abraham was called out of Ur, the second the date of the second part of our lesson. But one, or both, of these dates is wrong. To travel slowly, as they must have done with their flocks and herds, required considerable time to go from Ur to Haran. They must have remained at Haran some months, for it seems from chapter 12: 5 that, while there, they accumulated additional property and servants. They then went on to Canaan, and from there they journeyed into Egypt, and returned. It required considerably more than a year to do all these things. According to Hales, it re-

quired sixteen years. His dates for the two events of our lesson are 2093 B.C. and 2077 B.C. But all this guessing and speculating about dates has nothing to do with the truthfulness of the record.

*Places.*—Ur, Haran, and Canaan. There was a city called Ur on the lower Euphrates River, usually thought to have been Abraham's native city; but the facts do not support that idea. According to Joshua, Abraham's people lived beyond the River Euphrates (24: 14). The Ur below Babylon was not beyond the Euphrates. Stephen says, "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy land, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee." (Acts 7: 2, 3.) The Ur below Babylon was not in Mesopotamia, for Mesopotamia lay between the Euphrates and the Tigris Rivers. In sending his servant to his kindred for a wife for Isaac, Abraham referred to Mesopotamia as "my country," and "the land of my nativity." (Gen. 24: 1-10.) Mesopotamia was therefore Abraham's native country. There must have been a place in Mesopotamia called Ur. Two cities of the same name is not an unusual thing.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, Abram, Lot, and the Canaanites. Abram, a descendant of Shem, was the son of Terah. The name "Abram," meaning "exalted father," was later changed to "Abraham," which means "father of a multitude." (Gen. 17: 5.) The Canaanites were descendants of Canaan, the son of Ham. Canaan's descendants were divided into several nations. (Gen. 10: 6-20.)

*Lesson Links.*—In the tenth chapter we have some account of the descendants of the sons of Noah. Nimrod, a descendant of Ham, established a great kingdom. Babel, or Babylon, was the seat of his government. Here they undertook to build a great tower. They wanted to remain a compact group; and they meant for the tower to be a center of attraction and worship, a means of unity. They said, "Lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." But such was not God's plans, and so he confused their language so they could not understand one another.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Abram's Call and the Promises (Verses 1-3)

The command, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house," shows that this revelation was made to Abram before he left Mesopotamia. Stephen's speech (Acts 7: 1-4) makes this certain, for he tells us that God appeared to Abraham when he dwelt in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and told him to get out of his land, away from his kindred, and go into a land which God would show him. Whether God made this revelation to Abraham again in Haran is of no special importance to us; but the promises made to Abram are of special importance, for all the rest of the Bible is a record of the development and fulfillment of these promises.

*The First Promise.*—The first promise is really a combination of promises, but all are summed up in the one promise, "I will make of thee a great nation." To do this it would be necessary for God to bless him and protect him from those who would be unfriendly to him and his posterity. For his descendants to prosper and develop



## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

God's promise to make of Abraham a great nation.  
 God's promise to bless all nations through his seed.  
 Abraham and his altars.  
 Abraham's relations with Lot.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject of our lesson, and tell where found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text and give reference.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, and tell what seems wrong with Usher's dates.  
 Tell about the places of the lesson.  
 Does it seem possible that the Ur below Babylon was Abraham's city?  
 Give some information about the persons.  
 Give the important points between this lesson and the last.

*Verses 1-3*

Where was Abram when God called him to leave his country?  
 Where is Mesopotamia?  
 Repeat the promises made to Abram.  
 What is the substance of the first promise?  
 How was it fulfilled?  
 In whom was the second promise fulfilled?  
 Give proof.

*Verses 4-6*

Who was Abram's father?  
 Where did his father die?  
 What evidence is there that God guided Abram in his journey?  
 Discuss Heb. 11: 8.  
 To what place did Abram first go?

*Verses 7-9*

What act of worship did Abram perform?  
 Where did Abram next go?  
 How did he again manifest his faith in Jehovah?  
 What experience did Jacob have at Bethel?  
 What territory was called the South?

*Gen. 13: 14-17*

Why did Abram go down into Egypt?  
 Tell of his experience in Egypt.  
 On returning from Egypt, what caused Abram and Lot to separate?  
 What generous proposition did Abram make?  
 Where did Lot go, and why?  
 After the separation what did God say to Abram?  
 Where was Abram when this promise was made?  
 Show that Christians are of the seed of Abraham.

*Verse 18*

Where did Abram go from Bethel?  
 Give some important events connected with that city.  
 Discuss the reflections.

*Lesson VI—May 9, 1937*

## ABRAHAM A MAN OF PRAYER

Gen. 18: 17-32

17 And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do:  
 18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

19 For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice; to the end that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

20 And Jehovah said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous:

21 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

22 And the men turned from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before Jehovah.

23 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked?

24 Peradventure there are fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou consume and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

thy seed also be numbered." Not only did Abram have fleshly descendants beyond numbering, but all Christians are counted as his seed. "Know therefore that they that are of faith, the same are sons of Abraham." (Gal. 3: 7.) "And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise." (Gal. 3: 29.) He is "the father of all them that believe"—the father of all who walk in the steps of his faith. (Rom. 4: 10-12.) In verse seventeen Jehovah repeats the promise to give Abram the whole of the land of Canaan. While Abraham never actually owned the land of Canaan, it was his country, and he had full and undisputed use of all the pasturage he needed so long as he lived, as much so as if it had been his own individual possession.

### Abram Moves to Hebron (Verse 18)

"And Abram moved his tent, and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built there an altar unto Jehovah." Wherever Abram pitched his tent, he built an altar for worship. When he moved he took his religion with him. His faith did not change when he changed locations. His conduct should be a lesson to us, for we are to walk in the steps of his faith.

*Hebron.*—Hebron, perhaps the oldest city in Palestine, is situated about twenty miles a little west of south from Jerusalem. Here Sarah, Abraham's wife, was buried, as were also Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Gen. 23: 1-19; 25: 7-10; 35: 27-29; 49: 28-33; 50: 12, 13.) After the children of Israel returned from Egypt under the leadership of Moses, and had conquered the land, Hebron was given to the priests and Levites, and became also one of the cities of refuge. (Josh 20: 7; 21: 11, 13.) It was David's royal residence for the first seven and a half years of his reign. (2 Sam. 2: 4, 11.) Occupying so important a place in Old Testament history, it is singular that it is not mentioned in the prophets or in the New Testament. It is said to be now a city of about five thousand inhabitants, and that the country round about is in a good state of cultivation.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

The people among whom Abraham grew up were worshipers of idols. It was easier to free Abraham from all such influence, if he were entirely separated from his kindred and friends, and placed among strangers. Hence, God called him away from such environs into a strange country.

It seems that Abraham was not fully obedient at the first, for his father Terah went with him as far as Haran, where Abraham was detained till his father died. Even then he took Lot with him, and Lot was a source of trouble to him. But his faith grew till nothing hindered his obedience.

Abraham's religion was not a mere profession. His faith was a sublime trust in Jehovah. In the midst of people who knew not God, but worshiped idols, he built altars and offered sacrifices to Jehovah. He did not corrupt his religion by adopting their practices. His life was a life of faith, so much so that he is called the "father of the faithful."



25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked, that so the righteous should be as the wicked; that be far from thee: shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

26 And Jehovah said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sake.

27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes:

28 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, I will not destroy it, if I find there forty and five.

29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for the forty's sake.

30 And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.

31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for the twenty's sake.

32 And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for the ten's sake.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working."* (James 5: 16.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 John 3: 21-24.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

May 3.	M.	God's Confidence in Abraham (Gen. 18: 16-22)
May 4.	T.	Abraham's Confidence in God (Gen. 18: 23-33)
May 5.	W.	Friends of Jesus (John 15: 14-19)
May 6.	T.	Praying in Faith (Mark 11: 20-24)
May 7.	F.	Perseverance in Prayer (Luke 11: 5-10)
May 8.	S.	Acceptable Prayer (Acts 10: 1-6)
May 9.	S.	Joyous Communion with God (Psalm 34: 1-8)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1897 B.C.; according to Hales, 2054 B.C. There is a difference of one hundred and fifty-seven years between these two dates. But we can feel reasonably sure that Abraham was ninety-nine years old at this time; for the angel had just promised him that Sarah should bear him a son, and he was a hundred years old when that son was born. (Gen. 21: 5.) Abraham had now been in Canaan about twenty-four years, for he was seventy-five years old when he left Haran to come into the land of Canaan. (Gen. 12: 4.)

*Place.*—Hebron, "by the oaks of Mamre." Near Hebron stands a very old oak tree, which is said to be the oak under which Abraham entertained the angels. That tradition is more than four hundred years old; the oak must have been a very old tree when that tradition started. The student can draw his own conclusions as to the probable correctness of that ancient tradition.

*Persons.*—Abraham and three angels. Abraham was a great man, but not entirely free from mistakes. We sometimes attribute such a degree of perfection to these Old Testament worthies as to make them practically worthless to us as examples. It is refreshing to study Abraham as a man, to discover his weakness as well as his strength, and to see that, in spite of his weaknesses, he stands out as one of the greatest men of all time, so much so that he was called the "friend of God, and the father of the faithful." It is helpful to study such characters, and to see that God blessed them in their earnest efforts to do his will, and that he used them in carrying out

his purposes. The angels appeared to Abraham in the form of men. Through them Jehovah spoke to Abraham.

*Lesson Links.*—In chapter fourteen we have an account of Abraham's rescuing Lot from certain kings who had made a raid on Sodom, and carried away Lot as captive. He also recovered all the goods that these kings had taken from Sodom. On his return he was met by Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High, who blessed him and to whom he paid tithes.

*Chapter 15.*—Again God promised Abraham a numerous posterity. "And he believed in Jehovah; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness." This does not mean that Abraham at this time became a saved man; he had been a man of faith and a worshiper of God for many years before this time. But when Jehovah again referred to his promise to give Abraham the land, Abraham did not fully trust the word of Jehovah, and showed his distrust by saying, "O Lord Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Jehovah was not pleased with that lack of faith, and required Abraham to make sacrifices, and revealed to him in an unpleasant dream the future bondage of his descendants, and their later return from Egypt with great substance.

*Chapter 16.*—Abraham and Sarah were guilty of unbecoming conduct. As a result, Hagar, Sarah's handmaid, became the mother of Abraham's son Ishmael.

*Chapter 17.*—The land covenant was renewed, and circumcision was required as a token of that covenant. Also Jehovah promised Abraham that Sarah should bear him a son, whom he was to name Isaac. Abraham was ninety-nine years old when this covenant of circumcision was made.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Jehovah Speaks of Abraham's Character (Verses 17-19)

To properly understand this lesson the student must read the first part of the chapter. Abraham was sitting in the door of his tent in the heat of the day. His tent was pitched by the oaks of Mamre, near Hebron. Three angels in the form and dress of men appeared a little way from the door of his tent. With the true spirit of hospitality, Abraham ran out to meet them, and begged them to partake of his hospitality. Abundance of food was prepared for them. At the time Abraham knew not who they were. Perhaps this is one of the instances the writer of the Hebrews had in mind when he said, "Forget not to show love unto strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Heb. 13: 2.) Before leaving the angels gave specific promise to Abraham that Sarah should bear him a son. The men then started toward Sodom, "and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. Sodom was to be destroyed, but as yet Abraham knew nothing of its coming doom. A man does not reveal to another his plans and purposes unless he has great confidence in him. Jehovah would not hide from Abraham what he was about to do to Sodom, because of certain reasons which he names. First, Abraham was to become a great and mighty nation, that is, Abraham's descendants would become a great and mighty nation, for the expression can be understood in no other sense. This peculiar form of expression must be taken into consideration in studying all the promises made to Abraham. Abraham was to become a great and mighty



nation. In the sense of that statement the Hebrew nation was Abraham—Abraham multiplied into a nation; and in that sense the land of Canaan was promised to Abraham. God did not promise to give to Abraham the land of Canaan, as an individual, any more than he promised to make him as an individual into a great nation. The promise was made to him as the head of the nation. "All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him"—not in him personally, but in his seed after him. This eighteenth verse is a condensed repetition of Gen. 12: 1-3. Paul shows in Gal. 3: 16 that the promise to bless all nations in Abraham referred to Christ.

*Abraham's Children.*—"For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him." Besides Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham was the father of six other sons. (Gen. 25: 1, 2.) The many servants which Abraham had were a part of his household, and he was responsible for the proper training of these. He must so teach and train his children and his servants, "that they may keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice." In the training of his children and his servants Abraham was neither helped nor hindered by public schools, nor by colleges and universities. He conducted his own school. If he had any writings for them to read, they were, of necessity, very limited. He had no help from prophets or preachers, for there were none. Neither was he hindered by many of the diversions and hindrances that are so much in the way these days, when parents try to train and develop their children. Abraham gave good training in the principles of justice and righteousness. And he gave force to his teaching by his own life of faith and righteousness. Teaching is not very effective unless a right kind of life goes before it.

*The Promises Conditional.*—It has been said that the promises made to Abraham, including the land promise, were unconditional; but the fact that the Jews lost their land because they became sold under sin proves that the land promise was conditional. The words of Jehovah on this occasion show that all the promises to him were conditional. "For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice." And why should they keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice? "To the end that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." His descendants were to live right to the end that the promises might be fulfilled; if they failed, the promises would therefore fail of their fulfillment.

### The Wickedness of Sodom (Verses 20, 21)

"Their sin is very grievous." "Now the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceedingly." (13: 13.) When there was sin and corruption everywhere, conditions in Sodom must have been corrupt beyond anything imaginable for it to be singled out as the most wicked city in the world. It was with these great sinners that Lot had chosen to live for the sake of good pasture for his stock. And in the destruction of the city and the surrounding country Lot lost all he had. Speaking after the manner of men, the Lord said, "I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it." The Lord speaks to man in a way that



man can understand. He would not have Abraham to think that he was hasty in his judgment upon Sodom. Not only so, as respected Abraham, but all people, no matter how crude their ideas of Jehovah might be, must not get incorrect ideas as to Jehovah's justice. Jehovah would have them know that his judgment was not rendered upon Sodom without full knowledge of their guilt. For those who have a better knowledge of the All Wise God, such steps would not be necessary.

### Abraham Pleads for Sodom (Verses 22-32)

It seems certain that Abraham had learned that his visitors were messengers of God. He had also learned that it was Jehovah's purpose to destroy Sodom on account of their wickedness. Two of his visitors went on toward Sodom, "but Abraham stood yet before Jehovah." These two that went on toward Sodom are called angels in the first verse of the next chapter. It was natural that Abraham should think of his Nephew Lot and Lot's family, though he does not mention them in any of his pleas for Sodom. Abraham talked to Jehovah as man talks to man. Surely Jehovah would not destroy the righteous with the wicked; to do so would be to treat the righteous as if they were also wicked, and that should be far from Jehovah. It should be noticed that Abraham did not plead for the sinners of Sodom to be spared for their own sake. That would have been espousing the cause of the wicked and arranging himself against Jehovah. Neither did he give any hint that he thought the sentence on the wicked was too severe.

*Abraham's First Plea.*—"Peradventure there are fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou consume and not spare the place?" Not for the sake of the wicked did he want the city saved, but for the sake of the righteous. And Jehovah answered that he would not destroy the city, if fifty righteous people could be found in it. In its primary sense righteousness is justice, and has reference to fair and honest dealings between man and man. Abraham's plea shows that he had a fair idea as to the wickedness of Sodom, and doubted that more than fifty people could be found in the whole city who had any regard for the principles of justice and right, and his other pleas show that he feared that a much smaller number of righteous people could not be found therein.

*Abraham's Second Plea.*—Some of the things Abraham said seem to be more of the nature of an argument than of a prayer. He went about his argument in a rather unique way, yet he did not forget that he was "but dust and ashes." He was humble; he knew his own weakness and shortcomings and sins; yet he argued his cause before Jehovah with assurance. But he had started in to plead for the righteous that might be in Sodom, and he would argue his cause. You, Lord, promised to save the city, if fifty righteous people could be found in it. Suppose only forty-five righteous people could be found in it, would you destroy the city for the lack of only five? In the other pleas, six in all, the thought that the city was to be spared for the sake of the righteous was kept prominent. In each plea Abraham lowered the number of the righteous for whom the city was to be spared till he reached the low limit of ten. In his fourth plea it seems that Abraham thought the Lord might become angry with him because of his continued pleading. And so he prayed, "Oh let not the Lord be



angry, and I will speak." Before presenting his last plea, he prayed, "Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once." If the Lord would bear with him, he would make just this one more plea. Would the Lord spare the city if ten righteous people could be found in it? And the Lord said he would spare the city for the sake of ten righteous people. That was a remarkable situation—the destiny of a city depended on the presence of ten righteous people within its territory! And Abraham had prevailed on the Lord to save the city for that small number. But the sequel shows that even so small a number as ten could not be found in that city.

*Effective Prayers.*—"The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working." "And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint," that is, not to become discouraged and quit. The parable he spoke encouraged persistent pleading for the same thing. The principles set forth in both the foregoing passages are illustrated in Abraham's pleading for Sodom. And these things are written for our guidance and encouragement. In the times covered by the Bible record God's servants prayed without being disturbed by any theories as to whether it required a miracle to answer prayer, or whether an answer to prayer involved a violation of the laws of nature.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

The people before the flood, the people of Sodom, the Jewish nation, all show that a people may become so wicked that they are fit only to be destroyed.

Lot was a righteous man, and the moral corruption of the people of Sodom vexed his soul. Perhaps he merely worried, and did nothing to correct them. It is easy for people to say, "Conditions are so bad, what is the use of trying?"

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Abraham's strength and his weaknesses.

The expense and destructiveness of sin.

What we should learn from Old Testament examples.

The place and importance of prayer in the Christian's life.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject of the lesson, and tell where it is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the probable time as given by Usher and Hales.

Give the age of Abraham, and how long since he left Haran.

Give the place and the tradition about the oak.

Name the persons.

Give some points as to the character of Abraham.

Give a summary of events between the last lesson and this.

#### *Verses 17-19*

Give the incidents in the first part of chapter 18.

Why would Jehovah reveal to Abraham his purposes concerning Sodom?

How would Abraham become a great nation?

What did the Lord say as to Abraham and his children?

What advantages and hindrances would Abraham have in teaching his children and servants?

What did he train them to do?

What shows that the promises to Abraham were conditional?

#### *Verses 20, 21*

What is said of the sins of Sodom?

What moved Lot to live among these sinners?

How did his ambition for gain turn out?

What did Jehovah say that indicates he did not want men to think he was hasty in his judgment on Sodom?

## Verses 22-32

How did Abraham talk with Jehovah?  
On what did he base his pleas for  
Sodom?  
Give each of his pleas.

What was kept prominent as grounds  
for sparing the city of Sodom?  
What expressions did Abraham use that  
show his humility?  
What two New Testament principles  
are illustrated in Abraham's prayers?  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson VII—May 16, 1937

## THE FORBEARANCE OF ISAAC

Gen. 26: 12-25

12 And Isaac sowed in that land, and found in the same year a hundredfold: and Jehovah blessed him.

13 And the man waxed great, and grew more and more until he became very great:

14 And he had possessions of flocks, and possessions of herds, and a great household: and the Philistines envied him.

15 Now all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped, and filled with earth.

16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

17 And Isaac departed thence, and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

18 And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father: for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.

20 And the herdsmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek, because they contended with him.

21 And they digged another well, and they strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.

22 And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now Jehovah hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

23 And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba.

24 And Jehovah appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

25 And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of Jehovah, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God."* (Matt. 5: 9.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 5: 1-12.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

May 10.	M.	Isaac Envied (Gen. 26: 12-16)
May 11.	T.	Isaac Wins by Yielding (Gen. 26: 17-25)
May 12.	W.	Joseph Envied by His Brothers (Gen. 37: 5-11)
May 13.	T.	Living Together Peaceably (Rom. 12: 17-21)
May 14.	F.	Saul Envies David (1 Sam. 18: 5-9)
May 15.	S.	Jealousy and the Mob Spirit (Acts 13: 44-50)
May 16.	S.	Conditions of Blessedness (Matt. 5: 1-12)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—It is impossible to determine how many years the events of this lesson covered. According to Usher, it was between 1836 B.C. and 1796 B.C. But it is interesting to note that Abraham was one hundred years old when Isaac was born (Gen. 21: 5), that Isaac was forty years old when he married (Gen. 25: 20), and that he was sixty



years old when Esau and Jacob were born (Gen. 25: 24-26). Isaac moved to Gerar, where the events of our lesson occurred, after the birth of Esau and Jacob.

*Places.*—Gerar, Beersheba. Gerar was near the southern boundary of the country of the Philistines, and not far from either Gaza or Beersheba. It had a king of its own, who ruled also the territory surrounding Gerar. Its king was called Abimelech when Abraham visited that country, like Pharaoh for the kings of Egypt. Beersheba, the well of the oath, took its name from the well which Abraham dug and the oath by which a treaty between him and Abimelech was confirmed. The name was given to the town which later was built at the well. It was the southernmost city of the land that was allotted to the children of Israel. From the time of the conquest of the land by Joshua, on through Old Testament history, it was an important city. However, it is not even mentioned in the New Testament.

*Persons.*—Isaac, his herdsmen, Abimelech, and the Philistines. Isaac was a child of promise, the son of Abraham, and the father of Jacob and Esau. Abimelech, king of Gerar, appears to have been a strong character. He evidently had a high regard for the marriage vows, as is shown by the rebuke he delivered to Isaac. (Verses 6-11.) From Gen. 10: 6-14 we learn that the Philistines were descendants of Ham. From the days of Abraham or earlier, the Philistines occupied a rather narrow strip of country along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. For some reason Joshua did not drive them out of their lands as he did the other nations. During the days of the judges and on through the reign of King Saul, there was much warring between them and the Hebrews.

*Lesson Links.*—When Abraham was one hundred years old, Isaac was born. (Gen. 21: 1-7.) In his old age he sent his chief servant back to Mesopotamia to obtain a wife for Isaac from among his kindred. (Gen. 24.) The story is one of the beautiful romances of the Bible. The servant brought back with him Rebekah, who became Isaac's wife. "Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian, . . . to be his wife." (Gen. 25: 20.) To Isaac and Rebekah were born twins, Jacob and Esau.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Isaac's Prosperity (Verses 12-14)

"And Isaac sowed in that land." Isaac had formerly lived at Beersheba, "in the land of the South." (Gen. 24: 62; 25: 11.) But a famine came in the land, and Isaac started toward Egypt; but when he arrived at Gerar, the Lord appeared to him, and said, "Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of." And then Jehovah repeated to him the promises he had made to Abraham. Isaac lived a long time at Gerar. (See 26: 1-11.) Jehovah blessed him, and he prospered greatly. He sowed seed, and it produced a hundredfold. That is an enormous yield for small grain. His flocks and herds increased till it required a great household—many herdsmen—to care for his stock. And he "waxed great, and grew more and more until he became very great: . . . and the Philistines envied him." His property was so much greater than theirs that their envy became so great as to amount to resentment and bitterness. It seems also that they feared him. If Isaac had not prospered, they would have paid no attention to him.



### The Philistines Fill the Wells (Verse 15)

After Sodom was destroyed, Abraham moved from Hebron to the land of the South, "and he sojourned in Gerar." (Gen. 20: 1.) It seems that the greater part of his remaining days was spent in that section. He dug wells to furnish water for his household and his stock. From the fifteenth verse of our lesson it appears that Abraham had dug a number of wells. The Philistines filled up all these wells with earth. This seems to have been a direct violation of the covenant made between Abraham and Abimelech; but they had reached the point where their feelings against Isaac weighed more with them than any moral obligation.

### Abimelech Invites Isaac to Move (Verses 16, 17)

Abimelech, the king, had taken to heart the prosperity and greatness of Isaac. "Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we." That statement shows that even the king had come to fear Isaac. In that time when the mighty preyed on the weaker, it was natural for Isaac's increasing greatness to cause Abimelech to feel uneasy at having so great a foreigner in their midst; but Isaac was a man of peace, and had no intention of making trouble for the Philistines. But wars have been made over less causes than Isaac had. There was the broken covenant, and the filling of his wells; but apparently without any feeling of resentment Isaac quietly moved into the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. He was trying to live peaceably with all men. Besides, he did not own the land, and moving his tents and herds was not such a ruinous matter. It was better to move than to fight, for a fight would have meant much shedding of blood, and possible great loss of stock. Isaac showed wisdom as well as forbearance.

### Additional Strife About Wells (Verses 18-21)

In Isaac's new location, there were also wells which had been dug in the days of Abraham. These also the Philistines had stopped up after the death of Abraham. Because of Isaac's great prosperity the Philistines had developed a great antagonism toward him, and gave him as much trouble and inconvenience as they could without making war upon him; but Isaac apparently paid no attention to their efforts to make trouble for him. He quietly cleaned out the wells, and without any ado went on with his affairs; but not many of us have the strength of character to do as Isaac did. Isaac's servants increased their water supply by digging another well in the valley, "and found there a well of springing water." Marginal reading has "living" water. It was perhaps an overflowing well. That sort of well would save much labor of drawing water for Isaac's vast herds and flocks. The herdsmen of Gerar were persistent fellows. For this new well they strove with Isaac's servants, saying, "The water is ours." Isaac named this new well Esek, which means "contention." He dug another well, and the herdsmen of Gerar claimed it also. He named it Sitnah, that is, "enmity." The envy of the Philistines had now grown into enmity. Even the milder forms of wrong feelings toward others, like envy, if cherished, will grow into enmity and malice. If Isaac had cultivated a feeling of resentment toward these Philistines, it would have grown into a spirit of retaliation. But Isaac did not retaliate; he did not even defend his rights. A strong man, who



is able to maintain his rights, can surrender them without loss of dignity or prestige. To keep the peace, Isaac exercised all the forbearance that human nature seems capable of standing. For a person to suffer repeated wrongs when he is able to maintain his rights requires a high degree of moral courage and forbearance. In these traits of character, Isaac was more highly developed than many Christians. Yet we are taught to pursue things that make for peace, and to be forbearing toward all men. "Render to no man evil for evil. . . . If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. Avenge not yourselves." (Rom. 12: 17-19.) "So then let us follow after things which make for peace." (Rom. 14: 19.) "Let your forbearance be known unto all men." (Phil. 4: 5.)

### Rehoboth (Verse 22)

Isaac moved from the wells of strife and enmity, and dug another well, "and for that they strove not." He was now far enough away from Gerar that the Philistines felt that he was not in their way, or else they did not feel it would be safe to raise a disturbance with Isaac so far from the protection of their city. But Isaac generously attributed their failure to bother him to the fact that he had moved far enough away that he was no longer in their way. This is indicated by the name which he gave to his new well. He gave it the name "Rehoboth," which means "broad places, or room," and added this statement as a reason for so naming the well: "For now Jehovah hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land." Isaac knew what many of the authorities of today should know, but do not know, namely, that strife and war prevent prosperity. Now, strife having ceased, Isaac felt he would be prosperous in the land. If the world could ever learn the horrors and destruction of war and the blessings of peace, war and strife would cease; but it seems that each succeeding generation must learn its own lesson. But there was another consideration that may have had some influence in causing Isaac to give ground to the Philistines. He was a foreigner in the territory of the Philistines—it was their land. From their standpoint, he had no rights there, save as they granted them. When he was in their way, they felt no hesitancy in asking him to move on. "The water is ours"; that was their viewpoint. In a measure, at least, Isaac recognized the justice of their claims. One thing we know, namely, that Isaac was not perfect. His deceiving Abimelech in claiming that Rebekah was his sister showed that he lacked much of being perfect.

### The Promise Renewed (Verses 23, 24)

"And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba." He was getting still farther away from Gerar, and from strife. We are not told how long he remained at Beersheba; but he was still there when he had grown old and blind, for he was still there when Jacob was sent back to Paddan-aram to escape the rage of Esau. (Gen. 27: 1; 28: 10.) But he later made his home at Hebron, and was dwelling there when he died at the ripe age of one hundred and eighty years, "old and full of days." (Gen. 35: 27-29.) The night of the day in which Isaac reached Beersheba the Lord appeared to him, and identified himself to Isaac as the God of his father Abraham and said, "Fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee." Jehovah does not speak when there is no

need for a word from him. Isaac had passed through a lot of unpleasant experiences. After his experiences with the Philistines, he would naturally keep an eye on them. It is likely that he saw some unfavorable developments while he abode at the well Rehoboth; and for that reason moved on to Beersheba. This would account for the Lord's saying to him, "Fear not, for I am with thee." After so much strife and doubts as to what might occur next, these words of assurance must have been very comforting to Isaac, for the Lord was giving Isaac assurance that no harm would befall him. "And multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake." Abraham had several other sons, but Jehovah chose Isaac to be in the line of patriarchs through whose seed he would bless the world. But in selecting Isaac for that purpose, he was not selecting him to be saved, nor the others to be lost. It was not a matter that had anything to do with their own salvation. He was working out his plans, and only one son in a family could be used for that particular purpose. Of the two sons of Isaac, Jacob was selected.

### Isaac Builds an Altar (Verse 25)

If Isaac built any altars while he was near Gerar, we have no account of it. These altars, of course, were built for the purpose of offering sacrifices. And in this worship Isaac called upon the name of Jehovah. So far as we know there was no other family in all the land that worshiped Jehovah. But this one family kept alive the idea of the one God.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Forbearance is a characteristic of a Christian. It is to be exercised toward those who in some way make themselves unpleasant in a personal way.

Forbearance has to do with personal matters. We are not required to be forbearing toward false teaching nor toward crime; we are required to do all we can against both.

We are not called upon to contend for our personal rights; we should waive them for the sake of peace. But we are required to contend earnestly for the faith—to fight the good fight of faith.

If a person loves the right, he will hate the wrong. If he loves man, he will be uncompromising in his opposition toward everything that is against the best interest of man. Love for man is what made Jesus and Paul such fighters against sin and all false doctrines.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The New Testament teaching on forbearance.

What must be our attitude toward false teaching?

The sin of envy.

The blessings of peace in the home, nation, and church.

The religion of the patriarchs.

### QUESTIONS

Where is our lesson found?

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the probable time of the lesson.

Give the ages of Abraham and Isaac at

the time of some important events in their lives.

Name the places mentioned in this lesson, and give location and other important facts.

Give the persons and what information you can about them.



Give important happenings between the last lesson and this.

### Verse 12-14

Where had Isaac formerly lived?  
Why had he left there?  
Where did he intend to go?  
Why did he not go?  
Give the promises Jehovah made to Isaac.  
Why did the Philistines envy him?

### Verse 15

What did the Philistines do to annoy Isaac?  
Who had dug wells in that section?  
On what occasion had Abraham left Hebron?

### Verse 16, 17

Who was king of Gerar?  
What did he request Isaac to do, and why?  
What shows that Isaac was a man of peace?

### Verse 18-21

To what place did Isaac move?  
What happened to the wells in that section?  
What was peculiar about an additional well which Isaac's servants dug?

Why did he give up that well, and what did he name it?  
What is said about the next well?  
To what feelings had envy led the Philistines?  
What sort of feelings might Isaac have easily developed?  
What must the Christian do under such trying circumstances?

### Verse 22

How did Isaac promote peace?  
What did he name his new well?  
How do strife and war prevent prosperity?  
What else may have influenced Isaac to give ground to the Philistines?

### Verse 23, 24

To what place did Isaac next go?  
What shows that he lived there a long time?  
Where did he die?  
What did Jehovah say to Isaac?  
For what purpose had Jehovah selected Isaac?

### Verse 25

What arrangement did Isaac make for worship?  
Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson VIII—May 23, 1937

### THE WEAKNESS OF ESAU

Gen. 25: 27-34; 27: 41-45

- 27 And the boys grew: and Esau was a skilful hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents.  
28 Now Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: and Rebekah loved Jacob.  
29 And Jacob boiled pottage: and Esau came in from the field, and he was faint:  
30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red *pottage*: for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom.  
31 And Jacob said, Sell me first thy birthright.  
32 And Esau said, Behold, I am about to die: and what profit shall the birthright do to me?  
33 And Jacob said, Swear to me first; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.  
34 And Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: so Esau despised his birthright.  
41 And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.  
42 And the words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah; and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, *purposing* to kill thee.  
43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran;  
44 And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;  
45 Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be bereaved of you both in one day?

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things.” (1 Cor. 9: 25.)

## DEVOTIONAL READING.—Heb. 12: 14-17.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

May 17.	M.	-----	A Man of Appetite (Gen. 25: 27-34)
May 18.	T.	-----	A Man of Anger (Gen. 27: 41-45)
May 19.	W.	-----	Bodily Discipline (1 Cor. 9: 22-27)
May 20.	T.	-----	Weakness of the Flesh (Matt. 26: 40-46)
May 21.	F.	-----	Ruling One's Own Spirit (Prov. 16: 27-32)
May 22.	S.	-----	Slaves of Appetite (Isa. 56: 9-12)
May 23.	S.	-----	Victory through Christ (Rom. 8: 31-39)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, Esau sold his birthright 1805 B.C., and Isaac blessed Jacob 1760 B.C. According to William Hales, the dates were about 1962 and 1916 B.C. But there are some dates given in Genesis about which we can be certain, and it is well for the student to keep them in mind. Abraham was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. (Gen. 12: 4.) He was one hundred years old when Isaac was born. (Gen. 21: 5.) Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to be his wife. (Gen. 25: 20.) He was sixty years old when Jacob and Esau were born. (Gen. 25: 26.)

*Places.*—Beer-lahai-roi and Beersheba. When Hagar fled from Sarah, an angel "found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur." And because she said, "Thou art a God that seeth," the fountain, or well, was named Beer-lahai-roi—the well of him that liveth and seeth me, or the well of the vision of life. (Gen. 16: 7-14.) Here Isaac lived when Jacob and Esau were born, and perhaps also when Esau sold his birthright. He lived at Beersheba when he blessed Jacob.

*Persons.*—Isaac, Isaac's wife Rebekah, and his two sons Esau and Jacob.

*Lesson Links.*—Esau sold his birthright before the events of our last lesson occurred. Last Sunday's lesson left Isaac at Beersheba. Here he was visited by King Abimelech, accompanied by "Ahuzzath his friend, and Phicol the captain of his host." Isaac, remembering his unpleasant experiences with Abimelech and the Philistines, was in doubt as to the purpose of this visit. "Wherefore are ye come unto me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?" But Abimelech had not come for any harm; he had really come for his own protection. He knew that Jehovah was with Isaac, and that Isaac was becoming powerful. He therefore wanted to make a covenant of peace with Isaac, to which Isaac readily agreed. They then remained overnight with Isaac. "And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace."

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## Esau and Jacob (Verses 27, 28)

Esau and Jacob, sons of Isaac and Rebekah, were twins, but Esau was born first. (Verses 24-26.) When born, Esau was of a decidedly peculiar appearance—"red, all over like a hairy garment." As they grew to manhood, Esau became a skilful hunter, "man of the field." He was an outdoor man. Domestic pursuits did not appeal to him. "Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents." The hazards of hunting



wild animals did not appeal to Jacob. He became a successful stockman. It is singular that there was so much difference in the character and disposition of twins. Esau was a carefree, happy-go-lucky sort of fellow; Jacob was stern and calculating. Esau loved the excitement and chance of the hunt; Jacob preferred the quieter and more certain business of stock raising. It seems that the twins had no common interests. Isaac loved Esau. Perhaps his leaning toward Esau was due in part to the fact that Esau was the first-born, though he loved him because Esau fed him venison. Rebekah loved Jacob. He was a home boy. As Jacob was a stockman like his father, it is strange that Isaac did not prefer him. But the situation was both unnatural and unfortunate. It was bound to create friction between the sons; and as each parent would look out for the interest of the favored son, it would, in a measure, array husband against wife and wife against husband. Such favoritism is wrong, and will work harm in any family. Isaac and Rebekah reaped the bitter fruits of this unnatural partiality.

### Esau Sells His Birthright (Verses 29-34)

On one occasion Esau returned from hunting tired and hungry. "He was faint." He was weak from hunger. At that time Jacob was cooking a mess of pottage—some kind of a red stew. Esau was immediately overwhelmed with a desire for that stew, and asked Jacob to feed him "with that same red pottage." "Therefore was his name called Edom." The word "Edom" means "red." At that particular time the most desirable thing in the world to Esau was a full dinner of that pottage. And to Jacob the most desirable thing in the world was to be possessor of the family birthright. He would make a trade with Esau.

*The Birthright.*—"And Jacob said, Sell me first thy birthright." The birthright in the patriarch age was not very well defined. It belonged, of course, to the first-born son, and placed him at the head of the family at the death of the father. And in this case it put its possessor in the line of the patriarchs through whom Christ should come. But that was not always the case. (1 Chron. 5: 1-2.) Under the law of Moses, the first-born inherited a double portion of his father's property; it may have been the rule from the beginning. Jacob has been severely criticized for not feeding Esau with no thought of pay. The fact that he did not do so shows how little brotherly feeling existed between them even at this time. And there may have been more in the whole transaction than meets the eye. With Esau putting in his time hunting, it is likely that Jacob thought the birthright was in poor hands. Evidently Esau regarded the birthright lightly. "Behold, I am about to die: and what profit shall the birthright do to me?" It is not likely that Esau had stayed on the hunt till he was at the point of death from starvation. People are given to exaggeration about matters of that sort. Esau was impulsive, and weak enough to give sway to his appetites and passion; and so he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, and confirmed the trade with an oath.

*Birthright Despised.*—"So Esau despised his birthright." That is, he treated it as a thing of no worth. It seems that people are more ready to condemn Jacob for his part in this transaction than Esau, but the Lord does not. The writer of Hebrews warns the brethren



against allowing bitterness to spring up among them, "lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one mess of meat sold his own birthright." (Heb. 12: 16.) Esau was a profane person because he despised, or treated as worthless, the birthright, which was a sacred inheritance—profaned a sacred thing.

### Esau Determines to Kill Jacob (Gen. 27: 41)

"And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing." Isaac had grown old and his eyes were dim. He called Esau to him, and said, "I am old, I know not the day of my death." He wanted to formally confer upon Esau the rights and blessings belonging to the first-born. But he wanted to bless Esau at a feast. He therefore told Esau to kill venison; "and make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die." (Verses 1-4.)

*Rebekah's Scheme.*—"And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son." She told Jacob what she had heard, and then revealed to him a scheme by which Jacob would obtain the blessings intended for Esau. While Esau was hunting venison, Rebekah told Jacob to dress "two good kids of the goats," and she would prepare savory food for Isaac. "And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, so that he may bless thee before his death." Jacob objected on the grounds that Isaac might detect the fraud, and pronounce upon him a curse instead of a blessing. Rebekah was willing to assume the responsibility, and suffer the consequences, if Jacob would obey her voice. Rebekah dressed Jacob in the garments of Esau and put the skins of animals on Jacob's hands and the smooth of his neck, so as to deceive Isaac, if Isaac wanted to feel Jacob's skin. But when Jacob came before Isaac with the food, Isaac became suspicious, because he did not expect Esau to return so soon. Neither did the voice sound like Esau's. He felt the hairy surface of Jacob's hands and decided that it was Esau. And then he said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau."

*Isaac Blessed Jacob.*—Isaac proceeded to pronounce upon Jacob the blessing of the first-born. Among other things he said, "Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee." This gives us some idea as to the authority the first-born, that is, the one possessing the birthright, had over his brethren. When Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had gone out, Esau came in with his savory meat for Isaac. The discovery of what had been done disturbed Isaac greatly, and disappointed Esau beyond measure. "When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceeding great and bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father." Esau had reached a point in life where the birthright meant something to him. But he could not persuade Isaac to change what he had done. On this point the writer of Hebrews says, "For ye know that even when he afterward desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for a change of mind in his father, though he sought it diligently with tears." (Heb. 12: 17.)

Esau did not want to suffer the results of the trade he had made with Jacob. When he learned how Jacob had deceived Isaac and obtained the blessing, he said, "Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright;



and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing." But Jacob did not take away the birthright without Esau's consent. It is true that Jacob did not pay much for the birthright, but he bought it. Esau made a bad trade, and he had no right to hate Jacob because he himself despised his own birthright. Nevertheless he determined to kill Jacob; yet he had respect enough for his father's feeling not to carry out his determination while Isaac lived. Isaac must have been in ill-health at that time, for Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand." When Isaac was dead, he would kill Jacob, so he planned.

### Rebekah Plans to Avert the Murder (Verses 42-45)

Rebekah heard of Esau's threats. Though Rebekah had been a party to bringing about that deplorable condition in her family, yet the possibility of murder was distressing. But Rebekah was good at planning and scheming, and her plans were backed by a will power to see them through. She told Jacob what she had heard concerning Esau's threats. It is not likely that Jacob was surprised at the unpleasant information. He and Rebekah were bound to have known that Esau would be furious when he learned of their trickery.

*Rebekah's Plan.*—Rebekah felt that something had to be done to avert a tragedy. "Now therefore, my son, obey my voice." It seems that Rebekah had Jacob well trained to obey her. Loving Jacob as she did, only a matter of life and death would have prompted her to say to Jacob, "Flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran." That was a long journey, but she thought that it would not be necessary for him to be gone for a long period. "Tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away; until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him." From this we see that Rebekah knew Esau was emotional and given to angry flares, which soon passed away. He was temperamental—easily wrought up to a high pitch of anger, which soon passed away. He did not have the determination and the iron will characteristic of his brother Jacob. For that reason he would never develop the sturdiness of character that later characterized Jacob. As in wood, so in people, it takes a high degree of firmness to put on a polish. Soft wood will not admit a high degree of polish; neither will a soft, easygoing character.

*More Deception.*—It seems that no one told Isaac about Esau's threats. In securing his consent to send Jacob to Laban, Rebekah pleaded that Esau's wives were a worry to her, and that if Jacob also married such women her life would be worth nothing to her. It perhaps was well that she kept from Isaac the real reason for haste in sending Jacob away. Isaac readily agreed to the plan, and sent Jacob away with his blessings, charging him to find a wife in the family of Laban, and so Jacob departed from Beersheba; and the few days he was to tarry with Laban were lengthened into years. The record is silent as to whether Rebekah ever saw him again.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Esau sold his birthright for one mess of pottage. Reuben lost his birthright by fleshly indulgence. (1 Chron. 5: 1, 2.) Many people sell their interest in heaven for as little.

No earthly condition is more restful and satisfying than a peaceful and happy home. By selfishness, ill will, and strife, many families make a hell out of what should be a near Eden.

While cultivating peaceful and friendly relations with the Philistines, Isaac was a party to conditions in his home that caused bitterness between his two sons. When father pets one child and mother pets another, trouble is apt to come.

Esau and Jacob were so different in disposition that trouble would likely have sprung up between them without the help of Isaac and Rebecca, but it is fairly certain that their course made the feelings between Esau and Jacob more intense that it otherwise would have been.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

What the birthright meant in Isaac's family.

The mistakes of Isaac and Rebekah.

Jacob and Esau—A contrast of characters.

What home should be.

Is deception ever justifiable?

*about Jacob*  
1. H. and Jacob's children  
2. Esau's children  
3. Rachel's children  
4. Joseph's children

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time; also dates in the lives of Abraham and Isaac.

Give places—why so called?

Name the persons.

Tell about Abimelech's visit to Isaac at Beersheba.

#### *Verses 27, 28*

Give some characteristics of the twins born to Isaac and Rebekah.

What favoritisms were shown?

#### *Verses 29-34*

Tell about the selling of the birthright. Would Esau likely be as starved as he claimed to be?

What advantages did the birthright confer?

What does the New Testament say about Esau?

#### *Gen. 27: 41*

Tell why Esau came to hate Jacob so. What did he plan to do, and when?

#### *Verses 42-45*

What plans were made to avert that tragedy?

What statement shows that Esau was known to be impulsive?

Discuss the reflections.

*Lesson IX—May 30, 1937*

## THE STRENGTH OF JACOB

Gen. 28: 16-22; 32: 24-30

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely Jehovah is in this place; and I knew it not.

17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

19 And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace, and Jehovah will be my God,

22 Then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.



24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was strained, as he wrestled with him.

26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for thou hast striven with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for, said he, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."* (Rom. 12: 2.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 32: 1-5.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

May 24.	M.	Jacob's Dream of God (Gen. 28: 16-22)
May 25.	T.	Jacob's Experience of God (Gen. 32: 24-30)
May 26.	W.	How to Know God (1 Cor. 2: 9-14)
May 27.	T.	Seeing God (1 John 3: 1-5)
May 28.	F.	Facing Godward (Luke 15: 11-20)
May 29.	S.	The New Man (Eph. 4: 17-24)
May 30.	S.	Joy in Being Forgiven (Psalm 32: 1-5)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Jacob's vision, 1760 B.C. His wrestling with an angel, 1739 B.C. These are Usher's dates.

*Place.*—Bethel and Peniel, or Penuel. Bethel, up to the time of Jacob's vision, had been called Luz. Here Abraham had spent much time. When Jacob reached Shechem on his return from Paddan-aram, Jehovah commanded him to go on to Bethel, and there build an altar. Before going to Bethel, Jacob gathered all idols that his company had brought with them, and buried them. They must have no idols when he built his altar to Jehovah at Bethel. During the conquest of the land under Joshua's leadership, and during the remaining Old Testament history, Bethel is mentioned often. Peniel or Penuel means "face of God." The reason for that name is given in the text of our lesson.

*Persons.*—Jacob, Jehovah, and the angels.

*Lesson Links.*—In our last lesson we learned of the plan to send Jacob to Paddan-aram to the home of Laban. Jacob departed with Isaac's blessings. When Abraham's chief servant made this journey to secure a wife for Isaac, other servants went with him; but Jacob went alone. Had he made extensive preparations for the journey, Esau would have known of his going. Rebekah would see to it that he slipped away unknown to Esau, lest Esau slay him to prevent his escape. It was a lonely journey for a man who was not in the habit of traveling. Dangers from wild beasts and robbers beset every step of that long journey. When he reached the neighborhood of Luz, or Bethel, he stopped for the night, "because the sun was set." For some reason he did not go into the town to spend the night, but slept out in the open country, with a stone for a pillow. During that night Jacob dreamed a beautiful, yet awe-inspiring, dream. "He dreamed; and, behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending

on it. And, behold, Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac." By these words Jehovah identified himself to Jacob as the God whom Abraham and Isaac worshiped. Then Jehovah repeated to him the promises he had made to Abraham and Isaac. He would give the land to Jacob and to his seed after him; he would give him a numerous posterity; and in him and his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. He would be with Jacob in his journeys, and bring him again into that land. He would not leave Jacob until—and that word until is suggestive—until he had done what he had promised. There are other notable instances in which God made revelations to men in dreams—to Joseph, his supremacy (Gen. 37: 5-11); to Pharaoh, the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine (Gen. 41: 1-32); to Nebuchadnezzar, the universal empires (Dan. 2: 1-45). If interested, the student can find other instances.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Jacob Filled with Fear (Verses 16, 17)

When Jacob awaked out of his sleep, he was filled with fear. "Surely Jehovah is in this place." "How dreadful is this place!" Men have always feared when they realized they were in the presence of a heavenly being. It is not possible for a man to meet Jehovah face to face with the ease and feeling of comradeship with which one man meets another. Even the beloved John, though he had associated with the man Christ Jesus, when he found himself in the presence of the glorified Jesus, was so overcome with fear that he fell at his feet as one dead. (Rev. 1: 12-17.) It is not to Jacob's discredit that he was afraid. He felt that he was in God's dwelling place—at the very gate of heaven. And knowing that he had so basely deceived his father in securing the blessing perhaps added to his fear.

#### A New Name for Luz (Verses 18, 19)

"Jacob rose up early in the morning." It is not likely that he slept any after his wonderful dream. He was too excited, and there was too much to think about, for sleep to come easily. He set up for a pillar the stone upon which his head had rested, and poured oil on top of it as a dedication ceremony. Later Jacob and Laban made a heap of stones as a witness between them. (Gen. 31: 45-52.) For another example, see Josh. 4: 5-9. And Jacob named the place Bethel, but formerly it was called Luz. Bethel means "house of God." Moses speaks of Bethel in connection with Abraham, but he was using the name by which the place was known when he wrote. It was not known as Bethel till after Jacob gave it that name. Even then the name Bethel would gradually supplant the name Luz.

#### Jacob's Vow (Verses 20-22)

In the age in which Jacob lived, and for centuries thereafter, the common idea was that each tribe or nation had its own god. With the whole world saturated with that idea, it would be remarkable if Jacob did not think of Jehovah as a local deity. His calling Luz Bethel—God's house, and his statements that it was God's house, and that Jehovah would be his God, indicate that he had a local idea



of Jehovah. Also, he thought he had come unknowingly into the place where Jehovah abode. Now, if this Jehovah, the God of Abraham and Isaac, would go with him and keep him in the way, and give him bread and raiment, so that he would come again to his father's house in peace, Jehovah would be his God, the stone he had set up would be God's house, and he would give him a tenth of all he possessed. To say, as some have, that Jacob's "if" shows he was trying to drive a bargain with Jehovah, is rather a harsh criticism of him. We must seek to understand him, not in the light of the present day knowledge, but in the light of the thought of that day. Viewed in that light his speech is rather a striking speech, and his vow was all that one could reasonably expect. His proposing to give a tenth to Jehovah was of his own volition; he himself named the amount. And there is not the hint that Jehovah was displeased with the manner in which Jacob made his vow.

*Law of the Vow.*—The law of the vow, as given by Moses, is this: "When thou shalt vow a vow unto Jehovah thy God, thou shalt not be slack to pay it: for Jehovah thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe and do; according as thou hast vowed unto Jehovah thy God, a freewill-offering, which thou hast promised with thy mouth." (Deut. 23: 21-23.) From the very nature of a vow it will be seen that Jacob's proposing to give a tenth to Jehovah was purely voluntary on his part.

### Lesson Connection (Chapter 29 to 32: 23)

When Jacob reached the end of his journey, he was readily received into Laban's home. Within a month's time he had fallen in love with Laban's daughter Rachel, and proposed to Laban to serve him seven years for her; but at the end of the seven years Laban gave him Leah instead of Rachel, under the pretext that it was not the custom in that country to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older. In having this deceit practiced on him, Jacob likely remembered how he also had practiced deceit. He then served seven other years for Rachel. Jacob continued with Laban many years. He became the father of eleven sons and one daughter while in that land. He served Laban twenty years. (Gen. 31: 38.) He must have remained there looking after his own flocks and herds after he ceased working for Laban, though the record does not say so. But consider this: Leah's seven children were born in that land; and the youngest, a daughter named Dinah, was of marriageable age, and her brothers were old enough to make war on a city, when they migrated to Canaan. (Gen. 34.) And yet Leah did not become his wife till he had served Laban seven years, leaving only thirteen years more of service to Laban. The thirty-first chapter tells how Jacob slipped away from Laban, how Laban pursued and overtook him, and how, after a sharp controversy, they made a covenant of peace, and set up a pillar and made a heap of stones as witness between them. Laban then returned to his place, and Jacob went on his way.

*Jacob Fears Esau* (Gen. 32: 1-23).—When messengers whom Jacob had sent to Esau returned with the information that Esau was coming with four hundred men to meet him, he feared greatly. At the time Esau must have meant to do Jacob harm; if not, why the four hundred men? Any additional information that Jacob was able to



find out from the messengers must also have been to the effect that Esau was not in a friendly mood. What Jacob was able to learn about Esau caused him to be greatly afraid and distressed. He felt helpless in meeting Esau, and he was very humble in his prayer. He confessed his own unworthiness, reminded Jehovah of his promises, and prayed, "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, the mother with the children." It is certain that Esau had made the impression on the messengers that he meant to do Jacob harm. It is interesting to note how Jacob arranged his company and his presents to meet Esau, and sent them in companies on before.

### Jacob Wrestles with an Angel (Gen. 32: 24-28)

"And Jacob was left alone." Jacob evidently remained behind, so that undisturbed he could spend the time in prayer. "And there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." It was a heavenly visitor in the form of a man. The incident is one of the strangest occurrences recorded in the Bible. On this twenty-fourth verse Scott remarks, "Having taken every needful precaution, Jacob retired into some solitary place, to renew his earnest supplications: and while he was thus employed, 'one in fashion as a man' appeared to him, and engaged in wrestling with him. Nothing requires more vigor, activity, attention, and unintermitting exertion than wrestling, which seems on this account to have been selected as an emblem of the fervent prayer of faith, persisted in amidst delays, alarms, discouragements, and opposition from every side, and which at length will surely be crowned with success." But why should the angel put Jacob's thigh out of joint? That, of course, was temporary; but it would make Jacob feel his helplessness, so that when the angel did grant Jacob's request, Jacob could plainly see that it was an act of mercy, and not of necessity. Jacob had not gained his point by his own strength. But even so, Jacob persisted, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." The angel changed Jacob's name to Israel, because he had striven with God and with men, and had prevailed. The meaning of Israel, according to the marginal reading in the American Standard Version, is, "He who striveth with God, or, God striveth." Jacob had gained this standing in God's plans, not because he had obtained the birthright by fraud and deceit, but because he had prevailed in his striving with God. With this incident in mind Hosea says concerning Jacob, "In his manhood he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto him." (Hos. 12: 3, 4.)

### "And He Blessed Him There" (Verses 29, 30)

The blessing granted Jacob must have been the protection and security for which Jacob had so earnestly prayed. Protection for himself and family from the fury of Esau meant more to him just then than all the world beside. Jacob called the place Peniel, which means, "the face of God;" "for, said he, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Jacob had obtained the promise of blessing and protection. For that reason he could go forward to meet Esau with less fear and more confidence than he had the night before. The sequel shows that Esau, true to his emotional and impulsive nature,



was overcome by Jacob's presents and his humble attitude. "And Esau ran to meet him, . . . and kissed him: and they wept." (33: 4.)

### SOME REFLECTIONS

It is interesting to notice the names in the Bible, specially those that God and his servants gave to persons and places. Such names are descriptive titles. A discussion of the names and titles applied to the Lord Jesus Christ would fill a large book.

Abraham did not want Isaac to marry any daughter of the heathen surrounding him; neither did Isaac and Rebekah want their two sons to do so. The marriage relation is so close that no Christian should marry a person whose influence would be hurtful instead of helpful.

A thing gained through deceit or fraud cannot bring contentment and satisfaction. Jacob never enjoyed any real happiness in possessing the birthright. And the blessings he obtained from Isaac by fraud made him an exile, and caused him much worry and distress. One cannot see wherein it was any real satisfaction to him.

We get into trouble when we scheme and plan to help God work out his plans. When God announced, even before Esau and Jacob were born, his purposes concerning these two prospective sons of Isaac and Rebekah, Rebekah should have realized that God would work out his plans in his own way; but she thought she must do some scheming to help God work out his plans. In doing so she lost the company of her beloved son, and caused him untold misery.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Some of the names applied to Jesus, and their significance.

What Jacob reaped from deceit.

Whom should Christians marry?

How Jacob grew strong in character.

Jacob's meeting with Esau.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject of the lesson, and tell where it is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.  
Give some facts about Bethel.  
Why did Jacob go to Paddan-aram?  
Why did he go without attendants?  
At what noted place did he spend the night?  
Tell his dream.  
Mention some other dreams in which God made revelations.

#### *Verses 16, 17*

What effect did Jacob's dream have on him?  
What did he say?  
Was it to Jacob's discredit that he feared?

#### *Verses 18, 19*

What did Jacob do next morning?  
Give some other similar occurrences.

#### *Verses 20-22*

What was the general idea about gods in Jacob's time?  
What seems to have been Jacob's idea of Jehovah?  
Repeat Jacob's vow.  
What was the general law of the vow, as set forth by Moses?  
Would a thing God commanded be a proper matter for a vow?

#### *Lesson Connection*

Tell about Jacob's marriages to Leah and Rachel.  
In all, how long did Jacob serve Laban?  
What shows that he must have stayed in Paddan-aram longer than twenty years?  
Give the manner of Jacob's leaving Paddan-aram.  
Tell of Laban's pursuit, and the results.  
Why did Jacob become so fearful of Esau?  
Tell about Jacob's prayer.

## Gen. 32: 24-28

Tell about Jacob's wrestling.  
 What happened to Jacob?  
 Why this temporary injury?  
 To what was Jacob's name changed,  
 and why?  
 What does Hosea say about this incident?

## Verses 29, 30

What blessing was granted to Jacob?  
 What did Jacob name the place, and  
 why?  
 What was the outcome of the meeting  
 with Esau?  
 Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson X—June 6, 1937

## JOSEPH'S READINESS FOR SERVICE

## Gen. 41: 33-44

33 Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.  
 34 Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint overseers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years.  
 35 And let them gather all the food of these good years that come, and lay up grain under the hand of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it.  
 36 And the food shall be for a store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.  
 37 And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.  
 38 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the spirit of God is?  
 39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou:  
 40 Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.  
 41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.  
 42 And Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck;  
 43 And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he set him over all the land of Egypt.  
 44 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings." (Prov. 22: 29.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Luke 19: 11-23.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

May 31.	M.	Joseph Sees a Need (Gen. 41: 33-36)
June 1.	T.	Joseph Supplies a Need (Gen. 41: 37-44)
June 2.	W.	Principles of Promotion (Matt. 25: 19-23)
June 3.	T.	The Gain of a Good Conscience (1 Pet. 3: 12-17)
June 4.	F.	False Readiness (Luke 22: 31-33)
June 5.	S.	Service, the Measure of Greatness (Matt. 20: 25-28)
June 6.	S.	Faithful Stewards (Luke 19: 11-19)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1715 B.C.; according to Hales, 1872 B.C. At this time Joseph was thirty years old. (Gen. 41: 45.)

*Place.*—Egypt. No one knows when Egypt was first settled. At the time of its first mention in the Bible it appears to have had a strong government. Because of its importance in connection with the history of the children of Israel, every Bible student should gain what information he can about that land and its people. Consult any ancient history, encyclopedia, or Bible dictionary. Locate it on the map. To discuss Egypt and its people would require more space than can be given in this book.



*Persons.*—Joseph, Pharaoh, and his servants. Joseph was Jacob's eleventh son. The name Pharaoh was the title of the native kings of Egypt, and not a personal name. The servants mentioned in our lesson seem to have been his official servants, his advisers, and not slaves.

*Lesson Links.*—Joseph, the son of Jacob and Rachel, was born in Paddan-aram. He was the son of Jacob's favorite wife. Because of the peculiar circumstances of his birth, and perhaps for other reasons, Joseph was Jacob's favorite son. Jacob showed such partiality to Joseph that it excited the envy, and even enmity, of his other sons toward Joseph. He brought to Jacob an evil report concerning the conduct of the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah. In so doing he, of course, increased their enmity. "And his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren; and they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him." He told two of his dreams which indicated that he was to have preeminence over his brethren, and even over Jacob; and his brethren hated him still more. Jacob surely did not know how deep was the hatred of his other sons toward Joseph, else he would not have sent Joseph to the grazing lands at Shechem to see how they were getting along. When they saw him coming they made a plot to kill him. To prevent that, Reuben persuaded them to cast him into a pit. It was his intention to slip around later and get him out of the pit, and send him back to his father; but in Reuben's absence the others sold Joseph to some traveling traders, who took Joseph to Egypt, and sold him into slavery. Joseph, of course, did not know but that Reuben was a party to this whole scheme. How these men deceived their father is too well known to need repetition here. In Egypt Joseph was sold to an Egyptian, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, "and Jehovah was with Joseph." "And his master saw that Jehovah was with him, and that Jehovah made all that he did to prosper in his hand." Joseph became Potiphar's favorite servant, so much so that he made Joseph his business manager. Potiphar then prospered as he had never prospered before. He left everything in Joseph's hands. But in maintaining the purity of his character, he offended Potiphar's wife; and through her false charge he was cast into prison, the place where the king's prisoners were kept. But Jehovah was with Joseph in that prison, "and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison." The keeper of the prison made Joseph the manager of everything pertaining to the prison. Pharaoh's chief butler and his chief baker became prisoners under Joseph's charge. Each of these had a dream the same night, which Joseph interpreted for them. According to Joseph's interpretation the butler was restored to his office and the baker was hanged. Joseph asked the chief butler to remember him, and mention him to Pharaoh, and bring him out of prison. But the ungrateful butler promptly forgot Joseph. At the end of two full years Joseph was still in prison.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Joseph Recommends a Plan to Pharaoh (Verses 33-36)

While Joseph was still in prison Pharaoh had a dream. In his dream he stood by the river Nile. He saw seven fat kine come up out of the river, followed by seven lean kine, which ate up the seven fat



kine. "So Pharaoh awoke, and he slept and dreamed a second time." This time he saw seven good ears of grain grow on one stalk. Then seven ears, thin and blasted with the east wind, sprang up, and swallowed up the good ears. When morning came he was troubled about the significance of his dreams, and called in all the magicians and all the wise men, told them his dreams, and called for an interpretation. "But there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh." At this juncture the chief butler remembered his prison experience. He told Pharaoh how his dream and the dream of the baker were interpreted by a young Hebrew prisoner, and how things came to pass according to Joseph's interpretation of their dreams. Pharaoh sent in haste for Joseph, and stated to him his troubles, and said, "I have heard say of thee, that when thou hearest a dream thou canst interpret it." In truth and modesty Joseph replied, "It is not in me: God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace." God would speak to Pharaoh through Joseph, and explain to him the meaning of his dream. When Pharaoh told his dream to Joseph, Joseph replied, "The dream of Pharaoh is one: what God is about to do he hath declared unto Pharaoh." There were to be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine. There is a mystery about such dreams as the dreams of Pharaoh's butler and baker, that of Pharaoh, of the Midianites (Judges 7: 13-15), and of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2: 1-45). All these men were worshipers of idols—they were not believers in Jehovah; and yet God caused them to dream these dreams. As the interpretations were of God, so were the dreams. In fact it is plainly stated to both Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar that God had made known to them things that were to come. It is true that they did not understand their dreams till interpreted. But in some way, unknown to us, God caused them to dream as they did. But a fact worthy of note is that their dreams made no moral change in them whatsoever. Only the word of God, with its commands and motives, really changes human character. Joseph did not stop with interpreting Pharaoh's dreams. It seems a little daring for him to advise Pharaoh, for kings in those days were ready to punish any one who seemed too forward. However, though the record does not so state, it may be that Pharaoh asked Joseph's advice. Be that as it may, the case was urgent, and wise steps had to be taken. Food had to be stored up during the years of plenty to tide them over the years of famine. There was an emergency, and the government would have to take matters in hand. To merely recommend to the people to put away a fifth of their grain, and leave them to carry out the plan, would be a failure. Some of them would do as recommended, but the majority would not. Overseers must be appointed to collect the grain, and keep it under government protection. The grain was to be stored up under the hand of Pharaoh. It is not likely that all the past history of Egypt furnished a precedent for such action, but what mattered it? Something had to be done.

### Joseph's Recommendation Pleased Pharaoh (Verses 37, 38)

It is to the credit of Pharaoh that he was willing to receive good advice even from a foreigner, who was a slave and a prisoner. There are people, not so high up in the world as Pharaoh, who will not entertain suggestions made by people who they think belong to a lower class than themselves. But Pharaoh was not so. It was fortunate



for Egypt and some other nations that Egypt had a practical man at the head of the government at that time. He had about him some wise assistants. They too were pleased with Joseph's plan. And the search for a man to put at the head of Joseph's plan began. Pharaoh asked his assistants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the spirit of God is?" How much time they spent in discussing this point, we know not; for it is most certain that more was said about such a great matter than is recorded.

### Joseph Exalted Next to Pharaoh (Verses 39-41)

Likely Pharaoh's advisers expected one of their number to be selected to head the new move. That would have been natural, and nothing to their discredit. With their minds on themselves it would hardly occur to them that a foreigner, who had been a slave and then a prisoner ever since he had been in Egypt, could fill the place. What could he know about Egypt? But Pharaoh could see the matter more clearly, for he did not have himself in mind as the possible selection. Joseph's ability to interpret his dream, and perhaps also Joseph's appearance and demeanor, appealed to Pharaoh. He was high in his praise of Joseph, "Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou." By the appointment of Pharaoh, Joseph was made not only food administrator, but ruler over all the land. "Only in the throne will I be greater than thou." Later, when the famine came on, and the people cried to Pharaoh for bread, Pharaoh said to them, "Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do." (Verse 55.) Thus Joseph's days of slavery and imprisonment had ended; virtue had its reward. Joseph had become the dictator of Egypt. Pharaoh's counselors raised no objections; likely every one of them saw the wisdom of the appointment. The emergency was too great for any of them to feel disposed to cavil. Human nature is so prone to envy that had a foreigner, who was a slave and a prisoner, been so exalted on any other occasion, these counselors would have voiced a protest.

### Joseph Receives the Authority and Honors of His Office (Verses 42-44)

In an age when pomp and display were thought to be an inseparable part of high office, Joseph could not have impressed the people with his authority nor secured their cooperation, had he gone about his duties without such manifestations of his official position. He was clothed in fine linen, wore a gold chain around his neck, rode in Pharaoh's royal chariot, and as he passed along, the people were required to cry, "Bow the knee." In this country, and at this time, such ostentation would be ridiculous; but not in Egypt at that time. "And Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand." This ring might have been the insignia of his office, showing that he represented Pharaoh; or it might have been a ring used in putting the official seal on government documents; or it might have served both purposes.

*Pharaoh's Final Word to Joseph.*—"I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt." This was as much as to say, "I am Pharaoh, the supreme authority in Egypt, and I will see to it that all your wishes and plans are carried

out. You have my full authority to act as your wisdom dictates, and all the authority of my government is backing you up." But with all the duties and honors of his office, the sensitiveness of his character would not allow him to dismiss some things from his mind. He could not know what sort of report his brethren made to his father. He did not know but that they had told Jacob exactly what they had done. He would, therefore, wonder why his father had not followed him up. It would not have been difficult to follow a caravan of traders, for they would have to travel in sufficient numbers to repel robbers. But Jacob had not followed them. Was it because he had not loved his son as Joseph thought he had; or did the shock of his disappearance kill his father? Joseph could not know.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Affections not properly guarded and directed may result in much harm. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his other sons, and showed that love so plainly as to cause them to hate Joseph. It resulted in much misery to both Jacob and Joseph.

To work out his plans God rules in those who love and serve him, and overrules the disobedient. Those who fight against God are made to serve some purpose. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the residue of wrath shalt thou gird upon thee." (Psalm 76: 10.) For "gird upon thee" the marginal reading has "restrain." In so far as man's wrath can be used to carry out God's purposes he uses it; beyond that, he restrains it.

The only thing that moved Jacob's sons to sell Joseph into slavery was hatred. They meant to do him harm. But God overruled their actions so as to make them serve his purposes. In their wrath they would have slain Joseph; but such a deed could not have served God's purpose, and they were restrained from doing so. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!" (Rom. 11: 33.)

The treatment Joseph received at home would tend to make him arrogant and overbearing. To serve the purpose God had in view these traits had to be toned down. A period of slavery followed by a rather long stay in prison would reduce his pride and feeling of importance. In both slavery and imprisonment he learned to work under men, and at the same time he learned to manage men. He also learned business principles. A petted son does not have much opportunity to learn any of these useful things. Joseph had to be torn away from his father in order to learn to be useful.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- The hazards of being a petted son.
- The evils of favoritism in the family.
- What slavery and imprisonment did for Joseph.
- The ingratitude of the chief butler.
- Some noted dreams.

### QUESTIONS

- Give the subject of the lesson, and tell where it is found.
- Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

whatever information you can about either.

- How many sons had Jacob?
- Which was his favorite, and why?
- What effect did this have on the other sons?
- What incidents increased their hatred?

#### *The Lesson Settings*

- Give the time, place, and persons, and



Tell how Joseph became a slave in Egypt.  
Which of his brethren kept Joseph from being killed?  
Tell about Joseph's slavery.  
How did he fare as a prisoner?  
Tell about his interpreting two dreams.  
What request did he make?  
How was his request treated?

### Verses 33-36

Give the account of Pharaoh's dream.  
Of whom did he first seek an interpretation?  
How did Joseph come to be the interpreter?  
What did Joseph claim as to the power to interpret dreams?  
What was the interpretation?  
Give some significant dreams of other heathen.  
What evidence is there that God caused these dreams?  
What moral effects did these dreams have on the dreamers?  
How are moral effects produced?

What did Joseph recommend?  
Why would overseers be needed?

### Verses 37, 38

How were Joseph's recommendations received?  
What shows that Pharaoh was sensible and practical?  
What question did Pharaoh raise?

### Verses 39-41

What would Pharaoh's advisers naturally expect?  
Why was Joseph selected to head the plan?  
What authority was given Joseph?

### Verses 42-44

Why so much pomp and display?  
Why the ring on his hand?  
What final word did Pharaoh give Joseph?  
During all this time, what must have been on Joseph's mind?  
Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson XI—June 13, 1937

# THE BROTHERLY LOVE OF JUDAH

Gen. 44: 18-34

18 Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh, my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh.

19 My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?

20 And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother; and his father loveth him.

21 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.

22 And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die.

23 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

24 And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.

25 And our father said, Go again, buy us a little food.

26 And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down; for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us.

27 And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons:

28 And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I have not seen him since:

29 And if ye take this one also from me, and harm befall him, ye will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol.

30 Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad is not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life;

31 It will come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants will bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to Sheol.

32 For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then shall I bear the blame to my father for ever.

33 Now therefore, let thy servant, I pray thee, abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.

34 For how shall I go up to my father, if the lad be not with me? lest I see the evil that shall come on my father.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Let love of the brethren continue.*” (Heb. 13: 1.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 26: 1-7.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

June 7.	M.	Judah's Plea to Joseph (Gen. 44: 18-24)
June 8.	T.	Judah's Pledge to Joseph (Gen. 44: 25-34)
June 9.	W.	Brotherly Love (1 John 2: 7-11)
June 10.	T.	A Christian Community (Acts 2: 41-47)
June 11.	F.	Family Life (Eph. 6: 1-8)
June 12.	S.	Helping the Weak (Gal. 6: 1-6)
June 13.	S.	Sincere Love (Rom. 12: 9-18)

### THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1706 B.C. Nine years intervened between the events of our last lesson and the events of this lesson. It had been two hundred and fifteen years since Abraham came into the land of Canaan. Isaac was born twenty-five years after Abraham left Haran (Gen. 12: 4; 21: 5); Isaac was sixty years old when Jacob and Esau were born (Gen. 25: 26); and Jacob was one hundred and thirty years old when he came into Egypt (Gen. 47: 28). Add these figures, and you have two hundred and fifteen.

*Place.*—Egypt, in Joseph's house.

*Persons.*—Judah and Joseph. Of course the whole family of Jacob was in view.

*Lesson Links.*—Joseph was thirty years old when he was appointed general overseer in the place to collect and store grain during the seven years of plenty. (Gen. 41: 46.) Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, became the wife of Joseph. “And Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.” The food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. “And Joseph laid up grain as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left off numbering; for it was without number.” Two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, were born to Joseph. When the seven years of famine set in, people from other countries came to Egypt to buy grain, for the famine extended into all countries round about. Canaan did not escape the famine. When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he sent his sons to Egypt to buy grain. Benjamin remained at home. When Joseph's ten brothers came to him, he recognized them, but they did not know him. He pretended not to know them, used an interpreter in conversing with them, accused them of being spies, and locked them up three days. They had told him that they were true men, sons of one man in the land of Canaan, and that they had one brother, the youngest, at home. On the third day he brought them out, and proposed a test by which he would know whether they were spies. One of them was to be locked up, while the others went back home. They were then to bring their youngest brother down. If they returned with their brother he would know they were not spies. Not knowing that Joseph understood their speech, they began to talk among themselves. “We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore also, behold, his blood is required.” This was Joseph's first knowledge of the fact that Reuben had taken his part on that eventful day.



*Joseph Was Human—He Remembered His Dreams.* (Gen. 37: 5-11.) —He was now the sheaf standing upright, and his brethren were the sheaves bowing down before him. He had not yet learned that time had mellowed them and changed their feelings toward their brother whom they once hated, and whom they sold into slavery. But Benjamin was his full brother, and had had no part in selling him into slavery. He was, therefore, planning to get Benjamin down with him. To make sure that Benjamin would be brought, he bound Simeon to be kept in prison till Benjamin was brought. It would be useless for them to come for more grain, unless they brought Benjamin. (Gen. 42: 1-15.) Reuben was the oldest of his brothers, but Joseph learned from their talk that he was much less guilty than the others, so he had bound Simeon, the next oldest brother. When they returned for more grain bringing Benjamin with them, Joseph contrived a scheme to keep Benjamin, and let the others go on back home. He released Simeon and had his steward to make a feast for them. When he came in, he asked about their father, and also asked, "Is this your youngest brother, of whom ye spake unto me?" Had he not brought them into his house, he could not very well have accused them of stealing his silver cup. He commanded the steward to put every one's money into his sack's mouth, and to put his silver cup in Benjamin's sack. When they had gone but a little way, he sent his steward after them to charge them with stealing his silver cup. They earnestly denied the charge of theft. As proof of their honesty, they reminded him that they had brought back the money which they had found in their sacks. As further proof of their innocence they said, "With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen." When the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, they all returned to the city in great distress of mind. And they fell down before Joseph on the ground—a striking fulfillment of Joseph's dream about the sheaves. When Joseph accused them, Judah spake for all. His reply is pitiful in its expression of helplessness. They had no defense to make—no way to clear themselves. They were being paid for their iniquity. "We are my lord's bondmen, both we, and he also in whose hand the cup is found." Notice that they were willing to share punishment with Benjamin. How different they are now from what they were when they hated Joseph, plotted his death, and then sold him into slavery. They all now have a very tender feeling for their youngest brother. They remembered, too, their aged father at home; they could not go back, and face him without Benjamin. But Joseph was very stern with them, saying, "Far be it from me that I should do so: the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my bondman; but as for you, get you up in peace unto your father." Had they been as they once were, that would have been to them a happy solution of the matter, and they would not have cared much how their father felt about the loss of Benjamin.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Judah's Plea for a Hearing (Verse 18)

The heading of our lesson misses the real substance of the text. Throughout Judah's speech, the happiness and welfare of his father was the chief consideration. He, no doubt, loved Benjamin; but he



would have Benjamin released for the sake of his father. "Thou art even as Pharaoh"—equally to be respected and feared. Joseph's word was as final as Pharaoh's. (Chapter 41: 40, 44.) Joseph had already delivered his judgment, as recorded in verse seventeen. It must have been a very difficult matter to deliver a plea, or defense, after judgment had been pronounced. Judah did the speaking; but he was speaking for the others, for they were present. But it was fitting that Judah should make the appeal, for he had pledged Benjamin's safe return to his father. (Gen. 43: 1-15.) As we read the opening sentence, our mind goes back to Joseph's dreams; "Oh, my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh." In studying this speech the student should consider all the surrounding circumstances, together with the events leading up to it.

### Judah Recounts the Reasons for Bringing Benjamin (Verses 19-26)

Judah gives more of the particulars of the conversation between Joseph and his brethren at their former visit than are found in the narrative. (See Gen. 42: 1-25.) Concerning verse twenty one has well said, "Joseph had been long dead to his father, and his brethren had been long accustomed to speak of him as dead." Every word in this verse is simplicity and pathos itself. No man of the least taste or sensibility can read it without great emotion. Indeed the whole speech is exquisitely beautiful, and perhaps the most complete pattern of genuine natural eloquence extant in any language. Had Joseph been merely a humane judge, and no relation, and had Benjamin been guilty, such an address must have been irresistibly forcible; with what feeling then must Joseph have heard it! When we read the generous speech we forgive Judah all the past, and cannot refuse to say, "Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise." (Gen. 49: 8.) On their former visit, when Joseph asked them to bring Benjamin down, Judah had protested on the grounds that the absence of Benjamin would result in his father's death. But Joseph had demanded that they bring Benjamin. If they did not do so, they would see his face no more. This meant that Joseph would sell them no more grain. It seems that Judah was trying to impress upon this lord of the land that the trouble had come through the demands of the man himself, and over their protest. In bringing Benjamin they had, therefore, planned no harm. There is not, in Judah's entire speech, any hint as to whether he thought Benjamin was guilty or innocent. His whole concern was about his father. When Jacob had told them to go for more grain, they had told him it was useless to go, unless Benjamin accompanied them.

### Judah Recites Jacob's Words (Verses 27, 28)

Rachel had been the real object of Jacob's love. Leah had been forced on him by trickery. So he spoke of Rachel as his real wife. "My wife bare me two sons." Because he loved their mother most, it was natural for him also to love her sons. She was dead, and Joseph to him was dead; only Benjamin remained of the fruit of his real love. The other sons had become old enough and experienced enough to realize the situation, and not to resent his loving Benjamin.



But it must have been painful to Judah to recite the words of his father, knowing that they were based on their crime against Joseph and their deception of their father. They had carried that crime and deception on their consciences a long time. It was painful to them to think of it—it was much more painful to Judah to make it the basis of a plea for mercy in behalf of his father. But Joseph learned from Judah's recital that his brethren had not told his father that they sold Joseph into slavery, and that Jacob all these years had believed that a wild beast had torn him to pieces. He now knew why his father had not followed up the caravan that brought him to Egypt. Joseph had great self-control, or he could not have stood any more, especially when he heard these words: "And if ye take this one also from me, and harm befall him, ye will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol." Sheol is the abode of departed spirits, and is the same as Hades in the New Testament.

### Judah Fears for His Father's Life (Verses 29-31)

Jacob was growing old. His life was bound up in the life of Benjamin. If they returned without Benjamin, Judah felt sure that the shock would kill Jacob. The shock might cause him to die suddenly, or he might pine away, and die from excessive grief. And these sons felt that they would, therefore, be the cause of their father's death. They had caused him to mourn for years for Joseph; another such grief in his advanced age would be more than he could stand.

### Judah Pleads to Be Bondman Instead of Benjamin (Verses 32-34)

Judah pledged himself as surety for Benjamin. For the sake of his father, he pleads that he be allowed to take Benjamin's place as bondman. To him it seemed to be the only solution. He would willingly do it to save his father's life. Life would not mean much to him any way, if he should be the cause of his father's death. The substitution would not be any loss to Joseph, for Judah could serve as well as Benjamin. Besides, he could not bear to see the anguish of his father. "For how shall I go up to my father, if the lad be not with me? lest I see the evil that shall come on my father." Scott says, "Without exception, this may be considered as by far the most affecting speech that was ever recorded. Either the speakers and writers in this sacred volume excelled all other men in native genius and simple eloquence, or they were divinely inspired; for surely no men ever spoke and wrote as they did."

## SOME REFLECTIONS

It is sometimes both interesting and encouraging to note the development of character. When Judah hated Joseph, was a party to plotting his death, and then in selling him into slavery, sharing with the others the money from that heartless transaction, he seemed then to be hopelessly hardened in sin. But we now see him before Joseph completely transformed.

Joseph had been a spoiled lad, proud and haughty. In Egypt he had pondered over the cruelty of his brethren and the seeming indifference of his father. He had named his first-born Manasseh, "making to forget," saying, "For God hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house." Till now he did not realize the marvelous

change in them. Judah's speech was a revelation to him. He saw also that his father had thought he was dead.

It has been said that God works in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform. That is true with respect to his overruling providence in working out his plans. At first it would not have occurred to Joseph that God had any hand in what was taking place. God did not make Joseph's brethren hate him, but he overruled their hatred in working out his plans. This had become clear to Joseph, as is seen in what he said to his brethren: "And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. . . . God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God." (Gen. 45: 5-8.)

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- The transformation of character as illustrated in Joseph.
- The transformation of character as illustrated in Joseph's brethren.
- God's providence in the affairs of men.
- Jacob in his early and latter days.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

### *The Lesson Settings*

- Give the time, and tell how long since Abraham came into Canaan.
- Give the place and persons.
- How old was Joseph when made ruler?
- Who became his wife?
- Give the method of collecting and storing food?
- How extensive was the famine?
- Tell about the first trip of Jacob's sons to Egypt.
- How did Joseph contrive to have them bring Benjamin down?
- Of what did this remind them?
- What did Joseph seem to have in mind as to Benjamin?
- When they brought Benjamin, what plan did Joseph fall on as an excuse to keep Benjamin?
- What judgment did he render in the matter of the silver cup?

### *Verse 18*

Wherein does the heading of this lesson seem not to fit the lesson?

For whose benefit did Judah plead?  
How do Joseph's dreams fit this occasion?

### *Verses 19-26*

- Repeat from memory verse 20.
- What appears to have been Judah's object in reciting their former conversation?
- Give your impression of Judah's speech.
- How had they secured Jacob's consent for Benjamin to go to Egypt?

### *Verses 27, 28*

- Repeat what Jacob said to his sons.
- Why would Jacob be specially devoted to Joseph and Benjamin?
- What would happen if he lost Benjamin?
- What is Sheol?

### *Verses 29-31*

- Why did Judah so fear to return without Benjamin?
- Discuss verses 30 and 31.

### *Verses 32-34*

- What plea did Joseph make for himself?
- For whose sake did Judah ask to substitute for Benjamin?
- Discuss the reflections.



## Lesson XII—June 20, 1937

## JOSEPH'S KINDNESS TO HIS KINDRED

Gen. 46: 1-7, 28-30; 50: 24-26

1 And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.

2 And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I.

3 And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt: for I will there make of thee a great nation:

4 I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

5 And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

6 And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him:

7 His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

28 And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to show the way before him unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.

29 And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen; and he presented himself unto him, and fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.

30 And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, that thou art yet alive.

24 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die; but God will surely visit you, and bring you up out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

25 And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

26 So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.” (Eph. 4: 32.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Luke 2: 41-52.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

June 14.	M.	Joseph's Kindness to His Father (Gen. 46: 1-7)
June 15.	T.	Joseph's Kindness to His Brothers (Gen. 46: 28-30; 50: 24-26)
June 16.	W.	Remembering Loved Ones (Col. 2: 1-5)
June 17.	T.	Honoring Parents (Prov. 1: 7-9)
June 18.	F.	Forgiving One Another (Col. 3: 12-17)
June 19.	S.	Standing by One Another (Neh. 4: 19-23)
June 20.	S.	Jesus Helping in the Home (Luke 2: 46-52)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, the first part of our lesson occurred 1706 B.C.; the last part, 1863 B.C. and 1792 B.C. The first part of our lesson follows immediately after the events of our last lesson.

*Places.*—Beersheba, in the land of Canaan; the land of Goshen, in Egypt. The exact location of Goshen is not known. It seems certain that it was on the east side of the river Nile; for nothing is said of Jacob's crossing the Nile, nor of the children of Israel crossing that river as they fled from Egypt. It appears to have been suited for stockmen, such as were Jacob and his sons.

*Persons.*—Jacob, his sons, and their families.

*Lesson Links.*—Judah's speech was so overwhelmingly pathetic and appealing that Joseph could not restrain his emotions; "and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me." No outsiders were to look upon the happy reunion of a family once torn by hatred and trickery. Joseph, unashamed, wept aloud. He called his astonished brethren around him, and further astonished them by saying, "I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?" They could not answer him, so bewildered and astonished were they. Since they had been so cruel to Joseph, they would now fear what he might do to them. To quiet their fears, he said to them, "And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." He then urged them to hasten back home, and bring Jacob and all they had. They would dwell in the land of Goshen, so that, being near him, he could nourish them. Pharaoh was pleased when he heard that Joseph's brethren had come; he also urged them to move, with all they had, into Egypt. He also furnished them wagons to assist in bringing their families and their father to Egypt. It is interesting to note the rich gifts Joseph bestowed upon his brethren, and those he sent to his father. When they reached home, and told Jacob that Joseph was alive and ruler of the land of Egypt, Jacob did not believe them, till he saw the wagons. Then he said, "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### God Speaks to Jacob at Beersheba (Verses 1-4)

It seems that Jacob was living near Hebron when he started on his journey to Egypt. Having gathered all his tents and household goods, together with his flocks and herds, he started on his journey. Beersheba was on his route. Here he stopped, and offered sacrifices. Here he would leave Canaan. It seems that these patriarchs built no altars and offered no sacrifices while they were out of the land of promise. God's assurance, "Fear not to go down into Egypt," indicates plainly that Jacob's first enthusiasm at the thought of seeing Joseph had waned, and that he had begun to fear the consequences of going into Egypt. Before leaving the land of promise he would offer sacrifices, and seek divine guidance; he would find out if it was God's will for him to go. He was told not to fear going into Egypt; God would bring him up again. He would not bring Jacob back, only as he was represented in his descendants; for Jacob was leaving Canaan, never to see it again. The far-reaching promises made to these patriarchs were to be fulfilled to their seed.

#### Jacob Goes to Egypt (Verses 5-7)

In the moving of Jacob into Egypt we have the first mention of wagons. (See Gen. 45: 19.) Jacob, his sons' wives, and the little ones rode in the wagons. Their journey was slow, for the stock had to have time at camping places to graze. However, in settling up the western part of the United States, many of these early settlers traveled much farther in wagons than Jacob had to go. Jacob was buoyed up by two impelling motives—the prospect of seeing Joseph and of reaching a land where he would find food. He was also sustained by Jehovah's promise to be with him. Nothing but that which was best could happen to him. Neither was he leaving any of his



family behind. As Jacob had one daughter, Dinah, the daughters who are mentioned as going with him must have been either his sons' wives or his sons' daughters, or both. Grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, etc., are terms which were not then in use. A man's children and his children's children were his sons and daughters.

### Judah Acted as Guide (Verse 28)

Jacob's sons had made two trips to Egypt; hence, had been over the road four times. Some one would have to go before to look out for good camping places; because so large a company and so much stock would require good watering places, and the stock would need pasturage. Judah was selected to go before, and perform whatever services were necessary for their comfort and convenience. Judah would also go on before them to inform Joseph of their coming so that he could meet them in Goshen.

### Joseph Meets Them in Goshen (Verses 29, 30)

"Joseph made ready his chariot." By referring to chapter 41: 43 it will be seen that Pharaoh had given Joseph his second chariot. (Gen. 41: 42, 43.) That was the first time chariot is mentioned. Pharaoh's second chariot would be a very fine chariot. Hence, Joseph "rode in state" to meet his father—rode as a prince. It was an affecting meeting—father and son weeping for joy after so many years of sadness and heartaches. Jacob's cup of joy was now full; he was ready to die, since he had seen the face of his best beloved son.

### Intervening Events (Gen. 46: 31 to 50: 23)

This lesson is meant to include everything from the sixteenth verse of the forty-fifth chapter to the twenty-sixth verse of the fiftieth chapter. It is not meant for us to study only the text that is herein printed, for that would give us a very limited and fragmentary view of the lesson.

*Joseph's People Before Pharaoh* (47: 1-10).—Joseph had informed his brethren that they would be called to appear at the royal court. (46: 31-34.) At an opportune time Joseph selected five of his brethren to appear before Pharaoh. They told Pharaoh their occupation. "To sojourn in the land are we come; for there is no pasture for thy servants' flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen." That speech is significant, both in what is said and in what is not said. In saying they had come to sojourn in the land they were informing Pharaoh that they did not propose to make Egypt their permanent home. And they made their plea on their own merits and on their own account. They did not remind Pharaoh that they were Joseph's brethren, and would therefore expect favors on his account. Neither did they remind Pharaoh that they had come at his invitation, and were therefore due royal consideration. They made their plea as if they had come into the land strangers, uninvited and unexpected. They did not want special favors, and did not want Pharaoh to think they did. All they asked was to be allowed to dwell in the land.

*Jacob Before Pharaoh* (47: 7-10).—Neither did Jacob claim the right to any favors. On the contrary, he conferred favors; he blessed Pharaoh when he went before him, and as he departed from him.

"And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How many are the days of the years of thy life?" Jacob's reply is as quaint as anything found in literature: "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." He then graciously blessed Pharaoh, and took his departure. "But without any dispute the less is blessed of the better." (Heb. 7: 7.)

*Jacob Adopts Joseph's Two Sons* (Chapter 48).—Word came to Joseph that his father was sick. Joseph took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, and hastened to the bedside of his sick father. Jacob referred to God's promise to give his seed the land of Canaan, and added, "And now thy two sons, who were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh, even as Reuben and Simeon, shall be mine. And thy issue, that thou begetteth after them, shall be thine; they shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance." Then he blessed the two sons, giving preeminence to Ephraim, the younger son. By this adoption of Ephraim and Manasseh each of them became the head of a tribe, just as the other sons of Jacob became heads of tribes. "By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff." (Heb. 11: 21.)

*Jacob's Death and Burial* (50: 1-14).—Before Jacob died he charged his sons to take his body back to Canaan, and bury it in the cave of Machpelah, where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah were buried. When he died the physicians of Egypt embalmed him, and his sons took him to the family burying place—the cave of Machpelah.

*Joseph's Brethren Fear Him* (50: 16-21).—Joseph's brethren felt that Jacob's presence had been a restraining influence over Joseph. Now, that Jacob was dead, they feared that Joseph would take vengeance on them. They went to him with a humble plea for forgiveness. Joseph assured them of his good intentions toward them. "Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them."

### Joseph's Farewell to His Brethren (Gen. 50: 24-26)

"And Joseph said unto his brethren." Joseph was the youngest of the sons of Jacob, with the exception of Benjamin. Some of his brethren were considerably older than he. In the term brethren Joseph might have included the sons of his own brothers. He was about to die, but that would not hinder the working out of God's plans. "God will surely visit you, and bring you up out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Perhaps it had not been so revealed to Joseph, yet God would retain them in Egypt till they had grown in numbers sufficiently to possess the land. But Joseph did not require them to take him immediately back to Canaan for burial, as Jacob had done. He did, however, cause them to swear that, when they went up from Egypt to Canaan, they would take his bones with them. Of course, all those then living, those of whom Joseph exacted the oath, were dead when the children of Israel went up out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses; but the obligation of that oath was recognized by those who did go up. "And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he



had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you." (Ex. 13: 19.) But they did not bury his bones in Abraham's burying place. "And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in the parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money." (Josh. 24: 32.) Joseph was one hundred and ten years old when he died. As was the custom with the Egyptians they embalmed Joseph before burying him. "Three methods were employed by the Egyptians in embalming the bodies of the dead. Their choice depended chiefly upon the financial resources of the dead person's friends. It is estimated that the first cost about twelve hundred and fifty dollars; the second, about three hundred dollars; and the third was quite inexpensive." (The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia.) Of course Joseph would have the most thorough method of embalming.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

When Joseph became the ruler of Egypt, his high office did not spoil him. There were certain standards of official dignity that he had to comply with, but he did not allow his high honor to destroy his love and respect for his people. He was not ashamed to present them before the king.

The independent and self-reliant spirit of Jacob and his sons was commendable. It was their duty to respect the king as their ruler, and they did that; but they did not truckle to him, nor cringe before him. In Canaan they had never known anything but to rely upon themselves, for they were there sojourners and had to look out for themselves. They had never felt disposed to cringe before any man.

There is no visible miracle in the overruling providence of God. That God's hand is in an affair is rarely seen at the time of its occurrence. It took years for Joseph to see that God overruled the events of his past life for a great purpose. Even then he did not see the full significance of it all, for the major developments of God's plans did not come till many years after Joseph's death.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

How riches and high honors spoil some people.  
How hardships and disappointments sour some people.  
Jacob and his sons before Pharaoh.  
The unseen workings of God's providence.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject of the lesson, and tell where it is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, places, and persons.  
Describe Joseph's action at the close of Judah's speech.  
What questions did he ask?  
Why could not his brethren answer?  
How did Joseph quiet their fears?  
What did he urge them to do?

How was Jacob convinced that Joseph was alive?

#### *Verses 1-4*

Tell about Jacob at Beersheba.  
What did Jehovah say to him there?

#### *Verses 5-7*

What conveyances did they have?  
Try to figure from the map how long their journey was.

## Verse 28

What were Judah's duties on this trip?

## Verses 29, 30

How would Joseph know when to start out to meet them?

Describe his meeting with Jacob.

## Intervening Events

Give account of their appearance before Pharaoh.

Give the striking points in the speech of Joseph's brethren.

Repeat Jacob's speech.

What else did Jacob do while he was conversing with Pharaoh?

What light does Heb. 7: 7 throw on what was done?

Tell about Jacob's adopting Joseph's sons.

What therefore did Ephraim and Manasseh become?

## Gen. 50: 24-26

What oath did Joseph exact of his brethren?

What information have we as to the fulfillment of this oath?

How old was Joseph at his death?

Give what information you can about embalming in Egypt.

## Lesson XIII—June 27, 1937

## MESSAGES FROM GENESIS

Heb. 11: 3-10, 17-22

3 By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear.

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts: and through it he being dead yet speaketh.

5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him: for he hath had witness borne to him that before his translation he had been well-pleasing unto God:

6 And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

11 By faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac: yea, he that had gladly received the promises was offering up his only begotten son;

12 Even he to whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called:

13 Accounting that God is able to raise up, even from the dead; from whence he did also in a figure receive him back.

14 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even concerning things to come.

15 By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

16 By faith Joseph, when his end was nigh, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (Heb. 11: 13.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Heb. 11: 32-40.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

June 21. M.-----Faith Before Abraham (Heb. 11: 3-7)

June 22. T.-----Abraham's Call to Faith (Heb. 11: 8-10)



June 23.	W.	-----	Abraham's Faith Proved (Heb. 11: 17-22)
June 24.	T.	-----	Faith and the Right to Receive (Matt. 9: 27-31)
June 25.	F.	-----	Faith and the Power to Perform (Acts 3: 12-18)
June 26.	S.	-----	The Prayer of Faith (James 5: 14-20)
June 27.	S.	-----	Victories through Faith (Heb. 11: 32-40)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—It is not known when the letter to the Hebrews was written. The dates of the events referred to in the lesson may be seen, in so far as the dates can be determined, by referring to the lessons dealing with those events.

*Place.*—It is not known where the Hebrew letter was written.

*Persons.*—The author of the letter and the Hebrew Christians. The internal evidence seems to point to Paul as the author. The antagonism against Paul among the Hebrew Christians would be sufficient reason for leaving his name out of it. He could put the letter in the hands of some one who would be able to make good use of it. That it was written primarily to Hebrew Christians is evident from its contents.

*Lesson Links.*—This lesson is closely connected with the other lessons of this quarter. This the student will readily see. We have not had a more important lesson than this one. It was hard for the Hebrew Christians to break away from the law of Moses. Many of them continued to observe that law, and a determined group argued that even Gentiles had to be circumcised and keep the law, or they could not be saved. (Acts 15: 1.) The apostles and elders at Jerusalem issued a decree that no such requirements should be made of the Gentiles, but some of the extreme Judaizers kept up the contention, as Paul's letters show. Jerusalem was soon to be destroyed. These Hebrew Christians needed to know that Judaism had served its purpose, and that a life of faith, and not of the law, was what counted, lest, when the temple was destroyed, they should give up, feeling that they could no longer serve God acceptably. In the chapter we are now studying the writer shows what faith had accomplished aside from the law. These Old Testament heroes had not done these great things by the law, but by faith. They were brought forward as so many witnesses to prove the value of faith—to prove what can be done by faith without the law. Hence, he admonishes, "Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, . . . run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus." (Heb. 12: 1, 2.) This cloud of witnesses are not spectators, watching us run, but they are witnesses brought forward to testify to the value of faith.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### We Understand by Faith (Verse 3)

The things a person comes to know by his own experience and observation are comparatively few, and much of that is of little, or no, importance. No matter how scholarly a man may be, the most of what he knows comes by his faith in the reliability of testimony as to what others have learned. But there are some things that man cannot find out by experiments or observations. But as many of these undiscoverable things as we need to know and should know, God has made known to us through his chosen and inspired prophets and



apostles. By accepting the testimony left on record in the Bible, we can understand things that otherwise we can never know. And so, by our faith in God and in the reliability of his word, we understand that the worlds were framed by the word, or command, of God.

### A Sacrifice Offered by Faith (Verse 4)

The sacrifices referred to are recorded in Gen. 4: 1-8. Cain made an offering to the Lord of the first fruits of the ground; Abel's offering was the firstlings of his flock. God accepted Abel's offering, but rejected Cain's. Abel offered his sacrifice by faith; the implication is that Cain did not offer his by faith. Faith is the moving and guiding principle, and without it there can be no such thing as acceptable worship or service. And to do a thing by faith means more than to do it believing that God is. Cain believed in the existence of God, and made an offering to him. There is always an element of confidence in faith in a person. A man may have faith in himself, or in some other man, or in God. If he has faith in himself, he follows his own way, if he has faith in a man, he follows him; if he has faith in God, he follows him—does what he says. Cain had confidence in himself, and followed his own notions; Abel had confidence in God, and therefore did what God said. Hence, God accepted Abel's offering, and rejected Cain's. Abel's sacrifice was more excellent—more valuable, some one has said. Be it so, but it was Abel's faith that gave value to what he did, and not the intrinsic value of the animal. Nothing we do or give has any value in God's sight, only as it is an expression of our faith in obedience to his commands; but the smallest thing we do has value, if it is done by faith. Because Abel's offering was made in faithful obedience to God, God accepted it, and bore witness to Abel that he was righteous. By this act of faith Abel yet speaks to us—testifies to us that God's way is the only right way. "O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10: 23.) Because man cannot direct his steps, God in his mercy offers to direct him.

### Enoch Translated by Faith (Verses 5, 6)

Gen. 5: 24 says, "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Our text says, "And he was not found, because God translated him." This shows that no one knows what had become of him, and that they engaged in a fruitless search for him. He walked with God. To walk with God is to live in harmony with God's will. Self was put in the background, and God's will became Enoch's will. "Shall two walk together, except they have agreed?" (Amos 3: 3.) To walk with God one must know his way and believe his way is best, and strive earnestly to do his will. It requires great faith, and Enoch had that. Because of his faith, God translated him, that he should not die. In some way and before his translation, he had witness borne to him that he was well-pleasing to God. "And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him." In the very nature of things God could not be well-pleased with a person who had no faith in him. He that cometh to God must believe; he would not try to come, if he did not believe. But merely to believe that God exists is not sufficient—one must believe that God rewards those who seek after him. That God rewards faithful service and punishes



wickedness is a fundamental principle of true religion. Not to believe that he does so is to view him as a monster who has no interest in the conduct of his creatures.

### The Ark Built by Faith (Verse 7)

God commanded Noah to build an ark, and gave him full directions as to the building of it. (Gen. 6.) "According to all that God commanded him, so did he." The record is silent as to how long it took Noah to build the ark. Unless he hired sinners to assist, there were only four men to do the work. It would require four men a long time to build such a huge structure, but the phrase "by faith" spans the whole time, and includes every movement that was made in its construction. By faith Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his house. In doing so, he moved with godly fear—moved with reverence for Jehovah. And when the ark was finished, it stood there as the result and the proof of Noah's faith. While the people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage (Matt. 24: 38), Noah was obeying God in building the ark. While Noah obeyed, the people sinned. His obedience condemned their disobedience; and not only theirs, but the disobedience of all sinners since that time. And by his obedience he became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

### What Abraham Did by Faith (Verses 8-10, 17-19)

Because of the outstanding quality of Abraham's faith, he is set forth as the father of the faithful, the father of all who walk in the steps of his faith. (Rom. 4: 11, 12.)

*Abraham Obeyed by Faith.*—When God called Abraham to leave his father's house and go into another country, God did not tell him what country he had in mind. God would show him the country; "And he went out, not knowing whither he went." Abraham did not start out to another country because that country appeared to be a better country. He was not therefore walking by appearance. He had confidence in God's goodness, power, and wisdom, and was willing to go where God led him. He walked by faith—he obeyed by faith. He was not following his own notions, as men usually do when moving to another country; but he was obeying God. In the land to which Jehovah led him, he was a sojourner; but he was in the land to which God had led him, and he was content. Some one has said that faith is taking God at his word, and doing what he says. And that definition of faith exactly describes Abraham's faith. But it seems that the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saw more in the land of promise than a mere earthly home; "for he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (See, also, verses 13-16.)

*Abraham Offered Isaac by Faith.*—Read Gen. 22: 1-18. Abraham's own ideas and feelings never would have prompted him to make a burnt offering of his son. "And it came to pass after these things, that God did prove Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham; and he said, Here am I. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Promptly Abraham went forward in obedience

to this command till God stayed his hand, and thus gave proof of his unswerving faith in God.

*Faith and Opinion.*—God had promised Abraham that he would establish his covenant with Isaac, and make his seed a great nation. Now God commands him to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. On the face of it, it looked as if God's promise and God's command were in conflict. Abraham would certainly form some opinion about the matter. But he did not form the opinion that, if he carried out God's command, God could not fulfill his promise, and that an animal sacrifice would do as well. He concluded that God would immediately raise up Isaac so as to fulfill his promise. It will be noticed that that opinion did not interfere with his obedience. A man has a right to an opinion that does not interfere with either his faith or his obedience, or with the rights of others. He has no right to any opinion that goes beyond these limitations.

### Other Examples (Verses 20-22)

*Isaac.*—There can be no faith where there has been no testimony. As Isaac blessed Esau and Jacob concerning things to come, it is evident that God had revealed to him these things that were to come.

*Jacob.*—It is also evident that the Lord had revealed to Jacob the things he said to Ephraim and Manasseh.

*Joseph.*—God had revealed to Joseph that the children of Israel would go up out of Egypt into Canaan. Joseph gave commandment that they take his bones with them. The student should study carefully the entire eleventh chapter. The examples brought forward not only prove the value of faith, but they also show clearly that faith is valuable only when it walks in the way God has marked out.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

To believe that a certain person exists, and to believe in that person, are very different matters. To believe in a person is to have confidence in him. To believe in a physician is to have confidence in his ability and sincerity. We show confidence in a physician by following his directions. And we show our faith in God by following his directions.

If we turn away from God, if we refuse to trust his guidance, we have only the flickering light of human reason to guide us; or, what is worse, only our appetites and passions to lead us. In this respect the believer in God has all the advantage. His faith in God enables him to walk by the wisdom of God, God's wisdom is revealed to us in the Bible.

In all the relations of life faith is worthless unless it leads to action. You might believe that a certain business would be profitable, but what would that faith profit you if you do nothing about it? What good will come of believing in a doctor if you will not follow his directions? To profess to believe in God is all vain and worthless if you do not obey him. "Faith apart from works is dead."

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

How faith comes.

What must we believe?



The degrees of faith, namely, weak, little, strong, great, dead, and perfect.

The degrees of faith that save.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject of lesson, and tell where it is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

In so far as possible give the time, place, and persons.

What was the purpose of the letter to the Hebrews?

Why was the letter specially needed at that time?

Why did the writer emphasize the things done by faith?

In what sense were these examples witnesses?

#### *Verse 3*

In what ways may a person learn things? How does most of our information come?

Name some things that we can know only by revelation.

How do we know about creation?

#### *Verse 4*

Repeat verse 4.

What did Cain and Abel offer as sacrifices?

Which did God accept, and why?

In faith in a person, what element is always present?

What shows that Abel had confidence in God?

Cain believed that God existed, what was wrong with his faith?

Why was Abel's offering more excellent? What gives value to acts of worship or service?

How does Abel yet speak to us?

#### *Verses 5, 6*

What is said of Enoch in Genesis?

How may a person walk with God?

What witness had God given Enoch?

In coming to God, what must one believe?

#### *Verse 7*

In saying that Noah built an ark by faith, what does the writer include in the term "by faith"?

How did he condemn the world?

#### *Verses 8-10, 17-19*

Discuss Abraham's faith as shown in his answering God's call.

What shows that he looked beyond the material side of the land promise?

Discuss his faith as displayed in his offering Isaac.

Discuss faith and opinion.

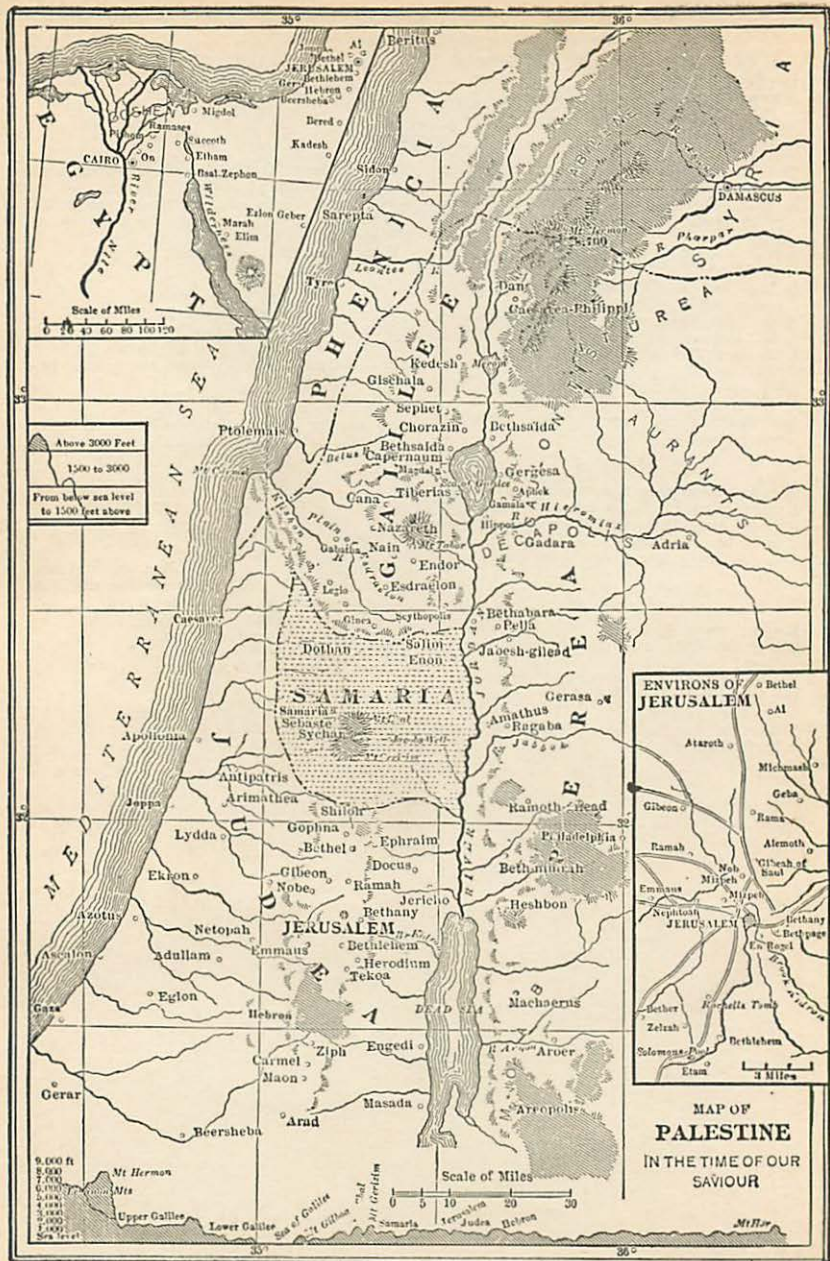
What opinions are allowable?

What opinion did Abraham have?

#### *Verses 20-22*

Discuss verses 20-22.

Discuss the reflections.





## THIRD QUARTER

## GOD IN THE MAKING OF A NATION

**AIM:** *To encourage the student to find and appreciate God's part in the making of a nation as set forth in the history of the era of Moses; to make clear the people's duty and privilege of recognizing God and cooperating with him in the life of their nation, in order that the student may see and perform his part as a Christian citizen.*

*Lesson I—July 4, 1937*

## GOD HEARS A PEOPLE'S CRY

Ex. 1: 6-14; 2: 23-25

- 6 And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.  
 7 And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.  
 8 Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph.  
 9 And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we:  
 10 Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they also join themselves unto our enemies, and fight against us, and get them up out of the land.  
 11 Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh store-cities, Pithom and Raamses.  
 12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.  
 13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor:  
 14 And they made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field, all their service, wherein they made them serve with rigor.  
 23 And it came to pass in the course of those many days, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.  
 24 And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.  
 25 And God saw the children of Israel, and God took knowledge of them.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—*"Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."* (Isa. 65: 24.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 42: 1-5.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

June 28.	M.	.....	A People Oppressed (Ex. 1: 6-14)
June 29.	T.	.....	A Cry of Distress (Psalm 94: 1-14)
June 30.	W.	.....	A Prayer in Affliction (Psalm 142: 1-7)
July 1.	T.	.....	God Hears a People's Cry (Ex. 2: 23-25)
July 2.	F.	.....	The Bondage of Sin (Rom. 6: 15-23)
July 3.	S.	.....	A Prayer of Trust (Psalm 3: 1-8)
July 4.	S.	.....	The Lord Delivers (Psalm 107: 1-9)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—According to Usher, Joseph's death occurred 1635 B.C.; according to Hales, 1792 B.C. The children of Israel were reduced to slavery under a new king, or dynasty, about sixty years after Joseph's death. The second part of our lesson occurred more than eighty years

after the children of Israel were made slaves. This is evident from the facts that Moses was born sometime after the Hebrews were reduced to slavery, and that he was eighty when he was called to deliver them.

*Place.*—Egypt.

*Persons.*—The king of Egypt, his slave drivers, and the children of Israel.

*Lesson Links.*—Our lesson two weeks ago closed with the death of Joseph. This lesson begins with a restatement of his death.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### The Hebrews Multiply Rapidly (Verses 6, 7)

Of Abraham's sons only Isaac was selected to be heir of the promises, and of Isaac's sons Jacob was selected to be heir of the promises. To Jacob were born twelve sons. These sons became the heads of the tribes in which were fulfilled the national promises made to Abraham. Judah was selected as the one through whom Christ should come. (Gen 49: 9-12.) But Joseph and all his brethren died in Egypt. In Egypt the children of Israel increased rapidly. The singular way in which Moses describes their increase shows that they increased much more rapidly than any other race of people. It has been estimated that their numbers doubled every fourteen years. But count that they doubled every fourteen and a half years, and it will come nearer figuring out what their numbers were when they left Egypt. The Lord must have caused the death rate in infants to be low.

### The Children of Israel Reduced to Slavery (Verses 8-11)

"Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph." The king and people of Egypt were favorable to Joseph's people so long as his service for the nation was fresh in their minds. But this new king, apparently a king in a new dynasty, a new line of kings, did not know, or did not take into account, Joseph's great service. He was not pleased with the rapid increase of these foreigners. To his people he said, "Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we." He expressed the fear that they might join the enemy, if his government became involved in war. But his statement of his fears that they might "get them up out of the land" shows that he wanted to keep them in the land of Egypt. If fear of them had been all that was in his mind, he could have sent them out of his country, for they were foreigners. But he wanted them as slaves to his government. The use he made of them shows that he had in mind an extensive public-works program. Likely he stated his fears about their joining an enemy so as to justify himself in the eyes of his people. As a matter of fact, his reducing them to such grinding slavery as he had in mind would make them more anxious to "get them up out of the land." And herein Jehovah was using the folly of his enemies to carry out his purposes. Had the children of Israel continued to be favored by the Egyptian government, as they had been under the kings that knew Joseph and appreciated the great service he had rendered, they would have wanted to remain in Egypt. But in some way they must be made willing to leave that land when the proper time came. Nothing would accom-



plish that end more effectively than slavery. The king proposed to "deal wisely with them." He would set taskmasters over them, and make their burdens heavy. He was too ignorant of Jehovah and his plans to know that he was pitting his wisdom and power against the wisdom and power of Jehovah. Jehovah had said to Jacob as he was on his way to Egypt, "I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation." Therefore all the planning and scheming the king of Egypt could do would not hinder God from carrying out his purposes. He could go only so far in his treatment of the children of Israel as his treatment of them fit in with the purposes of God concerning them. He was allowed to use them, but he could not control their destiny. He made some public improvements with this slave labor. "And they built for Pharaoh store-cities, Pithom and Raamses." Nothing is said as to how these government slaves were fed and clothed. It does not seem that any of them were owned by individuals, but were completely under government supervision.

### The Children of Israel Multiply More Rapidly (Verse 12)

Pharaoh wanted to use the Hebrews, but he was afraid for them to multiply as rapidly as they had been multiplying. Even if they did not join an enemy in war, they would become too powerful for him to control. He thought that excessive labor would decrease their birth rate; but that supposition is contradicted by the facts among all races and in all nations, for the birth rate among laborers is higher than it is among the idle, or even among those who follow less arduous callings. People who have little, or nothing, to do become soft and flabby, and suffer a loss of vitality. There is usually a lot of dissipation and general fleshly indulgences in lives of idleness, and that also lowers the birth rate. Hence, the more labor the king required of the children of Israel, the more they multiplied and spread abroad. Besides this, God was looking after the growth of that race of people, and nothing that Pharaoh could do would materially hinder the working out of God's plans. Pharaoh was fighting against Jehovah, and was bound to fail. Pharaoh and his people were grieved because their plan had not worked out as they desired. But Pharaoh was persistent; having started in on this labor plan to decrease the birth rate, and perhaps to increase mortality by excessive labor, he was determined to make it work. He now had two reasons for making his plan work—he wanted to reduce the birth rate, and he did not want to be humiliated before his people by a failure.

### Pharaoh Made Their Service Harder (Verses 13, 14)

Pharaoh pushed his plan with still more determination. He made them serve with rigor, and made their lives bitter with hard service. To us such treatment of innocent people seems exceedingly cruel, but to judge fairly the king and his people, we must judge according to the standards of that time. Higher standards of right did not prevail in other governments. In some respects people are better now than they were then. No real government now would think of treating an innocent and helpless people with such cruelty. Criminals in prisons are now treated with more consideration. And yet Egypt was perhaps the most highly civilized country in the world at that time,



with the possible exception of Babylon. Of this trying period in the history of the children of Israel, Stephen says, "But as the time of the promise drew nigh which God vouchsafed unto Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, till there arose another king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph. The same dealt craftily with our race, and ill-treated our fathers, that they should cast out their babes to the end they might not live." (Acts 7: 17-19.)

### Pharaoh's Inhuman Commands (Verses 15-22)

The verses between the two printed sections of our lesson are really a part of the lesson, without which the lesson is not complete. Having failed in his first scheme to reduce the birth rate among the children of Israel, Pharaoh adopted plans that reveal him as a monster of cruelty. But one heartless form of cruelty naturally prepares the way for a worse one.

*Pharaoh's Command to the Midwives.*—He demanded that the Hebrew midwives kill every male child at birth, but not the female children. At all hazards there must not grow up among the Hebrews any more men. Their fighting strength must be kept down. "But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them." "And God dealt well with the midwives." He was with these good women, and made them to prosper. This shows that when the government authorities command that a sinful thing be done it is the duty of those thus commanded to disobey the government. God is pleased with such disobedience. To other rulers, the apostles once said, "We must obey God rather than men." (Acts 5: 29.)

*Pharaoh's Command to His People.*—"And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive." Of course among the Egyptians would be found people who would be more diligent in carrying out Pharaoh's orders than the midwives had been. It is likely that very few sons escaped. It was a more wholesale slaughter of infants than that ordered by Herod. We are not told how long that order was in force, but we are certain that it was in force more than three months, and may have been in force over a period of years. It would be hard to imagine a more inhuman order. But because of such cruelty, a fearful judgment of God fell on that nation eighty years later. When you are wondering if the world is growing better or worse, think of this black spot in Egyptian history.

### Moses Born (Ex. 2: 1-10)

Moses was born during the time of the murderous decree. Of this event Stephen says, "At which season Moses was born, and was exceeding fair; and he was nourished three months in his father's house: and when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son." (Acts 7: 20, 21.) In Pharaoh's house Moses had all the educational advantages that the times afforded. "And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and he was mighty in his words and works." (Acts 7: 22.)

### Moses' Choice and Rashness (Verses 11-14)

While in the royal family, Moses did not forget Jehovah nor his people. "By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called



6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

7 And Jehovah said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people that are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.

9 And now, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: moreover I have seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be the token unto thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—*"Come now therefore, and I will send thee."* (Ex. 3: 10.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 2: 1-8.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

July 5.	M.	-----	God Saves a Life (Ex. 2: 1-10)
July 6.	T.	-----	God Provides a Leader (Ex. 3: 1-12)
July 7.	W.	-----	Accepting the Task (Heb. 11: 23-27)
July 8.	T.	-----	God Call's Joshua (Josh. 1: 1-9)
July 9.	F.	-----	God Calls Gideon (Judges 6: 11-18)
July 10.	S.	-----	God Calls Paul (Acts 9: 10-19)
July 11.	S.	-----	"The Reign of the Righteous King" (Psalm 72: 1-17)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—According to Usher, 1491 B.C.; according to Hales, 1648 B.C. Moses was forty years old when he fled to Midian. (Acts 7: 23.) The slavery of the Hebrews must have been in force for some years when Moses was born, for Pharaoh had already tried out two schemes to keep them from increasing so rapidly. Moses remained in Midian forty years. (Acts 7: 30.) Slavery was still in force.

**Place.**—Mount Horeb in the land of Midian. According to some authorities, Horeb is the name of a particular peak in a group called Sinai; others claim that Sinai is the name of a peak, and Horeb the name of the group of peaks. More likely the names were interchangeable. The group of mountains lies almost in the center of the peninsula that lies between the two horns of the Red Sea. On this peninsula lived the Midianites, the descendants of Midian, a son of Abraham by Keturah. (Gen. 25: 1, 2.)

**Persons.**—Jehovah, Moses, and Reuel. Moses was the son of Amram and Jochebed, descendants of Levi. (Ex. 6: 16-20.) Reuel was the priest of Midian. He is also called Jethro. (Ex. 18: 1-12.) When Moses was leading Israel out of bondage, Jethro met him at "the mount of God," and from what he said to Moses, it appears that the knowledge of Jehovah had been kept alive in Midian.

**Lesson Links.**—Pharaoh commanded his people to kill all sons born to the Hebrews. While this decree was in force, a son was born to Amram and Jochebed. What heartaches parents suffered during that time only parents can imagine. When a son was born to Amram and Jochebed, they kept him hidden from the prying eyes of the

Egyptians for a period of three months. They could hide him no longer. Perhaps he had become too noisy to be kept secret. But Jehovah was watching over that babe. It was by no mere chance that he was placed where Pharaoh's daughter found him. Without acting so as to excite suspicion, Miriam stood a distance away watching him. Perhaps his mother was the only mother ever paid by royalty to care for her own child. To be a successful leader of Israel Moses needed training which he received in the royal family. But his rashness in killing the Egyptian showed that he needed an additional sort of training which his royal training lacked. To that end and by the providence of Jehovah he became a shepherd in the land of Midian. In that forty years of shepherding he would have plenty of time for meditation, and to become more mature in his ways. Youth is frequently rash and impatient of results. The forty years in Midian were not wasted—they were building into the character of Moses the traits needful for the work he was to do. When the leader was ready to lead and the people were ready to be led, then Jehovah set in motion the plans for the exodus.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Moses as Shepherd (Verse 1)

While in the family of Pharaoh, Moses had every luxury that Egypt could afford. The most prominent men of the kingdom were his associates. Being closely connected with the throne, he knew the affairs of the kingdom, and, to a great extent, knew what was going on in other kingdoms. To give all that up for the hardships, loneliness, and obscurity of a lowly shepherd's life would seem to the world as the acme of folly. But the devout Bible reader can see God's hand in it all. There are lessons to be learned, which cannot be learned in schools and books; nor can they be learned in luxurious surroundings. Such lessons can be learned only in "the school of hard knocks." There are some lines of action in which a person has no time to get acquainted with himself or the Lord. As a shepherd Moses had time to meditate, to learn his own deficiencies, and to build against them. Had he not needed such training the Lord would not have led him through it. Notice the map. Midian is off the beaten track. There was little connection with the outside world. Perhaps no quieter section of country could have been found. Moses had married the daughter of Jethro, the priest of the land; and to this union two sons had been born. It is not likely that Moses enjoyed so much happiness and contentment at any other period of his life. In search of pasturage he led the flocks to the back side of the wilderness, to the mount of God. It is hardly possible that the mount was so designated at that time; but on account of the later giving of the law at that mountain, it came to be so designated.

### The Burning Bush (Verses 2, 3)

Of the incident of the burning bush, Stephen says, "And when forty years were fulfilled, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush." (Acts 7: 30.) From Stephen's speech we get some important dates in the life of Moses. He was forty years old when he went to Midian; forty years



later he was called to go back to Egypt. He had therefore been a shepherd for a period of forty years. When he saw the bush on fire and yet not being consumed, the sight naturally excited his curiosity. He proposed to go to it, and investigate. Leeser's translation, a translation made by a Jew and for the Jews, says, "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a thornbush; and he looked, and behold, the thornbush was burning with fire, but the thornbush was not consumed. And Moses said, I must turn aside, and see this great sight, why the thornbush is not burnt."

### Jehovah Identifies Himself to Moses (Verses 4-6)

God called to Moses out of the midst of the bush. So far as the record shows, this is the first time God had spoken directly and audibly to any one since he spoke to Jacob at Beersheba, as he journeyed to Egypt. (Gen. 46: 1-4.) But Moses must not approach the bush. It was no time to be prying into things out of curiosity. The Divine Presence made the ground holy. Why Moses should remove his shoes on holy ground is not made clear. It might have been required to impress him with the solemnity of the occasion. It is singular that God identified himself to Moses as he did. To us now it would seem that to say, "I am God," would be sufficient. But it was different in that age, when every nation or race had its own god or gods. It cannot be that Moses had a very clear conception of Jehovah. Hence, God said to him, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." To Jacob as he fled to Paddan-aram, God said, "I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac." (Gen. 28: 13.) Notice the present tense—"I am," not, "I was."

*The God of the Living.*—In the days of Jesus there was a sect of the Jews, the Sadducees, who denied the existence of angels and spirits. They did not believe there would be a resurrection of the dead. They undertook to argue with Jesus against the resurrection. Jesus quoted Jehovah's statements to Moses as God's word to them, and added, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Hence, there was and is yet a sense in which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not dead. As their bodies were buried, it is certain that their spirits were and are still living (See Matt. 22: 23-32.) Jesus put that forth as proof that there would be a resurrection, and his argument silenced the Sadducees. But Jehovah spoke the words of Moses to let Moses know that the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob was still mindful of their descendants, and was guarding their interests. He would have Moses know that he had not failed them nor forsaken them. But the stoutest heart fears in the presence of a heavenly visitor. "And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." Stephen says, "And Moses trembled, and durst not behold." It is not to the discredit of Moses that he did fear and tremble. Even though the beloved John had been intimately associated with Jesus in the flesh, yet when he appeared to John in his glorified state, John was so overcome with fear that he fell at his feet as one dead. (Rev. 1: 12-18.) This fear has grown out of the fact that human beings feel their littleness and helplessness in the presence of heavenly beings.



### God Hears the Cry of His People (Verses 7-9)

It is not likely that the great mass of the Hebrews in Egypt had much information about the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. They had now been in grinding slavery more than eighty years under taskmasters who worshiped idols. To those who did have some ideas as to Jehovah it would seem that Jehovah had entirely forsaken them; or was indifferent to their distress and suffering. But he was hearing their cries and groanings. He had bided his own time. In these verses God adapts himself to man's way of speaking. It is not to be supposed that he did not know all along that his people were in slavery. But God does not hear the cries of the proud and self-sufficient. God hears only those who will hear him. The bondage of the Hebrews had become unbearable. They would now be willing to be led out of it. God is willing and ready to lead people when they get to the point where they want to be led; he will deliver when people want to be delivered. The Hebrews had reached that point—God's time had come. He was ready to lead them out of Egypt into a good land, a land flowing with milk and honey. Milk and honey symbolized the good things they would have in that country. That would appeal powerfully to a group of scantily fed slaves. In that land, the land of Canaan, dwelt a number of races of people, some of which were descendants of Canaan, the son of Ham.

### Moses Called to Lead Israel Out of Bondage (Verses 10-12)

It appears that Moses had settled down to the life of a shepherd, but God had meant otherwise. Now he calls him to the most difficult and harassing task that any man had ever been called on to perform. "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." Moses did not feel so important then as he did when he left the courts of Pharaoh forty years before. He is humble now. He was now fit to lead the people; forty years before that time he was utterly unfitted for such a great undertaking. When God called him, he was not seeking the office, and saying, like some of our candidates for pulpits and offices, "I am the very man for the place—no one else is so well fitted to do the work you want done." He did say, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh?" But Jehovah assured Moses that he would be with him.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

"By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." In some way God had revealed to him that he was to be the leader in the deliverance of Israel from bondage. But he got in too much of a hurry, and rashly killed an Egyptian. He supposed that his brethren understood that God by his hand was giving them deliverance; but they understood not. The trouble with Moses was that he was in a bigger hurry than God was.

It is not well to try to move faster than God moves. Some sad mistakes have been made along that line by good men and women. Abraham and Sarah tried to hurry up the fulfillment of God's promise that a son should be born to Abraham. They tried to move faster than God, and got into trouble when they got in such a hurry to have the birthright and Isaac's blessings transferred to Jacob.



"Take time to be holy" is good advice. It took a long season of quiet living and meditation for Moses to become fitted for his great work. People sometimes get in such a rush about the Lord's work that they have little or no time left in which to think of him and to meditate on his word and his ways, or to give him much consideration. And that grows on people till doing things becomes more important to them than humble obedience to God. "Wait for Jehovah: be strong, and let thy heart take courage; yea, wait thou for Jehovah." (Psalm 27: 14.)

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Evils of rashness.

A study of two shepherds, Moses and David.

God's apparent slowness in working out his plans.

How we may lose sight of God while we try to serve him.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, and the age of Moses when he fled from Egypt.  
Give name of place, and some facts about the place to which he fled.  
Give the persons, and some facts about Moses.  
What means did Pharaoh adopt to keep Israel from increasing in numbers?  
Give facts about how Moses was preserved.  
What training did Moses receive in the royal family?  
What shows that he needed additional training?  
How did he get that additional training?  
When did God set in motion the plans to deliver Israel?

### *Verses 1*

What advantages for development of character did Moses have as a shepherd?  
Whom had Moses married?  
To what place did Moses lead the flocks?

### *Verses 2, 3*

How long had he been a shepherd?  
What wonderful sight did Moses behold?

What did God say to him?  
What does Stephen say of this incident?

### *Verses 4-6*

So far as we know, when had God last spoken audibly and directly to any one?  
How did God identify himself to Moses?  
Why was this necessary?  
What use did Jesus make of this language to Moses?  
What effect did the scene and God's words have on Moses?  
Give some incidents where people feared in the presence of a heavenly visitor.

### *Verses 7-9*

Why could the people not have known much of Jehovah?  
Why had God waited so long?  
Into what land would he lead them?  
What races then inhabited that land?

### *Verses 10-12*

To what did God call Moses?  
What change had come over Moses since he left the royal court?  
How did he differ from some of our candidates for pulpits and offices?  
What assurance did God give him?

## Lesson III—July 18, 1937

## GOD ENCOURAGES A LEADER

Ex. 3: 13-16; 4: 10-16; 5: 1

13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt.

10 And Moses said unto Jehovah, Oh, Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; for I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

11 And Jehovah said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh a man dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? is it not I, Jehovah?

12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt speak.

13 And he said, Oh, Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.

14 And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is there not Aaron thy brother the Levite? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.

15 And thou shalt speak unto him, and put the words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.

16 And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people; and it shall come to pass, that he shall be to thee a mouth, and thou shalt be to him as God.

1 And afterward Moses and Aaron came, and said unto Pharaoh, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Jehovah will give strength unto his people."*  
(Psalm 29: 11.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 6: 1-8.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

July 12.	M.	.....	The Call of Moses (Ex. 3: 13-17)
July 13.	T.	.....	Moses Encouraged (Ex. 4: 1-9)
July 14.	W.	.....	The Promise of God's Help (Ex. 10: 10-17)
July 15.	T.	.....	The Promise of God's Presence (Acts 18: 5-11)
July 16.	F.	.....	The Promise of Victory (John 16: 25-33)
July 17.	S.	.....	Fearless Trust in God (Psalm 27: 7-14)
July 18.	S.	.....	The Abiding Presence (Matt. 28: 16-20)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—The same as the last lesson, which see.

*Places.*—Midian and Egypt.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, Moses, Aaron, and Pharaoh.

*Lesson Links.*—Near the close of our last lesson, we read of God's call to Moses to return to Egypt. He was to go before Pharaoh, and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt. Moses felt that he was not great enough to appear before the king, or to be the leader in bringing the Hebrews out of Egypt. To give him confidence, Jehovah said, "Certainly I will be with thee." Then God made a statement which,



at first glance, seems singular: "And this shall be the token unto thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." When God called a man to do a certain work, the man needed definite proof that he himself was not deceived in the matter. The demonstrations at Sinai would be all the token Moses would need to fully assure him that he was God's chosen agent to lead the people. People often think that miracles were wrought in connection with a man's ministry solely as proof to the people that God was with him. But the man himself needed to know that he was not self-deceived. Even the signs that Moses wrought not only convinced the people that God had sent him, but they served as a means of assuring Moses that his call was not a mere hallucination.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### How Moses Was to Answer the People's Unbelief (Verses 13-15)

"This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? him hath God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer with the hand of the angel that appeared to him in the bush." (Acts 7: 35.) When the man forty years before had asked him, "Who made thee a ruler and a judge?" Moses had no effective answer to make. Now, knowing their ignorance and possible hostility toward him, he wanted to be able to answer their questions and meet their objections. To tell them that the God of their fathers had sent him would not mean much to them, so ignorant had they become. What would he tell them when they asked him for the name of this God who had sent him? The language of Moses does not necessarily imply that all the Hebrews had lost all knowledge of the God of their fathers, but it is evident that Moses had grown up with little or no knowledge of Jehovah. The almost universal notion then was that there were many gods. The children of Israel, sharing that idea, would certainly want to know the name of the God who sent Moses.

*The Self-Existent One.*—"And God said unto Moses, I am that I am." Or, "I am who am." The designation signifies, "I am he that exists." He is self-existent, independent, eternal; all others have their being from him. With him all time is eternal now. Our finite minds cannot fully grasp him—we cannot comprehend the perfection of his being. To show the eternity of his own divine nature, Jesus declared, "Before Abraham was born, I am." (John 8: 58.) "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you." He would impress upon the minds of the children of Israel that he was the existing One, and not made by hands as were the idols, nor derived from some other god, as the Egyptians fancied some of their gods came to be. To stir up in those Hebrews a feeling of Jehovah's nearness to them and his personal interest in them, Moses was to remind them that this Jehovah, this *I am*, who had sent him, was the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. This would stir up in them a more lively interest in what Moses had to say to them.

#### The Elders of Israel (Verse 16)

"Go, and gather the elders of Israel together." They were the older men, the heads of families. It is not likely that the children of Israel had any form of organized government. None was then



needed. The heads of families exercised authority over the families. But the orderly way in which Moses was to proceed is worthy of note. The mistake he made forty years before must not be repeated. Neither was he to go and make his appeal directly to the people, and stir them into a frenzied mob. Nor was he to go alone to Pharaoh. He must go before Pharaoh with the representation of his people. Pharaoh must be made to understand that Moses was not alone in the matter, but that the whole Hebrew race was back of him.

*Human Agency.*—God was interested in the Hebrew race. They had suffered enough, and he had come down to deliver them. When God comes down to inaugurate any great work, or to execute any plans concerning men, he uses human agency. He would deliver Israel, and yet he would use Moses, Aaron, and the elders of Israel in that deliverance. And later, when on numerous occasions he delivered Israel from their oppressors, he invariably used human agency in doing so. And when he would save men from sin through Jesus Christ, he used chosen agents, the apostles, through whom he made known his plan for saving men. And he still uses human agents in carrying out that plan. The fact that God uses human agents in carrying out his plans gives importance and dignity to human beings that many fail to appreciate.

### Moses Begs to Be Excused (Ex. 4: 10-13)

Moses felt that he could not speak as forcibly as he should in presenting matters to his own people nor to the Egyptians, for he was "slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." Yet Stephen says he was mighty in his words. (Acts 7: 22.) What then did Moses mean? The fact that God told him that Aaron could speak well shows that Moses meant that he could not speak well to his own people nor to Pharaoh. He had had very little opportunity to become fluent in the use of the Hebrew language. Even if the Midianites spoke a Semitic language, it would be a dialect peculiar to themselves. He had not had occasion to use the Egyptian's tongue for forty years. Aaron, of course, would be skilled in the use of both languages. And finally, a man's words may be powerful, even if few. Follow up the history of Moses, and see the power he exerted over people by his words. To cause him to see the weakness of his plea, Jehovah reminds him that he made man's mouth, and promised to teach Moses what to say. That should have been all that Moses could ask for.

*Any One But Me.*—"And he said, Oh, Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send." The truth is, Moses did not want to go. Perhaps his brethren's thrusting him from them forty years before made him reluctant to go to them again. Anyway, he was like many people today. Many people would like to see certain things done, but want some one else to do them. "Brother John Doe is out of duty. Some one should talk to him, but do not send me." Such things are often heard. When Moses had exhausted all the excuses he could think of, he pled with the Lord to send any one but him.

### The Anger of Jehovah Kindled Against Moses (Verses 14, 15)

We know of God's attributes only as he is revealed to us in the Bible; and even then we are liable to allow our own ideas of deity to color what we learn from the Bible. Too many people in their



imaginations have created a God of their own, such a God as they fancy God should be. They would rob him of all attributes save mercy and love. But God was angry with Moses. The Bible speaks often of the anger of Jehovah, even of his fierce anger. "Our God is a consuming fire," as well as love. But we must not conclude that God flies into an angry rage, as men do. He is displeased with disobedience and punishes the disobedient, though he is long-suffering.

*Cause for Anger.*—God is never angry without cause; and he had cause to be angry with Moses. Moses first hesitated to do God's bidding because he did not feel great enough to go before Pharaoh. Then he wanted to know how to answer his own people when they asked who sent him. Then he objected on the grounds that his own people would not believe him. God then gave him some signs to perform to convince them that God was with him. Then Moses sought to be excused on the grounds that he was not eloquent, but was slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And when God told him that he would teach him what to say, he showed the real reason for all of his pleading to be excused—he did not want to go. Send any one but me. "And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Moses." He would not excuse Moses, but would give him his older brother Aaron to be his spokesman, and therefore share honors with him. Aaron would meet him on the way, and would be glad. It would be a happy meeting, for they had not seen each other for forty years.

### Aaron the Spokesman for Moses (Verse 16)

"And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people." Aaron would be to Moses a mouth. He was known to his own people, and they would the more willingly hear him talk. He would speak as Moses directed. The same program was to be followed when they went before Pharaoh. "And Jehovah said unto Moses, See, I have made thee as God to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." (Ex. 7: 1.) Here we learn the function of a prophet. He is one who talks for another, or, rather, one through whom another talks. God's prophet is God's spokesman—through him God talks to the people. Through the prophet God makes revelations to the people, whether it be some present truth, some duty, or some future event. In this plan to deliver Israel from Egypt, Moses was to be as God, and through Aaron he would speak to both Pharaoh and the Hebrew people.

### The Intervening Verses (Verses 17-31)

When Moses returned to his father-in-law Jethro, he merely told Jethro that he desired to return to his brethren in Egypt. Having received Jethro's permission to go, he started on his journey. In the meantime Jehovah had commanded Aaron to go into the wilderness to meet Moses. They met in the mountain of God, the mountain of the burning bush. "And Moses told Aaron all the words of Jehovah wherewith . . . he had charged him." They then proceeded to Egypt and gathered together the elders of the people, "and Aaron spake all the words which Jehovah had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed." Miracles wrought through human agency, or in connection with an agent of God, are called signs. The signs which Moses and Aaron wrought were the only proof they could present that God had sent them. It

was always God's rule, in sending a man on some special mission, or with a revelation, to enable him to work miracles as signs of God's presence with him. As God is not now sending out men on special missions or to make revelations, no miracles are now wrought through human agency.

### Moses and Aaron Before Pharaoh (Ex. 5: 1)

It was first necessary that Moses convince his own people that God had sent him to deliver them. Having done this, Moses and Aaron went before Pharaoh. It was certainly an unusual procedure for the representatives of government-owned slaves to go before the king with certain demands. It must have startled Pharaoh when his slave Aaron said, "Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness." It would naturally seem to Pharaoh that the God of a lot of slaves could not be much of a God. Likely he had never before heard that they claimed to have any God; and so he said, "Who is Jehovah, that I should hearken unto his voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, and moreover I will not let Israel go." (Verse 2.) And thus Pharaoh joined issue with Jehovah, and thereby inaugurated one of the most dramatic contests in the world's history.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Humility is a virtue, which, if carried too far, becomes rebellion. It was well for Moses to be humble, but it was not good for him to allow his feeling of unfitness to keep him from promptly doing what God commanded. When God commands, and man says, "I can't," it becomes stubborn rebellion.

The Bible does not idealize humanity—not even its heroes. It impartially records the good and the bad. It records the drunkenness of Noah and the falsehood of Abraham, and gives us a full picture of the awful sin of David. It tells of Peter's denial of Christ and of his hypocrisy at Antioch. It tells how Moses tried to find a way to keep from carrying out God's orders. No human productions are so impartial.

In spite of man's weakness, God uses him. If he used no imperfect people in carrying out his purposes, he would use no men at all. But all great works and all human developments have come through the agency of these imperfect human beings. Only the Lord Jesus Christ is set before us as absolutely perfect, but we know of him only through the agency of imperfect men. The fact that God so uses imperfect men is encouraging.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

How a virtue may become a vice.

Some examples of God's use of human agencies.

What Christ's chosen agents did.

Our part in carrying on God's work of saving sinners.

Miracles as signs.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

*The Lesson Settings*  
Give the time, places, and persons.  
Why was Moses reluctant to answer God's call?



*Verses 13-15*

What does Stephen say of "this Moses"?  
 Why did Moses now want special instructions as to what to say?  
 Why would the people need such special instructions about God?  
 What notion then prevailed in the world about gods?  
 What name, or descriptive term, was Moses to use in answering them?  
 What does the term seem to signify?  
 To make Israel feel that this God might have an interest in them, what was Moses to say?

*Verses 16*

Whom was Moses to call together, and why?  
 What use does God make of human agency?

*Ex. 4: 10-13*

What objection did Moses here make?  
 What does Stephen say of the words of Moses?  
 Why might not Moses be able to speak well?  
 In that respect, what advantage did Aaron have?

What did Moses say last?  
 What does his request show?

*Verses 14, 15*

How did Moses' answers affect Jehovah?  
 Why is God called a consuming fire?  
 Name the different excuses Moses offered.

*Verses 16*

How was Aaron to help Moses?  
 What is a prophet?  
 In what sense was Moses to be as God?

*Verses 17-31*

Give the contents of these intervening verses.  
 What are the purposes of miracles wrought through human agency?  
 What other proof than miracles could Moses and Aaron give that God had sent them?

*Ex. 5: 1*

What was so unusual in Moses and Aaron's going before Pharaoh?  
 Who did they say had sent them, and why?  
 What answer did Pharaoh give?  
 Discuss the reflections.

*Lesson IV—July 25, 1937***GOD PREPARES A PEOPLE***Ex. 12: 21-28*

21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out, and take your lambs according to your families, and kill the passover.

22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side-posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.

23 For Jehovah will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side-posts, Jehovah will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

24 And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.

25 And it shall come to pass, when ye are come to the land which Jehovah will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service.

26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?

27 That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of Jehovah's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.

28 And the children of Israel went and did so; as Jehovah had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession." (Deut. 7: 6.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 63: 1-7.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

July 19.	M.	God Prepares a People (Ex. 12: 21-28)
July 20.	T.	Preparation through Repentance (Matt. 3: 1-6)
July 21.	W.	Preparation through Pardon (2 Chron. 30: 13-20)
July 22.	T.	Preparation for Service (2 Chron. 35: 1-6)
July 23.	F.	Preparation for Worship (Ezra 6: 16-22)
July 24.	S.	Preparation for Victory (Josh. 5: 10-15)
July 25.	S.	Preparation for a New Era (Mark 14: 17-25)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1491 B.C., the same date as our last lesson; according to Hales, 1648 B.C.

*Place.*—Egypt.

*Persons.*—Jehovah and the people of Israel.

*Lesson Links.*—The full significance of this lesson will not be appreciated without having in mind the events leading up to it. Our last lesson left Moses in the royal court where he had gone in and out as a favorite forty years before. Then he had left of his own choice. Now he is back asking a simple favor for his people, and is treated with utmost rudeness. Pharaoh did not know Jehovah, and did not intend to make any effort to learn anything about him. And on that day a mighty contest began. Jehovah claimed Israel as his people; Pharaoh claimed them as his slaves. Jehovah said to Pharaoh, "Let my people go"; Pharaoh said, "I will not let Israel go." Jehovah had asked that the people be allowed to go into the wilderness to hold a feast. Pharaoh said they were idle, and increased their burdens. Over them were Egyptian taskmasters. There were under these taskmasters officers from among the Hebrews. It appears that their duty was to see that every man did his allotted work; for when there was failure, these officers were beaten. These officers complained to Pharaoh, "There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick: and, behold, thy servants are beaten; but the fault is in thine own people." But Pharaoh refused to soften his orders, and by so doing turned these officers against him. Moses complained to Jehovah; and Jehovah gave him to understand that he would bring to bear upon Pharaoh such pressure that Pharaoh would "drive them out of his land." After some preliminary moves, Jehovah began to bring upon Pharaoh a series of plagues of such a nature as finally to make Pharaoh anxious for Israel to go. These plagues were as follows: (1) the waters turned to blood (7: 17-21); (2) the plague of frogs (8: 1-6); (3) the plague of lice (8: 16-19); (4) the grievous swarms of flies (8: 20-24); (5) the plague of murrain upon the livestock of the Egyptians (9: 1-7); (6) the plague of boils (9: 8-11); (7) the grievous hail (9: 18-26); (8) the plague of locusts (10: 3-15); (9) the plague of darkness (10: 21-23); (10) the death of the first-born of the Egyptians (12: 29, 30). The magicians of Egypt were allowed to duplicate, or, at least, to imitate, the preliminary miracles and also the first two plagues, but they could not turn the dust into lice. At this point they reported to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But the efforts of these magicians served a useful purpose. As the people then relied so on magicians, and believed so much in their powers, they might have thought Moses and Aaron were great magicians, had not Pharaoh entered his magicians into a contest with Moses and Aaron. The magicians were forced to admit that what Moses and Aaron did was not magic, but the work of God. But even so, Pharaoh yet believed that he and his gods would triumph over the God of the Hebrews. Paul gives the names of Pharaoh's leading magicians as Jannes and Jambres: "As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also withstand the truth." (2 Tim. 3: 8.) We never would have heard of these men had they not come into contact with Moses.



## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

The Hebrews Commanded to Proceed with the Passover Feast  
(Verses 21, 22)

The student must read the eleventh chapter and the first thirty-six verses of the twelfth chapter; otherwise the lesson will not mean so much to him.

*Preparing for the Exodus.*—One more plague was to be visited upon Pharaoh; then he would let Israel go. "When he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether." There would then be no time to make any preparation; that must be made before Pharaoh ordered them to leave. "It has already been shown that the word absurdly rendered 'borrow' means to ask; and the same as when Sisera asked water and Jael gave him milk, and when Solomon asked wisdom, and did not ask long life, neither asked riches, neither asked the life of his enemies." They had enriched the Egyptians by their labor, and they were now to ask such wages as they could carry with them.

*The Tenth Plague Foretold.*—The first-born among all the families of the Egyptians and the first-born of their cattle would die the same night. There would be a great cry throughout all Egypt.

*Israel to Be Exempt.*—No harm was to come to any of the children of Israel. But their escape was not to be unconditional. Each household was to put up a lamb on the tenth day of that month, which Moses had designated as the first month of their year. Two small families might join in the use of one lamb. The lamb, or kid, had to be without blemish, a male a year old. They were to keep that lamb, or kid, till the fourteenth day of the same month, and then kill it at even. Specific directions were given as to how the lamb was to be prepared and eaten. If any of it was not consumed, it was to be burned; nothing was to be left till morning. "And they shall take of the blood, and put it on the two side-posts and on the lintel, upon the houses wherein they shall eat it." However unnecessary some of these directions might have seemed to any Hebrew, we can well believe that no one ignored one required item. A life in that home depended on strict obedience. The death angel was to pass through the land, and destroy the first-born in every home where the required blood was not seen.

*The People Directed Through the Elders.*—When the time came for the final act in this great drama, Moses assembled the elders of Israel, and told them to proceed as planned. They in turn would tell the people. The blood of the lamb was to be caught in a basin. Hyssop was then used to sprinkle the blood on the doorposts and lintels. No one now knows the identity of this plant called hyssop, which afterward was much used in sprinkling the blood of expiatory sacrifices, so much so that it was symbolized as a cleansing agent. Said David, "Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." (Psalm 51: 7.)

## The Protection of the Blood Sign (Verse 23)

The death of the Passover lamb brought security of life to the first-born where the blood was sprinkled as directed. In the thirteenth verse Jehovah said, "And the blood shall be to you for a token



upon the houses where ye are." We usually think of the blood as a sign to the destroying angel. It was also a token to those who were in the house. It set them apart as under God's special care; it gave them a feeling of security. It was a token to them that they were exempted from a visit from the destroying angel. None of them were to go out of their houses till morning—they must not get out from under that blood protection. The blood was therefore a token to them of God's care for them, and it also reminded them of their responsibility in availing themselves of its benefits.

### The Passover to Be Observed Annually (Verses 24, 25)

By command of Jehovah the Passover became an annual feast of the Jews. It appears to be the only part of their national law that was instituted in Egypt. But some of the special requirements for its observance were not kept up. On the night of its first observance, they ate the Passover Feast in haste, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand. But later, in repeating the law of the Passover, the foregoing requirements were not repeated. (See Lev. 23: 4-8; Num. 28: 16-25; Deut. 16: 1-8.) The manner in which Jesus and his disciples ate the Passover also shows that all these features indicating haste had been left off. (Matt. 26: 17-25; Mark 14: 12-21; Luke 22: 7-16.) Neither were the requirements to sprinkle the blood on the doors and to remain in their houses permanent features of the Passover law. Nor does it seem that putting up the lamb on the tenth day of the month was later required.

*Permanent Requirements.*—No leaven was to be used for any purpose during the Passover week. None of the Passover lamb was to remain till morning. When they were settled in Canaan, they were not to eat the Passover in their homes, but in the city where God recorded his name. Certain sacrifices, in addition to the regular sacrifices, were to be offered each day of the Passover week. The time of its observance remained the same. There was, however, this condition later made. If a person was on a journey or was unclean by reason of a dead body, he could eat the Passover in the second month. (Num. 9: 9-14; 2 Chron. 30: 2-15.) Others beside the Jews might eat the Passover, if their males were circumcised. (Ex. 12: 45-49.) But it is doubtful that this requirement that strangers who desired to eat the Passover might be circumcised was made a permanent part of the law. (See Num. 9: 14; 15: 14-16, 29.) Any Hebrew man who refused to eat the Passover was cut off from his people. When the Hebrews were settled in the land of Canaan, and a central place of worship was established, the women were not required to attend the feast, though they were allowed to do so. With them it was a privilege; with the men it was a duty. Do not get duties and privileges mixed up in your thinking, so that you will not know one from the other.

### They Were to Teach Their Children (Verses 26, 27)

Legislation here looked forward to the time when the children of Israel would be settled in the promised land. Their children would have to be taught the origin of the Feast of the Passover, the significance, and their duty concerning it. So when their children should say to them, "What mean ye by this service?" they were to give them



the needed information. So prone are people to drift into lifeless formalities, the Hebrews finally made a ritual out of this simple requirement. It seems that Moses was teaching them to give to their children whatever instruction about the feast they need to learn, and did not mean for his words to be repeated at the feast as a mere ceremony. When Moses finished speaking, the people bowed their heads and worshiped as a token of their submission to Jehovah in all he required.

### They Eat the Passover (Verse 28)

"And the children of Israel went and did so; as Jehovah had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they." "By faith he [Moses] kept the passover, and the sprinkling of the blood, that the destroyer of the first-born should not touch them." (Heb. 11: 28.) At midnight the death angel did pass through the land of Egypt, destroying the first-born in every Egyptian home, but he passed over the homes of the Hebrews. Jehovah had said to the Hebrews, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." (Verse 13.) "And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead." It is said that the Egyptians, in their mourning for their dead, ran into the streets, wailing at the top of their voices. No one can imagine what that night was like in Egypt. Jehovah had said, "And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there hath not been, nor shall be any more." (11: 6.) "And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, to send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We are all dead men." This was as Jehovah had foretold.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

A privilege is a right which we may exercise or not, as we choose. Attending the annual feasts of the Jews was a privilege with the women. They could stay at home or go, without guilt. To the men, attending these feasts was not a privilege, but a duty. To fail brought guilt. Christians should do some serious thinking to determine their privileges and their duties. To say that a certain thing is both a privilege and a duty is about as sensible as to say that a certain thing is both black and white. To be baptized, to attend the Lord's day worship, to give, to study God's word, and to obey all other commands are duties, and are not privileges in any proper sense of the word.

The hardening of Pharaoh's heart has been a source of so much controversy that many of us lose sight of the practical lesson it teaches. If the student will read the American Standard Version and notice that the marginal reading gives the exact meaning of the words translated "hardened," he will get some light. At first Pharaoh put himself above Jehovah. "I will not let Israel go." Then at each succeeding move his heart was strong or he made his heart heavy, till after the fifth plague. It is then said that Jehovah hardened Pharaoh's heart. (9: 12.) He had hardened his own heart till he was hopeless. When a man reaches that point, he is fit only for destruction. God never hardens any one's heart against good impulses, but when a man is wholly given to rebellion, as was Pharaoh,

Jehovah hardens his heart against the consequences of his rebellion, so that he may rush on to his destruction. And finally, even the gospel hardens the heart of any one who continually rebels against it.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- God uses human agents.
- What is a prophet?
- Challenging Jehovah.
- Examples of God's destroying wicked men.
- The annual feasts of the Hebrews.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

### The Lesson Settings

Give the time, place, and persons.  
With what incident did our last lesson close?  
What did Pharaoh immediately cause to be done to the Hebrews?  
How were these slaves managed?  
Who were the officers?  
Why were the officers beaten?  
What effect did this beating have?  
What was the purpose of the plagues?  
Name the plagues in their order?  
Who sought to duplicate the miracles and plagues?

### Verses 21, 22

Why would it be necessary to make any preparations before the last plague?

How did the Hebrews prepare to escape the tenth plague?

### Verse 23

How was the blood a token to Israel?

### Verses 24, 25

Name some requirements for the first Passover that were not made permanent.  
Name the permanent laws of the Passover.  
Who might eat it the second month?

### Verses 26, 27

Discuss verses 26, 27.

### Verse 28

What is said of the people's obedience?  
Discuss the distress among the Egyptians.  
What did Pharaoh do about the Hebrews?

Lesson V—August 1, 1937

## GOD LEADS A PEOPLE

Ex. 13: 17-22; 14: 10-15

17 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt:  
18 But God led the people about, by the way of the wilderness by the Red Sea: and the children of Israel went up armed out of the land of Egypt.

19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.

20 And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness.

21 And Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; that they might go by day and by night:

22 The pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, departed not from before the people.

10 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians were marching after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto Jehovah.

11 And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to bring us forth out of Egypt?



12 Is not this the word that we spake unto thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it were better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.

13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah, which he will work for you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

14 Jehovah will fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

15 And Jehovah said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Jehovah will guide thee continually.” (Isa. 58: 11.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 37: 1-7.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

July 26.	M.	God Leads a People (Ex. 13: 17-22)
July 27.	T.	God's Leadership Assured (Ex. 14: 10-15)
July 28.	W.	Victory through Obedience (Ex. 14: 26-31)
July 29.	T.	The Mighty Arm (Ex. 15: 11-21)
July 30.	F.	The Almighty Leader (Psalm 77: 11-20)
July 31.	S.	Our Help in the Lord (Psalm 90: 1-12)
August 1.	S.	Trusting in God (Psalm 37: 1-7)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1491 B.C.; according to Hales, 1648 B.C. But authorities differ considerably, some putting the date as low as 1320 B.C.

*Place.*—Egypt, at Rameses, Succoth, and an encampment by the Red Sea.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, the Hebrews, and the Egyptians.

*Lesson Links.*—Of the night of the first Passover it is said, “It is a night to be much observed unto Jehovah for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of Jehovah, to be much observed of all the children of Israel throughout their generations.” (12: 42.) They started on their great journey from Rameses and encamped first at Succoth. It was a vast multitude, “about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them.” This mixed multitude were, of course, not Hebrews, but a great crowd who had taken this means of escaping from such conditions as had prevailed in Egypt, and to be with people who were favored of Jehovah. The women, the children, the aged, and the mixed multitude added to the six hundred thousand men on foot must have swelled the whole number to more than three million people. There being so many of them shows that the decree that all sons born to the Hebrews must be killed had long ago been abolished. It seems that Moses repeated at Succoth some of the necessary regulations for the Passover. He emphasized to the men their duty to teach their children the reasons for the dedication of the first-born to the Lord, both of man and of animals. The first-born belonged to Jehovah because he had saved the first-born from the destroying angel in Egypt. The firstlings of the ass might be redeemed with a lamb; if not redeemed, it was to be killed. Later the whole tribe of Levi was substituted for the first-born sons. (Num. 3: 40-51.) This whole transaction taught the Hebrews that one life was redeemed by another life. In Egypt the life of the first-born son was saved by sacrificing the life of a lamb and sprinkling its blood on the doors. And the idea began to take root in the thinking of the Hebrews that they were a redeemed people. In future years,



when the son should ask why the first-born was devoted to Jehovah, the father was instructed to say, "By strength of hand Jehovah brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: and it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that Jehovah slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-born of beast: therefore I sacrifice to Jehovah all that openeth the womb, being males; but all the first-born of my sons I redeem." This idea of redemption would therefore be frequently brought to mind. The Hebrews were bidden to let these hallowed memories remain with them, as a sign upon their hand and as frontlets between their eyes. But the Hebrews later foolishly interpreted this to mean that they should literally wear certain words on their hands and their foreheads.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### A Longer Journey to Avoid War (Verses 17, 18)

The short and easy way from Egypt to Canaan passed through the territory bordering the Mediterranean Sea. They traveled about as far in reaching Mount Sinai as they would have traveled by the near way in reaching the borders of Canaan. But along the upper reaches of the shorter way dwelt the war-disposed Philistines. Had this vast horde of people undertaken to go through the territory of the Philistines, there would have been war. The Hebrews were not trained warriors; on the contrary, they had been so crushed by slavery all their lives that they lacked courage and determination. And so Jehovah led them "about, by the way of the wilderness by the Red Sea," "lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt." "From this we learn two lessons. Why did not He, who presently made strong the hearts of the Egyptians to plunge into the bed of the sea, make the hearts of his own people strong to defy the Philistines? The answer is a striking and solemn one. Neither God in the Old Testament, nor God manifested in the flesh, is ever recorded to have wrought any miracle of spiritual advancement or overthrow. Thus the Egyptians were but confirmed in their own choice; their decision was carried further. And even Saul of Tarsus was illuminated, not coerced; he might have disobeyed the heavenly vision. He was not an insincere man suddenly coerced into earnestness, nor a coward suddenly made brave. In the moral world, adequate means are always employed for the securing of desired effects. Love, gratitude, the sense of danger and of grace, are the powers which elevate characters. And persons who live in sensuality, fraud, or falsehood, hoping to be saved some day by a sort of miracle of grace, ought to ponder this truth, which may not be the gospel now fashionable, but is unquestionably a statement of a scriptural fact: in the moral sphere, God works by means, and not by miracle. . . . The other lesson we learn is the tender fidelity of God, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear. He led them aside into the desert, whither, where he still in mercy leads very many who think it a heavy judgment to be there." (An Exposition of the Bible.) But it may be asked, Did they not have war with Amalek soon after leaving Egypt? However, that was a small affair—one battle, and it was over. (Ex. 17: 8-13.) It will be noticed that "the children of Israel went up armed out of the land



of Egypt." It must be that these arms were some of the things which they asked of the Egyptians, for as slaves they would not be allowed to have any opportunity to procure them.

### The Bones of Joseph (Verse 19)

"And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." (Gen. 50: 25.) All the people of whom Joseph took this oath concerning his bones had died long before the exodus from the land; but Moses felt the binding force of that oath which was made before he was born. "And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him." From the following words of Stephen it appears that the bones of Joseph's brethren were also carried back to Canaan: "And Jacob went down into Egypt; and he died, himself and our fathers; and they were carried over unto Shechem, and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a price in silver of the sons of Hamor in Shechem." (Acts 7: 15, 16.) Some one has said, "In the Epistles to the Hebrews (11: 22) it is recorded as the most characteristic example of the faith of the patriarch, that, instead of desiring to be carried, like his father, at once to Canaan, he made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones. To him Egypt was no longer an alien land. There only he had known honor without envy, and happiness without betrayal. There his bones could rest in quiet, but not forever . . . This confidence in their emancipation was his faith."

### The Pillar of Cloud and the Pillar of Fire (Verses 20-22)

It is not possible to trace on a map the exact line of the journeys of the children of Israel, but a general idea can be obtained by comparing the text and the map. From Rameses they went to Succoth, and thence to Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. In their journeys Jehovah went before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night; and these departed not from before the people. That was Jehovah's way of leading the people. The pillar of fire by night lighted up the camp, or gave them light by which to journey. Later, after the tabernacle was made, the pillar of cloud overshadowed it by day, and the pillar of fire was above it by night, so long as they were in camp. But when it moved on, they took up their journeys; at the place over which it came to rest, they encamped. (See Num. 9: 15-23.) This was God's way of guiding the people in all their movements.

### The Egyptians Pursue Them (Ex. 14: 10)

For some reason the Hebrews turned at Etham back toward the Red Sea; but it seems that Jehovah brought them into a situation from which no human power or wisdom could deliver them. "Now they had the Red Sea before them, and on their right and left hand fortresses of the Egyptians to prevent their escape; nor had they one boat or transport prepared for their passage! If they be now saved, the arm of the Lord must be seen, and the vanity and nullity of the Egyptian idols be demonstrated. By bringing them into such a situation he took from them all hope of human help, and gave their adversaries every advantage against them, so that they themselves

said, "They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in." (Adam Clarke.) As strange as it seems, while all Egypt was still mourning their dead, Pharaoh and his counselors decided that they had done a foolish thing in letting Israel go. They must have decided that the God of the Hebrews was not a God of war, else he would not have led his people into such a hopeless situation. His recent experience had given him no correct idea of Jehovah. So he started the pick of his army in pursuit of Israel. "And the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, before Baal-zephon."

### They Blame Moses (Verses 11, 12)

Their language to Moses shows that they were utterly without hope of escape from the Egyptians; and like an unreasoning mob they railed at Moses, as if he on his own responsibility had deliberately led them into a hopeless situation. The recent mighty works of Jehovah had made no permanent impression upon their dull minds. Were there no graves in Egypt that you brought us out here to die? Did we not beg you to let us alone, that we might serve the Egyptians. In the face of what they thought was certain death, the slavery of which they had so bitterly complained did not seem so bad. In their thinking, they were little ahead of a group of emotional children. In that vast throng only Moses had courage and faith. It must have begun to dawn upon Moses that Jehovah had committed to him an enormous task in making him the leader of such a faithless race of people.

### Moses Encourages the People (Verses 13, 14)

Moses had done all that God had directed him to do. He had gone as far as he had directions. He had encamped at the place God had appointed. He knew that of their own strength they could not escape; yet he believed that Jehovah would destroy their enemies. But till they received further instructions, he would try to prevent a stampede. His command for them to stand still was appropriate, for they had gone as far as they had directions. In the face of such dangers, it certainly required strong faith to urge the people just to be still and wait.

### Jehovah Commands a Forward Move (Verse 15)

Jehovah said to Moses, "Wherefore criest thou unto me?" From this it is evident that Moses had been praying to Jehovah. Evidently, he had prayed to know what to do next, for that was the information Jehovah gave him. "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." But first Jehovah must open up the way. In commanding Moses to lift up his rod and stretch his hand over the water, and divide it, he was exalting Moses in the eyes of the people as the agent of their deliverance. The waters separated and stood upright—a frozen wall on either side as they marched across. (15: 8.) The cloud stood between them and the Egyptians—light to them, but darkness to the Egyptians.



## SOME REFLECTIONS

The Lord saved Israel out of the hand of the Egyptians, but Israel had to do as they were commanded. The Lord now saves people from sin, if they do what he commands them to do.

With the walls of water on either side and the cloud covering them, they were completely buried in the cloud and sea. Paul says they were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. (1 Cor. 10: 12.) To say that they were baptized by rain is to contradict Paul. Paul says they were baptized in the two elements—cloud and sea; not in the one element, rain.

"By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were swallowed up." (Heb. 11: 29.) The phrase "by faith" here spans the Red Sea, reaching from shore to shore, and includes everything that was done in crossing. It includes their baptism, for they were baptized in crossing.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

How Jehovah led Israel.

The hardness and recklessness of the Egyptians.

How God saved Israel.

How they were baptized.

How their deliverance is like ours.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.  
What did Jehovah say of the night of the Passover?  
From what point did Israel start their journey?  
About how many went out?  
What law was announced concerning the first-born?  
What trade was later made concerning the first-born?  
What did God command to be done in the future?

*Verses 17, 18*

Which was the short way to Canaan?  
Why did Israel go a much longer way?  
How does God bring about moral changes in people?

*Verse 19*

Give what is said of the bones of Joseph.  
What seems to have been done with the bones of Joseph's brethren?

*Verses 20-22*

How did Jehovah guide Israel in their travels?

Give what information you can about the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire.

*Ex. 14: 10*

Into what seemingly hopeless situation did the Lord direct Israel?  
What did the Egyptians decide to do, and why?  
How can their rashness be accounted for?  
What shows that Israel had little, or no, faith?

*Verses 11, 12*

What shows that Israel had no hope of escape?  
What must Moses have thought?

*Verses 13, 14*

Why was Moses' command to stand still appropriate?  
Have we ever now the same reason for standing still and waiting?  
What did Moses say Jehovah would do?

*Verse 15*

What did Jehovah say to Moses?  
How was the way opened up for Israel?  
What occurred to the water?  
How were the people hidden from the Egyptians?  
Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson VI—August 8, 1937

## GOD FEEDS A PEOPLE

Ex. 16: 11-20; 17: 3-6

11 And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying,

12 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah your God.

13 And it came to pass at even, that the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the camp.

14 And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness a small round thing, small as the hoar-frost on the ground.

15 And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, What is it? for they knew not what it was. And Moses said unto them, It is the bread which Jehovah hath given you to eat.

16 This is the thing which Jehovah hath commanded. Gather ye of it every man according to his eating; an omer a head, according to the number of your persons, shall ye take it, every man for them that are in his tent.

17 And the children of Israel did so, and gathered some more, some less.

18 And when they measured it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating.

19 And Moses said unto them, Let no man leave of it till the morning.

20 Notwithstanding they hearkened unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and became foul: and Moses was wroth with them.

3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore hast thou brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

4 And Moses cried unto Jehovah, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they are almost ready to stone me.

5 And Jehovah said unto Moses, Pass on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thy hand, and go.

6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father.” (James 1: 17.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 6: 32-40.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

August 2.	M.	God Feeds Israel (Ex. 16: 11-20)
August 3.	T.	God Provides Water (Ex. 17: 1-6)
August 4.	W.	A God of Mercy (Psalm 78: 12-25)
August 5.	T.	Remembering God's Bounty (Deut. 8: 11-20)
August 6.	F.	Bread for the Multitudes (Mark 6: 35-44)
August 7.	S.	Security of the Righteous (Psalm 37: 16-25)
August 8.	S.	The Bread of Life (John 6: 32-40)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

Time.—According to Usher, 1491 B.C.; according to Hales, 1648 B.C. The events of the first section of our lesson occurred one month “after their departing out of the land of Egypt.”

Place.—“The wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai,” and Rephidim.

Persons.—Jehovah and the Hebrews.

Lesson Links.—When the children of Israel were baptized in the cloud and in the sea, and their former owners were drowned, they became absolutely free from their bondage. The Hebrews had been



blessed with two deliverances. By the sacrifices and the blood of the Passover lamb the first-born son in every family was delivered from the destroying angel. Keep in mind that only the physical life of the first-born was saved by the blood. They were also delivered from bondage, and this deliverance was for the whole Hebrew race; but that deliverance was not complete till the army of Egypt, the strong arm of Pharaoh, was destroyed in the Red Sea. Let us not mix these two deliverances. It is well also to remember that the Hebrews were God's people before either deliverance. In their baptism unto, or into, Moses, they were saved from the Egyptians, and were completely committed to the leadership of Moses. It was only after they crossed the Red Sea that the record says, "Thus Jehovah saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore." (14: 30.) They then sang the song of deliverance. In delivering Israel from the Egyptians, the Lord did for them the things which they could not do for themselves; but he would not deliver them from the trials and hardships incident to travel. Through the heat they marched three days in the wilderness of Shur, to Marah. There was water, but too bitter to drink. Directed by Jehovah Moses cast a certain tree into the waters, and the waters were made sweet. Here Jehovah made a covenant of health with them. If they would diligently obey him, he would put none of the diseases upon them, which he had put upon the Egyptians. It was a short distance from Marah to Elim. There they found twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees. From Elim they went to the wilderness of Sin, to a point between Elim and Sinai. They reached this point "on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt." Their food supply ran low, and they murmured bitterly against Moses and Aaron. It appears that Jehovah had no place in their thinking; and the land flowing with milk and honey had no appeal to them. Their former slavery had lost its terrors. Only the fleshpots of Egypt lingered in their minds. Jehovah promised them food; and Moses told them plainly that their murmurings were not against him and Aaron, but against Jehovah. When we read of such incidents, we are amazed at the patience of Moses and at the mercy and forbearance of God.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Flesh and Bread Promised (Verses 11, 12)

Jehovah had said to Moses (Verse 4), "I will rain bread from heaven for you." The people were to gather each day the food necessary for that day; on the sixth day they were to gather food for two days. That arrangement would be a test as to whether they would walk in his law or not. Moses was commanded to tell the people that at even they should eat flesh. No hint was given as to what the flesh would be, nor how it would be given. In the morning they would be filled with bread, but no hint was given as to how the bread would come. Jehovah would satisfy their hunger, but not their curiosity. By this miraculous feeding they would know that Jehovah was their God; and as Moses and Aaron said in verse six, "Ye shall know that Jehovah hath brought you out from the land of Egypt." They had been murmuring against Moses and Aaron, saying, "Ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."



(Verse 3.) The great miracle that they had witnessed but a short month before had faded from their minds; they had lost sight of the fact that God had had anything to do with their deliverance, so stupid were they, and ignorant. Now, that they might keep him fresh in mind, Jehovah would demonstrate his presence with them by miraculously feeding them every day.

### Food in Abundance Furnished (Verses 13, 14)

At even the quails came in great quantities, so much so that they covered the camp. Much speculation has been indulged in concerning this swarm of quails; but if we take Jehovah into account in the matter all difficulties vanish. "Is anything too hard for Jehovah?" To puzzle over how Jehovah could bring so many quails is much like the Hebrews' worrying about how they were going to be fed. All questioning as to the bread is also out of place. With Jehovah all things are possible. Of mornings there was <sup>the dew</sup> on the ground. When the dew disappeared there was the bread. And it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." (Verse 31.) The whole circumstance shows that it was a new kind of bread, unlike any bread ever before seen.

### They Gather the Bread (Verses 15-20)

This thing that lay about on the ground was an utterly new thing to these Hebrews. Had it been a natural product of that region of country they would have seen it before that day, and would have had no occasion to ask, "What is it?" Moses distinctly says in Deut. 8: 3, 16 that Jehovah fed them with manna, which neither they nor their fathers had known. Before any one knew that it was for food, they asked, "What is it?" and Moses replied, "It is the bread which Jehovah hath given you to eat." Moses had on the day before rebuked them for their murmuring, telling them that their murmuring was not against him and Aaron, but against Jehovah. Now he would not have them to honor him and Aaron for this food; Jehovah was giving them bread as he had promised. By every possible way he was seeking to implant in their stupid and untutored minds the conviction of God's continued presence with them.

*Directions for Gathering the Bread.*—It will be noticed that Jehovah did not give them this bread in loaves baked and ready for eating. In fact, gathering it must have been rather tedious; for it was "a small round thing, small as the hoar-frost on the ground." It might be prepared for use by baking or boiling. (Verse 23.) "The people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in mortars, and boiled it in pots, and made cakes of it." (Num. 11: 8.) But they were to gather only so much each day as they would eat that day—"an omer a head," with the exception of the sixth day; on the sixth day they were to gather a double portion. An omer was explained to be the tenth part of an ephah (Verse 36), or a fraction more than five pints. For a large family a considerable quantity would be required. But food seemed to be about the only thing these Hebrews were thinking about, and Jehovah would make it necessary for them to work fast to get it; for "when the sun waxed hot, it melted." (Verse 21.) But they gathered as directed; some gathered more than others, for some had larger families. "He that gathered



much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack." This does not necessarily imply that there was a miraculous evening up of the amount gathered. The next clause, giving the reason for each one's having the proper amount, rather shows that each one had merely gathered what was needed—They gathered "every man according to his eating." It could not mean that the one who was too indifferent to God's command, or too lazy to do as commanded, had his small amount miraculously increased to the proper amount. God would not thus encourage and bless either indifference or laziness. Paul's reference to this incident (2 Cor. 8: 15) does not give any additional light, unless he means that those who were too feeble to gather the required amount were supplied by the over amount gathered by the able-bodied of the camp. Though this food was for the physical man, yet Paul calls it spiritual food. (1 Cor. 10: 3.) It was food not obtained in the regular, natural way.

*Some of Them Disobeyed* (Verses 19, 20).—In promising this bread Jehovah had said, "That I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or not." (Verse 4.) It was a test of their spirit of obedience. They disobeyed in two particulars. (1) "Let no man leave of it till the morning." But some of them left of it till the morning, "and it bred worms, and became foul." Thus their sin resulted in something very offensive to them. It was an object lesson, teaching them that disobedience brought discomfort and unpleasantness to the sinner. (2) On the sixth day they were to gather a double portion to be kept for food on the Sabbath. This food kept over for the Sabbath would not become foul as that did which was kept over for any other day. No manna was to be found on the Sabbath. Yet on the seventh day some went out in search of manna, but found none. (Verse 27.) And Jehovah rebuked them severely for their disobedience. The manner of giving this manna, and the laws governing its use, may give some light on Paul's referring to it as spiritual food; for it did more than feed the body. It was an everyday miracle, reminding them of God's presence with them. The regulation governing the gathering and use of it cultivated a spirit of obedience; at least, tended to do so.

### The People Again Murmur Against Moses (Ex. 17: 3, 4)

From the wilderness of Sin the children of Israel went on toward Sinai, "and encamped in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink." Instead of counseling with Moses as to what could be done about the distressing situation, they came with the imperious demand, "Give us water that we may drink." Again they failed to take Jehovah into consideration. They had never known anything in Egypt but hardships. But now, having been the objects of some special favors, they, like some very poor folks suddenly become rich, became arrogant and angry at any sort of self-denial. It seems that the statement of Moses that they were not finding fault with him, but Jehovah, had made no impression upon them. In reality they were angry with Jehovah, and taking their spite out on Moses; for Jehovah, and not Moses, was responsible for their being there. It was not as if they were about to perish for water. When men are at the point of perishing for water, their one consuming desire is a drink. For the time being they think not of their cattle. They were not begging



for water; they were demanding it. They were not so much distressed as angry. In their anger they were about to stone Moses. But even so, they were not so different from people of later times. To become angry with any man for preaching God's truth, whether the preacher be an inspired man, or an uninspired man, is to act as did these stupid Hebrews. In his distress Moses appealed to Jehovah: "What shall I do unto this people? they are almost ready to stone me."

### Water from a Rock (Verses 5, 6)

It appears that the people were denied the privilege of witnessing the miracle. Jehovah commanded Moses to take some of the elders of Israel, take his rod in his hand, and go. Jehovah would stand upon the rock in Horeb; Moses would strike the rock, and water would come out of the rock. "And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." The miracle which the people had seen had made no permanent impression upon them. The daily miracle of the manna was accepted as an ordinary occurrence. They would see no other miracle till they witnessed the terrible scenes on Mount Sinai. Jehovah would give them water, and they would soon have to fight for that—as soon as Amalek and his followers discovered it; for water was scarce in that section. This would be a chastisement for their angry murmuring against Moses, which in reality was against Jehovah. Sometimes only severe treatment will teach people a needed lesson.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

We think that, if we had seen all the wonderful miracles the Hebrews saw, we would have done better than they; but would we? We do not doubt that these miracles were wrought. In addition to all these things, we have the record of the wonderful works of Christ and his apostles, and also his glorious gospel; but these things have made little impression on the masses of people.

The manna sustained the body. Something for the body, either food, clothing, or some other form of fleshly indulgence, is what people mostly seek even now. They labor for the meat that perishes, rather than for that which endures to life eternal. And they murmur and complain, as did the Hebrews, when things do not come up to their expectation.

Jesus is both the bread of life and the water of life. "For the bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world. . . . Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." (John 6: 33-35.) "I am the living bread which came down out of heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: yea and the bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world." (John 6: 51.) We eat this bread by believing in him, and learning and doing his will.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The evils of murmuring.  
How unbelief leads to sin.  
Man's stupidity and hardness of heart.  
Jesus the bread of life.



## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.  
When did Israel become entirely free from Egyptian bondage?  
From what did the Lord not deliver them?  
What occurred at Marah?  
Describe their next camp.  
Where did they next go?  
How long since they began their journey?  
What started their murmuring?  
Against whom did they really murmur?

*Verses 11, 12*

How had Jehovah promised Moses to feed them?  
What was Moses to tell the people?  
What would their miraculous feeding cause them to know?  
What shows their stupidity and ignorance?  
How would Jehovah show his continued presence with them?

*Verses 13, 14*

What food came to them?  
Describe the bread.

*Verses 15-20*

What shows that this bread was a new thing?  
What directions were given for gathering the bread?  
What shows that gathering it was tedious?  
How was it prepared for eating?  
How much was to be gathered for each one?  
How did their gathering measure out?  
What had God said about proving them?  
Discuss how they failed to stand the test.  
How might this manner of feeding them help them spiritually?

*Ex. 17: 3, 4*

To what place did they next journey?  
Why the renewed murmuring?  
What shows they were angry?  
Why should they be angry with Moses?  
Why do people become angry when some one preaches the truth?

*Verses 5, 6*

How was water furnished?  
Who saw this miracle?  
What did they have to do to retain rights to this water?  
Discuss the reflections.

*Lesson VII—August 15, 1937*

## GOD GIVES LAWS TO A NATION

## Ex. 20: 1-17

- 1 And God spake all these words, saying,
- 2 I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
- 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
- 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:
- 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me,
- 6 And showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.
- 7 Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.
- 8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
- 9 Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work;
- 10 But the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:
- 11 For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.
- 12 Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee.
- 13 Thou shalt not kill.
- 14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.

- 15 Thou shalt not steal.  
 16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.  
 17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matt. 22: 37-39.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 19: 7-14.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

August 9.	M.	Duties to God (Ex. 20: 1-11)
August 10.	T.	Duties to Man (Ex. 20: 12-20)
August 11.	W.	Understanding the Law (Psalm 119: 33-40)
August 12.	T.	Loving the Law (Psalm 119: 97-104)
August 13.	F.	Fulfilling the Law (Rom. 13: 8-14)
August 14.	S.	The Perfect Law (Psalm 19: 7-14)
August 15.	S.	God's Law in the Heart (Heb. 10: 14-17)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—According to Usher, 1491 B.C.; according to Hales, 1648 B.C. From the language of Ex. 19: 3 it seems that the children of Israel reached Sinai on the third day of the third month after their departure from Rameses.

**Place.**—The wilderness of Sinai, before Mount Sinai.

**Persons.**—Jehovah and the Hebrews.

**Lesson Links.**—In the vast host of murmuring Hebrews there would be some worthy souls who would not join in such rebellion. These dependable ones would have to bear the brunt of the battle with Amalek. Among these was a man now first mentioned, who later became the leader of the hosts of Israel. "And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek." Joshua would know who were dependable. He and his men fought while Moses prayed. Prayer and the labor of battle gained the victory. Now came a friendly visitor to the camp, Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, bringing some assistance to Moses in bringing about a better organization for the management of the people. In making his recommendations to Moses, Jethro made this significant statement: "If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure." He would not have Moses to do anything without God's command. From Rephidim they came into the wilderness of Sinai and went into camp before the mount. This is where Jehovah had said to Moses from the burning bush, "When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." (Ex. 3: 12.) When Moses went up into the mount, Jehovah commanded him to say to the people, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." (Ex. 19: 4-6.) When these words were repeated to the people, they said, "All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do." This is really the covenant, the conditions of which were announced three days later. The people were specially charged not to come up into the mount, and not to touch it, on penalty



of certain death. On the third morning, "there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud; and all the people that were in the camp trembled." The people were there assembled before the mount. Mount Sinai, the whole of it, smoked, because Jehovah descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. It was an awe-inspiring scene calculated to impress the most stupid heart in the camp. "And so fearful was the appearance, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." (Heb. 12: 21.) Amid such awful scenes the ten commandments were given.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Other Gods and All Images Prohibited (Verses 1-6)

*Introductory Words.*—Their knowledge of Jehovah had increased. In Egypt the masses knew little, or nothing, of him. To them Moses announced him as the God of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But experience, as it always should, had led them into a more intimate and personal knowledge of him. To them he was now Jehovah their God, who had brought them "out of the house of bondage." Without presenting himself as the object of their worship, it would be vain to prohibit their worshiping idols, for men will worship something. So Jehovah reminds them that he was their deliverer, and was therefore worthy of their worship.

*First Commandment.*—"Thou shalt have no other gods before me." All their lives these Hebrews had been the slaves of a nation who had invented for themselves various gods, as also had the surrounding nations. Various phenomena and forces of nature were idealized as deities. That was the best that unaided human reason could do. The idea of one God, the supreme ruler over all the heavens and the earth, is distinctly a matter of revelation.

*Second Commandment.*—The language of this command shows clearly that they were not to make any images or likenesses to be used as objects of worship. To take it, as some do, that the command prohibits pictures and sculptures for ornamental purposes, or photographs of people, houses, scenes, and so on, is rather ridiculous. That construction would prohibit the use of all blueprints for use in structural work, and our law enforcement officers could not make a photograph of fingerprints of a criminal! Any heathen of intelligence looked upon his image as a representation, an image, of what he believed to be a living god. Through it he worshiped his deity. But Jehovah would allow no such rivals. He declares himself to be a jealous God. Too often we think, and too often it is; but modified and controlled by knowledge and pure thinking, it is not.

### The Third and Fourth Commands (Verses 7-11)

*The Third Command.*—"Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain." It is difficult to determine the full scope of this command. It evidently prohibits the use of the name of God in an irreverent way. It would prohibit profanity, and also the use of the name of God in any light, useless, or flippant way. If a man loves and reveres God as he should, he will always use the name of God in

a spirit of reverence and respect. He will never use it as a byword, nor in a joke.

*Fourth Command.*—"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." The reasons for the first three commands inhere in the very nature of our relation to Jehovah. While it may be true that man's nature demands one rest day in seven, it would never appear so to man's reason, especially would it not in those early times. To them therefore it was a positive law, resting solely on the authority of the lawgiver. They were to do all their work during the six days—no work was to be done the seventh day, on penalty of death. (Num. 15: 32-36.) It was a sign between Jehovah and Israel, which it could not have been if it had been given to all nations. (See Ex. 31: 12-17.) "And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day." (Deut. 5: 15.) Jehovah commanded them to keep the sabbath because he had brought them out of Egypt. He did not, therefore, command them to keep the Sabbath before he brought them out of Egypt. It has been argued that the manner in which the Sabbath was spoken of in Ex. 16: 23, 26 shows that the Sabbath was well known at that time, but that could not be. The Hebrews in their slavery had no chance to observe the Sabbath, had it then been a law. And the masses were reduced to such ignorance that they did not know, or care, anything about Jehovah and his service.

### The Fifth Commandment (Verse 12)

Some one has well said, "This commandment forms a kind of bridge between the first table and the second. Obedience to parents is not merely a neighborly virtue; we do not honor them simply as our fellow men: they are the vice-regents of God to our childhood; through them he supplies our necessities, defends our feebleness, and pours in light and wisdom upon our ignorance; by them our earliest knowledge of right and wrong is imparted, and upon the sanction of their voice it long depends." This is the first commandment with promise. The parent that is worthy the name seeks to preserve the health of his child and to keep him out of unnecessary dangers and exposures. The thoughtful child knows that the parent knows best what is good for him. One thing greatly lacking these days is a proper reverence for parents. Parents are greatly to blame, because they do not train their children to respect their will and wishes. Obedience to authority must be learned, and if that is not learned in the home, the child has a rocky road before him. If a child is not taught to respect the authority of parents, he is not likely to respect any other authority. Such a child is a criminal in the making. This commandment is plainly and pointedly set forth in the New Testament. (Eph. 6: 1, 2.)

### Commandments Regulating Their Neighborly Relations (Verses 13-17)

*Sixth Commandment.*—"Thou shalt not kill." This commandment prohibited murder, but it did not prohibit the taking of human life to constituted authorities as punishment for crime. The law of Moses itself required the death penalty for upwards of twenty crimes.



The sixth command therefore did not prohibit legal executions, but did prohibit murder. The murderer was to be killed. (Ex. 21: 12.)

*The Seventh Commandment.*—"Thou shalt not commit adultery." Adultery was another crime punishable by death. (Lev. 20: 10.) The gospel of Christ condemns adultery, and pronounces the doom of the adulterer. (1 Cor. 6: 9; Heb. 13: 4.) But the teachings of Jesus go back of the overt act and condemn the evil desires of the heart. (Matt. 5: 27.) Even a man's thoughts may be sinful. But if the thoughts are pure, so will our words and actions be. The seventh commandment prohibited the impure act; Jesus prohibits the impure thought. If impure thoughts are banished, impure deeds will never occur. "Keep thy heart with all diligence." "For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings: these are the things which defile the man." (Matt. 15: 19, 20.)

*The Eighth Commandment.*—"Thou shalt not steal." This commandment required them to respect property rights. The language just quoted from the Savior places thievery on a plane with other degrading sins. Paul admonishes, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need." (Eph. 4: 28.) This requirement of the New Testament is superior to the eighth commandment; for it requires us, not only to refrain from stealing, but to give to the needy. It would be next to impossible to name all the ways in which stealing may be done. In a general way it may be said that stealing is taking another's property without his knowledge or consent, and also withholding from another that which rightfully belongs to him, whether it is done legally or otherwise. There is an alarming growth of thievery. To prevent children from growing into thieves, teach them to respect property rights.

*Ninth Commandment.*—"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." That prohibited the making of false statements about the neighbor in court and out of court. These Hebrews had done much of that in their repeated murmurings against Moses. Each of the two tables contained a prohibition against the wrong use of the tongue. They were not to take the name of God in vain, nor to speak falsely about their neighbor. On these points the New Testament is as emphatic as language can be. Words are powerful things. Reputations are blasted, and the innocent are made to suffer untold miseries, by false testimony. Unbridled passions make unbridled tongues, and give rise to much false testimony. Envy and hatred cause us to overstate the defects of others. And nothing is more prolific of false testimony than the party spirit in religion. The partisan wants to make the other party out as bad as words can picture him. The best of people will be given to exasperation and falsehood when the party spirit runs high. The tongue is an unruly member—it speaks out of the abundance of the heart. "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matt. 12: 37.)

*The Tenth Commandment.*—"Thou shalt not covet." Covetousness is sinful desire. It is not wrong to desire another's property, if you also desire to pay for it. All legitimate trade is based on desire. But it is wrong to desire another's wife at all, for there is no right

way for you to obtain her. Covetousness leads to other sins, such as stealing, robbery, defrauding, falsely representing the value of property for sale or for taxation. The New Testament is severe on the covetous man.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

It is apparent to anyone who will thoughtfully read the ten commandments that they are not a perfect code of morals. The five commands regulating human conduct toward human beings are all negative—"Thou shalt not." Nothing there about loving your enemy or even your neighbor. Nothing about helping the needy, whether the needs be spiritual or physical. Nothing about speaking comforting words. In all respects the New Testament is far superior.

But the ten commandments are not the greatest command of the Old Covenant. A lawyer asked Jesus, "Which is the great commandment?" (Read the incident in Matt. 22: 35-40; Mark 12: 28-34.) All the other commands of the law, including the ten commandments, are based on these two commandments—on them hung the law and the prophets. If a man loved God supremely, and his neighbor as himself, he would do a lot more in service to God and man than is enjoined in the ten commandments.

There are certain moral principles that have always been true and binding—true in the nature of our relationship. They were true before the ten commandments were given, and they are true since the ten commandments were abolished with the rest of the law of Moses. A thoughtful study will show that what some term the ceremonial law reaches a higher standard in the moral requirements than do the ten commandments. But the New Testament sets forth the only perfect code of morals that has ever been known.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

To whom was the Sabbath law given?

Wherein the ten commandments fail to be a perfect moral code.

The end of the law.

The two great commands.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.

Who was selected to lead the fight against Amalek?

How was the victory won?

What friendly visitor came to the camp?

What assistance did he render Moses?

From Rephidim where did Israel journey?

What had Jehovah formerly said to Moses about the mount?

Tell how they covenanted with Jehovah.

Tell what happened the third day.

#### *Verses 1-6*

By what descriptive term had Jehovah been introduced to them in Egypt?

What descriptive term is here used?

Why the difference?

Repeat and discuss the first of the ten commandments.

Give the second commandment.

Discuss the extent of its application.

#### *Verses 7-11*

Repeat the third commandment.

Discuss the extent of its application.

Repeat the fourth commandment.

Was it a positive or a moral law?

To whom did it apply?

Give reasons for your answer.

#### *Verse 12*

Repeat the fifth commandment.

Discuss its practical benefits.

Where should obedience be learned?

How are many criminals made?



## Verses 13-17

Repeat the sixth command.  
 What proof that this did not prohibit legal executions?  
 Repeat the seventh commandment.  
 In what respect is Christ's teaching on this matter superior to the seventh commandment?  
 Repeat the eighth commandment.  
 In what respect is the New Testament teaching superior to the eighth command?

How would you define stealing?  
 On this point, what should children be taught?  
 Repeat the ninth commandment.  
 Discuss the application of this command.  
 What gives rise to much false testimony?  
 What does the heart have to do with the tongue?  
 Repeat the tenth commandment.  
 What is covetousness?  
 Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson VIII—August 22, 1937

## THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN A NATION'S LIFE

Ex. 25: 1, 2, 8, 9; 29: 43-46; 40: 34-38

1 And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying,  
 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, that they take for me an offering: of every man whose heart maketh him willing ye shall take my offering.

8 And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.  
 9 According to all that I show thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the furniture thereof, even so shall ye make it.

43 And there I will meet with the children of Israel; and the Tent shall be sanctified by my glory.

44 And I will sanctify the tent of meeting, and the altar: Aaron also and his sons will I sanctify, to minister to me in the priest's office.

45 And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God.  
 46 And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them: I am Jehovah their God.

34 Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle.

35 And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of meeting, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle.

36 And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward, throughout all their journeys:

37 But if the cloud was not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up.

38 For the cloud of Jehovah was upon the tabernacle by day, and there was fire therein by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah."*  
 (Psalm 33: 12.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 2: 2-4.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

August 16.	M.	Offerings for the Sanctuary (Ex. 25: 1-9)
August 17.	T.	A Sacred Meeting Place (Ex. 29: 38-46)
August 18.	W.	Divine Guidance (Ex. 40: 34-38)
August 19.	T.	Temples of God (1 Cor. 3: 16-23)
August 20.	F.	Strength through Worship (Psalm 27: 1-6)
August 21.	S.	Joy in Worship (Psalm 122: 1-9)
August 22.	S.	God's Tabernacle with Men (Rev. 21: 1-8)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

Time.—For the first part of the lesson, according to Usher, 1491 B.C.; for the last part of the lesson, 1490 B.C.

Place.—Mount Sinai.

Persons.—Jehovah and the Hebrews:

*Lesson Links.*—It had been hard to impress the masses of the children of Israel with the truth that Jehovah was with them and was directing them in all their traveling and encamping, as is shown by the fact that every time things did not suit them they laid all the blame on Moses. But after they had witnessed the awful scenes on Mount Sinai—the thundering, the fire, the smoke, the darkness, the voice of the trumpet waxing louder and louder—they were frightened beyond measure, and came to Moses and said, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Ex. 20: 19.) Jehovah then gave them, through Moses, numerous precepts concerning worship, concerning personal rights, and concerning property rights. In chapter twenty-three, verse twenty, we have this significant statement: "Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee by the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared." And then Jehovah said to Moses, "Come up unto Jehovah, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off." They all went up, but the others did not go so far as Moses went. At the command of Jehovah, accompanied by his minister Joshua, Moses went on up farther into the mountain, to receive the two tables of stone, and the law and commandment. A cloud still covered the mountain. "And the appearance of the glory of Jehovah was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses entered into the midst of the cloud, and went up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days." Later Moses said, "I did neither eat bread nor drink water. And Jehovah delivered unto me the two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which Jehovah spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly." (Deut. 9: 9, 10.) And while he was in the mount, Jehovah gave him full directions concerning the building of the tabernacle and the construction of its furniture.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### The Tabernacle Built of Material Given by the People (Verses 1, 2)

The law of Moses, with all its forms and ceremonies, was designed to regulate the religious activities of a nation, and was therefore adapted to that end. Its requirements were enforced by duly constituted authorities, and temporal punishments were meted out to the sinful and disobedient. A formal compliance with the requirements of the law was sufficient to enable one to escape the penalties of the law. This does not mean that there were not deeper values in the law of Moses, for there were. The law was spiritual, but most of the people were too carnal to see beyond its formal requirements. But many men and women of piety and reverence lived under the law. Nor must it be understood that there were no eternal rewards and punishments for those who lived under the law. The story of the rich man and Lazarus, as told by Jesus and recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Luke, proves that there were eternal rewards and punishments for the people then living. But the authorities whose business it was to enforce the law could not go beyond the formal requirements, for they could not look into a man's heart. They could not determine whether any obeyed as a matter of conscience. They therefore



punished no man because he was not conscientious in what he did, but because he did not comply with the prescribed forms. It was therefore suited to be a national religion. But the religion of Christ cannot be a national religion. Obedience to Christ must come from the heart, and civil authorities cannot look into the heart. Christianity is individual, not national. All a government can do—and it certainly should do that—is to see that no government agency and no government money are used to hinder the progress of the Christian religion. But today much government money, collected by taxation from God-fearing men and women, is used to undermine the foundation of Christianity. The place of the Christian religion in a nation's life is in the individual lives of its citizens. Certainly a government should do nothing to hinder the fullest expression of that religion in the lives of its citizens, nor lend its aid to any move to hinder Christians in their efforts to propagate that religion. The people were asked to make contributions for the building of the tabernacle. Moses was to put the matter before them—"Of every man whose heart maketh him willing ye shall take my offering." The finest material was called for—"gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and sealskins, and acacia wood, oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense, onyx stones, and stones to be set, for the ephod, and for the breastplate." The material they gave, and the spirit and liberality of their giving, is recorded in chapters 35: 20-29; 36: 2-7. Had not the Egyptians given them so much when they left Egypt, they would have had very little to give for the tabernacle, its furniture, and its service. "They asked of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and Jehovah gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. And they despoiled the Egyptians." (Ex. 12: 35, 36.) But even so, the liberality with which they gave was remarkable.

### God Gave the Pattern for the Tabernacle and Furniture (Verses 8, 9)

As the tabernacle was to be Jehovah's sanctuary, his own dwelling place, and as it was also to be typical of matters then future, it would be expected that he would give all the plans for the tent and its furniture. Jehovah was the architect; the plans were laid before Moses, with the charge: "According to all that I show thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the furniture thereof, even so shall ye make it." Again the charge came: "And see that thou make them after their pattern, which hath been showed thee in the mount." (Verse 40.) Everything had to be an exact reproduction of the pattern. Moses was charged with the responsibility of seeing that everything conformed to the pattern. Of course he did not do the work of building. To any one who studies carefully the plans and specifications as outlined to Moses it will seem that a degree of inspiration was necessary to follow the plans. Hence, Jehovah said of his master workman Bezalel, "I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship." Oholiab was his assistant, and there were other workers: "and every wise-hearted man, in whose heart Jehovah had put wisdom." (See Ex. 31: 1-11; 36: 1-7.) But the only



wisdom these workmen needed in that work was the wisdom to follow the plans given them. So far as the record shows, the tabernacle was the first building ever erected on earth to be used in the worship of Jehovah. But it was more than a house of worship, it was Jehovah's house—his place of dwelling among the children of Israel. It was not in any sense a type of our meetinghouses.

### The Tent of Meeting (Ex. 29: 43)

"And there I will meet with the children of Israel." For this reason the tabernacle was frequently called "the tent of meeting." He did not meet with the whole congregation in this tent, for only the priests entered it. But he met with the people there when they offered their sacrifices and he accepted them. He also met with them when the high priest entered the most holy place, and God spoke with him from the mercy seat, for the priest was the representative of the people. It was through him that the people approached Jehovah.

### The Tent and the Priests Sanctified (Verse 44)

To Moses Jehovah said, "And I will sanctify the tent of meeting, and the altar: Aaron also and his sons will I sanctify, to minister to me in the priest's office." And yet Jehovah commanded Moses to sanctify, or make holy, the tabernacle and its furniture, or also the laver and altar of burnt offerings. He was also commanded to sanctify Aaron and his sons. (Ex. 40: 9-15.) Adam Clarke thought there were two sanctifications: one real, performed by Jehovah; the other ceremonial, or symbolic, performed by Moses. But that is a mistake. Jehovah sanctified them by having Moses do the things necessary to their sanctification; that is, God did it through the agency of Moses. Aaron and his sons were not sanctified in order that they might be members of the covenant, but that, as members of that covenant, they might serve as priests. This sanctifying the tabernacle and its furniture, and Aaron and his sons to be priests, gives us a fine illustration of the incoming of sanctification. To sanctify, or to make holy, is to set apart. It signifies "not of the earth." All the material of the tabernacle and its furniture had been used in the common worldly affairs. When the tabernacle and its furniture had been set apart from worldly uses and dedicated to the service of God, they were sanctified. They had been separated from worldly uses. They were holy. No change had been made in the material of which they were made. It was a change of relationship—a change from worldly uses to the service of God. Aaron and his sons had been set apart to a special service. In harmony with this idea, Paul speaks plainly of our sanctification. "I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye presented your members as servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now present your members as servants to righteousness unto sanctification." (Rom. 6: 19.) When a worldly person turns from worldliness and gives himself into the service of God, that is sanctification.

### The Tabernacle a Reminder of God's Presence (Verses 45, 46)

In the law state of development of the children of Israel, they needed some visible, tangible, evidence of God's continued presence



with them. The tabernacle served that purpose, as well as other purposes. It was God's house, God's dwelling place. It made Jehovah seem more real. Nothing about the tabernacle stirred in their hearts any regard for idols. His presence with them kept alive in their hearts the great truth that the Jehovah dwelling among them was the Jehovah who brought them out of Egypt. He brought them out that they might be his own possession, and that he might dwell among them. The church is now the temple of God. It is called God's building. (1 Cor. 3: 9.) This refers to the people of God, and not the buildings in which they meet. "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye." (1 Cor. 3: 16, 17.)

### Jehovah Accepts the Tabernacle (Ex. 40: 34-38)

The children of Israel had now been before Mount Sinai a period of ten months, lacking three days; for they encamped there on the third day of the third month, and it was now the first day of the first month of the second year. (Ex. 40: 2.) That was a long stay at one place; but building that tabernacle and all its furniture was a long, tedious piece of work. Everything was made by hand with the crude tools of that day, and yet nothing but the finest workmanship would be tolerated in that building. Surrounding the tabernacle was a court in which was placed the altar of burnt offerings; between it and the door of the tabernacle was the laver. The tabernacle faced east. It was thirty cubits long, ten cubits wide, and ten cubits high. In it was hung a veil, which divided it into two parts. In the first part was the table of showbread on the right, the golden candlestick to the left, and the altar of incense next to the separating veil. Beyond the veil was the most holy place, in which was the ark of the covenant on which rested the mercy seat. When the tabernacle was set up and everything was in its proper place, Jehovah showed his acceptance of it by covering it with a cloud and filling it with his glory. The Hebrews remained in camp so long as the cloud remained over the tabernacle; they moved only when it moved. It guided the direction of their travels. It was one way of training them in the art of obedience. They dared not go beyond the cloud, nor stop till it stopped. Without words, it told them exactly what to do. It would be well if Christians marched and halted faithfully, as the word of God directs.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Religion is a broad term. There are many religions, but only one true religion. It would be better now to speak of "The Place of Christianity in a Nation's Life."

The place of Christianity in a nation's life is in the lives of the citizens of the nation; for Christianity is wholly an individual matter. And yet it is meant that each individual shall share it with his fellow man.

Nations are in a deplorable condition today because of the lack of Christianity in both the rulers and the ruled. Nations need not expect much improvement so long as the people drift farther and farther from the principles of righteousness set forth in God's word.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- A discussion of Heb. 9: 1-10.  
 A discussion of Heb. 12: 18-24.  
 The world's need of Christianity.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.  
 How were the Hebrews made to realize God's presence with them?  
 What request did they make, and why?  
 Why was Moses invited up into the mount?  
 How long did he remain in the mount?  
 What did Moses say of this in Deuteronomy?  
 What instructions did he receive in the mount?

*Verses 1, 2*

How was the law of Moses suited to be a national religion?  
 Why cannot Christianity be adopted as a national religion, and enforced by the government?  
 How do governments hinder Christianity?  
 Why were the Hebrews asked to make gifts?  
 What were they asked to give?  
 What is said of their liberality?  
 How came they to have anything to give?

*Verses 8, 9*

Who was the architect of the tabernacle?  
 What was Moses commanded to do?  
 Who did the actual work of building?

How were they enabled to follow directions?

*Ex. 29: 43*

Why was the tabernacle called "the tent of meeting"?  
 How did Jehovah meet the people in the tent?

*Verse 44*

How was it true that both Jehovah and Moses sanctified the tent and its furniture?  
 What does "sanctify" mean?  
 What lesson do you get as to how we are sanctified?

*Verses 45, 46*

Of what did the tabernacle continually remind them?  
 What is now God's temple?  
 Quote proof.

*Ex. 40: 34-38*

When was the tabernacle erected?  
 How long had the Hebrews been at Sinai?  
 How much longer did they remain at Sinai? (See Num. 10: 11, 12.)  
 Discuss the arrangement of the tabernacle and its furniture.  
 How did Jehovah show his acceptance of the tabernacle?  
 How were the people guided in their movements?

*Lesson IX—August 29, 1937*

## GOD CONDEMNS INTEMPERANCE

Lev. 10: 1, 2, 8-11; Prov. 31: 4, 5; Isa. 28: 1-8; Rom. 14: 21

1 And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took each of them his censer, and put fire therein, and laid incense thereon, and offered strange fire before Jehovah, which he had not commanded them.

2 And there came forth fire from before Jehovah, and devoured them, and they died before Jehovah.

8 And Jehovah spake unto Aaron, saying,

9 Drink no wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tent of meeting, that ye die not: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations:

10 And that ye may make a distinction between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean;

11 And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which Jehovah hath spoken unto them by Moses.

4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine;  
 Nor for princes to say, Where is strong drink?



- 5 Lest they drink, and forget the law,  
And pervert the justice due to any that is afflicted.

1 Woe to the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim, and to the fading flower of his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley of them that are overcome with wine!

2 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one; as a tempest of hail, a destroying storm, as a tempest of mighty waters overflowing, will he cast down to the earth with the hand.

3 The crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim shall be trodden under foot:

4 And the fading flower of his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be as the first-ripe fig before the summer; which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.

5 In that day will Jehovah of hosts become a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people;

6 And a spirit of justice to him that sitteth in judgment, and strength to them that turn back the battle at the gate.

7 And even these reel with wine, and stagger with strong drink; the priest and the prophet reel with strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they stagger with strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

8 For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.

21 It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise."* (Prov. 20: 1.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 28: 1-4, 7.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

August 23.	M.	-----	The Sin of National Leaders (Lev. 10: 1-11)
August 24.	T.	-----	Warning against Wine (Prov. 23: 29-35)
August 25.	W.	-----	Drunkness Condemned (Isa. 28: 1-8)
August 26.	T.	-----	Sobriety Commended (1 Thess. 5: 1-11)
August 27.	F.	-----	The Two Paths (Prov. 4: 10-19)
August 28.	S.	-----	Social Responsibility (1 Cor. 8: 1-13)
August 29.	S.	-----	The True Christian Policy (1 Cor. 10: 23-33)

### THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, the time of the different references of our lesson was as follows: Lev. 10: 1, 2, 8-11, 1490 B.C. It is not known when the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs was written. The time in which Isaiah did most of his prophesying was probably between 735 B.C. and 713 B.C. How long he continued to prophesy is not known. Paul wrote the letter to the Romans about A.D. 58.

*Places.*—The Hebrews were still in camp before Mount Sinai when Nadab and Abihu died; Solomon reigned and wrote in Jerusalem; Isaiah was a resident of Jerusalem; Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans at Corinth.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, the priests, the rulers, Isaiah, the people of the kingdom of Israel, Paul, and the Roman brethren.

*Lesson Links.*—The family of Aaron was selected to be the priestly family. Aaron was of the tribe of Levi, and the brother of Moses. Hence, not all of the tribes of Levi were priests. Aaron had four sons, namely, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. Aaron became the first high priest. His four sons became priests. (See Ex. 28: 1-5.) The eighth chapter of Leviticus tells of their induction into their offices as priests. Their first official acts are recorded in the ninth chapter of Leviticus. After the priests had performed their required services, Moses and Aaron blessed the people, "and the glory of Jehovah appeared unto all the people. And there came forth fire



from before Jehovah, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat; and when all the people saw it, they shouted, and fell on their faces." Unfortunately their great rejoicing was broken up by sin.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### The Sin and Death of Nadab and Abihu (Verses 1, 2)

"And Nadab and Abihu . . . offered strange fire before Jehovah, which he had not commanded them." For their deed they were devoured by fire. What impulse or idea moved Nadab and Abihu to do this unauthorized thing is not revealed. And there has been a lot of speculation as to what they really did. But why worry about that? Whether their sin consisted in using fire other than that obtained from the altar, or whether they offered their incense at a time not commanded, or whether they went into the most holy place, is of little importance to us. The thing we do know is that they performed an act of worship, or service, which Jehovah had not commanded them. The things required had been attended to, as we learn from the preceding chapter. These two priests presumed to perform an act of worship on their own responsibility—an act for which they had no authority. Their deed was much like that of King Saul, when, instead of doing what God commanded, he planned to make a great sacrifice to Jehovah. Jehovah informed Saul that obedience was better than sacrifice. (1 Sam. 15: 1-23.) To perform an act as worship which Jehovah has not commanded is will worship. It is also in reality presumption—it is presuming that a human being can improve on God's arrangement. It would be a tedious task to undertake to point out all the things which professed Christians have added to their worship and service—things which God has not commanded them. "This then is the first lesson of this tragic occurrence. We have to do with a God who is very jealous; who will be worshiped as he wills, or not at all. Nor can we complain. If God be such a being as we are taught in the holy scripture, it must be his inalienable right to determine and prescribe how he will be served. And a second lesson, scarcely less evident, that with God, intention of good, though it palliate, cannot excuse disobedience where he has once made known his will. No one can imagine that Nadab and Abihu meant wrong; but for all that, for their sin they died." (An Exposition of the Bible.) The next section of our lesson may throw some light on the cause for Nadab's and Abihu's rashness.

#### Priests on Duty Prohibited from Drinking (Verses 8-11)

The demand made in these verses seems to have grown out of the sin and death of Nadab and Abihu, for it immediately follows that event, and indicates that the rashness of Nadab and Abihu grew out of their having been drinking intoxicants. The reason assigned for the demand also lends support to that idea. Jehovah said to Aaron, "Drink no wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tent of meeting, that ye die not." So far as this prohibition goes, it only prohibited their being under the influence of intoxicants while they officiated as priests. At such times they were to abstain entirely from strong drink, and this was a perpetual requirement for the priests. But the reason assigned for their



abstinence at such times will apply, so it seems, to all Christians—"that ye may make a distinction between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean; and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which Jehovah hath spoken unto them by Moses." The holy things were the things God had ordained; the common were all the other things, all things which men do without authority. Intoxicants blunt the judgment, so that the priests would be likely to do things not commanded. Later Jehovah said of the city of Jerusalem, "Her priests have done violence to my law, and have profaned my holy things." An explanation was immediately given as to how they had done violence to God's law and profaned his holy things: "They have made no distinction between the holy and the common, neither have they caused men to discern between the unclean and the clean." (Ezek. 22: 26.) To bring into the worship things not authorized, as did Nadab and Abihu, is to profane the whole worship.

### Strong Drink Not for Rulers (Prov. 31: 4, 5)

A man who is under the influence of strong drink makes a poor showing at governing himself, if he is able to do so at all. Certainly a man who is not able to govern himself would be utterly unfitted for governing others. People are in a deplorable condition when those whose duty it is to make and enforce the laws are addicted to strong drink. Strong drink is not for kings and princes—not for any officer of the law. But bring the matter closer home. Parents are governors in their own homes, or should be. They cannot properly govern the home if they are given to indulging in strong drink. Children who have drunken parents are also in a deplorable condition. A drunkard would not be put in charge of a business concern, nor in charge even of a freight train. He should not be in charge of an automobile on the highway. A drunkard is unfit to rule anything.

### The Drunkards of Ephraim (Isa. 28: 1-4)

After the kingdom was divided during the reign of Rehoboam, ten tribes followed Jeroboam, the revolting tribes were called the Kingdom of Israel. Sometimes that kingdom was referred to as Ephraim, because Ephraim was the dominant tribe in that kingdom. (See such references as Isa. 7: 2, 5, 8, 9; 11: 13.) In the section of our lesson which we are now considering, Ephraim stands for the kingdom of the ten tribes. At the time of our lesson Ephraim had sunk low in wickedness, and was carried into captivity by the Assyrians before the death of Isaiah. They had become utterly unfit to continue as a nation. That kingdom, like many other kingdoms, fell as a result of its own corruption. It seems that one of the chief sources of corruption in Ephraim was drunkenness. They began their downward plunge, when, under the leadership of Jeroboam, they turned from the worship of Jehovah to the worship of idols. (1 Kings 12: 25-33.) But not all of the people of Jeroboam's kingdom worshiped his idols. But the kingdom, as a whole, went from bad to worse till, in Isaiah's day, its cup of iniquity was full. The glorious beauty of Ephraim was now as a fading flower; it had become a nation of drunkards, fit only for destruction. Jehovah had a mighty one, who would come against Ephraim like a mighty storm of hail, wind, and rain, and



the kingdom would fall. This strong hand with which Jehovah would cast them down to the earth was the king of Assyria. (Isa. 8: 7.)

*Drunkenness Not Their Only Sin.*—By reading the account of the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel as related in 2 Kings 17: 1-18, it will be seen that drunkenness was not the sole cause, nor even the major cause, for idolatry; and when Jehovah sent prophets to them, they would not hear. "They forsook all the commandments of Jehovah their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made an Asherah, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger. Therefore Jehovah was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight." Even a fuller account of the sins of the kingdom of Israel is given by the prophet Hosea, especially, from the first of the seventh chapter through the thirteenth chapter. But Ephraim would be destroyed by a greedy enemy, like one hastily devoured the first ripe fruit. Because people now can buy ripe fruit any season of the year, we fail to realize how hungry people then became for ripe fruit, and how greedily the first ripe fig was devoured; and so we miss the full force of Isaiah's comparison.

### A Faithful Residue (Verses 5, 6)

Even during the days of the reign of the notorious Ahab, not all of the people of the kingdom of Israel were corrupt, though it seemed so to Elijah. Seven thousand had not bowed the knee to Baal. (1 Kings 19: 9-18.) But it appears that Isaiah refers more particularly to the kingdom at the time of the downfall of Ephraim. Hezekiah was making heroic efforts to reform the kingdom of Judah. To all who really sought to do the will of the Lord, Jehovah was a diadem of beauty. To the righteous judges, Jehovah was a spirit of justice. He is strength to them that fight his battles. But to the wicked and profane, there is nothing in him desirable; to them he is a consuming fire. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

### The Repulsiveness of the Drunkard (Verses 7, 8)

See the drunkard as he reels and staggers along the street, unmindful of the spectacle he is making of himself. See the drunken driver of an automobile as his body sways to and fro, his automobile likewise. He is too drunk to know the danger he is to himself and others. The government authorized some one to sell him the liquor that makes him either a disgusting spectacle or a menace. Though Hezekiah worked some reforms, he did not save the nation. When priests and prophets reeled with strong drink, the nation was foregone. "They err in vision, they stumble in judgment." Their vomit left no place clean.

### Abstinence for the Sake of Others (Rom. 14: 21)

A Christian must regard his influence. What he considers harmless might lead another to sin. The man who knew that an idol was nothing thought he could eat meat that had been sacrificed to an idol. He ate it as food with no thought of honoring the idol. But a brother might think he was doing it to honor the idol, and so be led to eat in



honor of the idol. And so the fancied liberty and strength of one causes the downfall of another. The principle holds good as to strong drink. It is good to refrain from anything that might cause another to fall. We should do all we can to make it as easy as possible for others to do right.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Men are inclined to be lenient toward one who commits a crime while under the influence of strong drink; but why should they be? Such a one has really committed two offenses. He committed an offense by getting drunk. So far as the record shows, Jehovah excuses no crime because of drunkenness.

The personal liberty plea has very little weight now as an excuse for drinking. The more complex civilization becomes, the more our personal liberties are curtailed. Where one's conduct endangers the life or property of others, or even interferes with their comfort, the plea for personal liberty goes for naught. Even the man who pleads the right to drink on the grounds of personal liberty knows that such plea has its limitations. He merely wants it to apply to himself, and not to the engineer of the train he is riding on, nor to the one behind the wheel of the automobile in which he is riding.

Nadab and Abihu added to the worship God had appointed for the day. To the average person the burning of incense when God had not commanded them to do so would seem to be a small matter. "God had not said, Thou shalt not burn incense in such manner." Certainly not; but he had given a daily program for the tabernacle services. Nadab and Abihu went beyond that—made an addition of their own. That was not a small matter. The mother says to the child, "Hand me that spool of thread." The child replies, "I'll not do it." A spool of thread is a small thing, but the impudence and rebellion in the child's heart were not a small thing. Let us therefore not deceive ourselves into rebellion by saying, "It is such a small matter." Disobedience to God is never a small matter, and people can disobey in small matters as well as in great matters.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The responsibility of religious leaders.  
 God judges the high and the low without partiality.  
 The sin of adding to God's requirements.  
 How corruption destroys a nation.  
 The menace of the drunkard.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.  
 Who were selected as priests, and to what tribe did they belong?  
 Give the names of Aaron's sons.

#### *Verses 1, 2*

Who were Nadab and Abihu?  
 How did death come to them, and why?

What was the nature of their sin?  
 What is will worship?  
 Name some things people do in worship which God has not commanded.  
 What two lessons may we gain from Nadab and Abihu's sin and death?

#### *Verses 8-11*

To what may the rashness of Nadab and Abihu be attributed?  
 What words seem to so indicate?  
 What were priests prohibited from doing?

What reasons were assigned for their abstaining from strong drink?  
 What were the holy and the common?  
 Read and discuss Ezek. 22: 26.

*Prov. 31: 4, 5*

What is said of rulers and princes as to strong drink?  
 Why should rulers not be drinkers?  
 How may we bring this lesson closer home?

*Isa. 28: 1-4*

What does Isaiah mean by Ephraim?  
 What does Isaiah indicate as to the condition of Ephraim?  
 When did the kingdom of Israel begin its downward course?  
 What striking figure did Isaiah use to describe their condition?

What figure did he use to describe their overthrow?  
 Who was the strong hand?  
 Of what other sins were they guilty?

*Verses 5, 6*

Who were the residue?  
 To whom was Jehovah a diadem?  
 To whom was he strength?  
 What is he to the wicked?

*Verses 7, 8*

Describe the repulsiveness of drunkards.

*Rom. 14: 21*

Read and discuss Rom. 14: 21.  
 Discuss the reflections.

*Lesson X—September 5, 1937*

**GOD REQUIRES SOCIAL JUSTICE**

*Lev. 19: 9-18, 32-37*

9 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

10 And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather the fallen fruit of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am Jehovah your God.

11 Ye shall not steal; neither shall ye deal falsely, nor lie one to another.

12 And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, and profane the name of thy God: I am Jehovah.

13 Thou shalt not oppress thy neighbor, nor rob him: the wages of a hired servant shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.

14 Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind; but thou shalt fear thy God: I am Jehovah.

15 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor.

16 Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor: I am Jehovah.

17 Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor, and not bear sin because of him.

18 Thou shalt not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am Jehovah.

32 Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and thou shalt fear thy God: I am Jehovah.

33 And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not do him wrong.

34 The stranger that sojourneth with you shall be unto you as the home-born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt: I am Jehovah your God.

35 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in measures of length, of weight, or of quantity.

36 Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.

37 And ye shall observe all my statutes, and all mine ordinances, and do them: I am Jehovah.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." (Luke 6: 31.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Amos 8: 4-8.



## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

August 30.	M.	.....	Respect for Parents (Lev. 19: 9-18, 32-37)
August 31.	T.	.....	Social Obligations (Lev. 19: 9-18)
September 1.	W.	.....	Love to Enemies (Luke 6: 27-38)
September 2.	T.	.....	The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-26)
September 3.	F.	.....	A Plea for Christian Justice (Phile. 8-20)
September 4.	S.	.....	The Lord's Judgment upon the Unjust (Amos 8: 4-8)
September 5.	S.	.....	Our Duty toward Offenders (Matt. 18: 21-35)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—1491 or 1490 B.C. As the children of Israel left Sinai about one month and twenty days after the tabernacle was set up, it is probable that many of the precepts of the law were delivered during the ten months in which the tabernacle was being prepared. In their low state of development, the Hebrews would need to have these numerous precepts announced and repeated over and over for days and days.

*Place.*—Before Mount Sinai.

*Persons.*—Jehovah and the children of Israel.

*Lesson Links.*—It will appear strange to the thoughtful student that the precepts of the law of Moses should be the text of the lesson under the heading, "God Requires Social Justice." The student may ask, "Does God now require us to obey the precepts of the law of Moses?" The answer must be, No. But there is this about the laws governing our relations to one another: Many of these requirements are based on inherent principles of justice and right. The things they require are right in the very nature of things. That is true of the moral precepts of the present lesson. However, Jesus taught a higher standard of social relations than was taught in the law of Moses, as will be seen by reading Matt. 5: 21-48. What God now requires in the matter of social justice, as well as in all other matters, is found in the New Testament. But God required the Hebrews to deal justly, and we certainly should not do less. The chapter of our lesson opens up with Jehovah's charge to Moses to say to the people, "Ye shall be holy; for I Jehovah your God am holy." As Jehovah was holy, so must his people be; and the design of the precepts of the chapter is to promote that required holiness. The first injunction required every man to fear his parents. This respect for parents should continue all through life. Paul's injunction to children to obey their parents in the Lord, and thus to honor their fathers and mothers, is of binding force so long as the parents live. The next injunction required that they serve Jehovah, and not idols. It will be noticed that each group of related commands in our lesson closes with the statement, "I am Jehovah."

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## Consideration of the Poor Required (Verses 9, 10)

In cutting grain by hand with a small reaphook, as they did in ancient times, it does not seem that much grain would be left. Some grain was to be left in the corners of the fields. The poor would get very little in their gleanings. Some idea may be gathered from Ruth's gleanings in the field of Boaz. She fared much better than the usual gleaner; for by the express command of Boaz the reapers whom she followed purposely dropped some of the grain for her, yet at the end of the day she had about an ephah of barley, or about three



pecks. (Ruth 2: 14-17.) They were also to leave some grapes for the poor and the stranger. Their fruit that fell to the ground was to be left. These requirements would help to feed the poor, and at the same time cultivate in the owner of the field and vineyard thought for the poor. It would teach him to be not too grasping. The New Testament teaching is superior to the precepts of these verses of our lesson. Read how generously the church at Jerusalem cared for the needy. The brethren at Jerusalem wished that Paul and Barnabas would remember the poor, which Paul was zealous to do. (Gal. 2: 9, 10.) "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need." (Eph. 4: 28.) Give to the needy rather than send them off to the field to gather the scraps you have left. (Read also Matt. 25: 31-46.)

### Honesty and Truthfulness Required (Verses 11, 12)

The requirements of these verses are closely related, and also bear some relation to the two preceding verses. If a man does not cultivate some generous feelings, but cultivates stinginess, he is liable to become so greedy that he will steal. If he does not steal outright, he is likely to deal falsely, so as to make unjust gains in his dealings with others. If he steals, he will lie to cover it up. If he has a disposition to deal falsely for gain, he will lie for an advantage. Such a man, if brought before the court for fraud or for stealing, will swear falsely, and in so doing profane the name of God. And so greediness, or stinginess, may lead to a train of other sins. But what saith the New Testament? "Let him that stole steal no more." (Eph. 4: 28.) "Nor lie one to another." "Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor: for we are members one of another." (Eph. 4: 25.) "Swear not at all." (Matt. 5: 34.) "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by the heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; that ye fall not under judgment." (Jas. 5: 12.)

### Oppression and Violence Prohibited (Verses 13, 14)

If a man was so situated that he could take advantage of his neighbor to his own profit and to his neighbor's hurt, the language of these verses prohibited his doing so. There are numerous ways in which one man may oppress another. It is possible even to rob a man without using violence. Much needless oppression—oppression that amounts to robbery—has been indulged in by foreclosing mortgages, or collecting notes, when the person, given a little more time, could have saved himself. Another way of robbing a man is to take advantage of the fact that he must have work, and pay him less than his labor is worth. The wages of the hired man had to be paid promptly. This law of the wages is repeated and enlarged on in Deut. 24: 14, 15: "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy sojourners that are in thy land within thy gates: in his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it (for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it); lest he cry against thee unto Jehovah." And it would be a base, cowardly thing to curse the deaf. The blind man makes his way poorly at best—put no hindrance in his way. But



the spirit of helpfulness taught in the New Testament requires us to help the blind, or any other helpless person. To the wealthy, James 5: 4 says, "Behold, the hire of the laborers who mowed your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth out: and the cries of them that reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."

### **Righteous Judgment Required—Talebearing Prohibited (Verses 15, 16)**

"Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment." There was to be no partiality in rendering judgment. The judge was forbidden to cater to the rich. Men of power have a way of bringing pressure to bear on the court, that a poor and obscure man cannot have; and that power has, at times, been used unrighteously. The judge was not to be biased in favor of the mighty. Neither was he to favor a poor man in his cause. He must disregard the financial or social standing of both parties, and render a just judgment. There was, therefore, no grounds in this law for class prejudice. The man of might had his rights, and so did the poor man. Legal machinery must not be used to rob the rich, nor to oppress the poor. Right is right, no matter who are on opposite sides. It is said that the Hebrew word here translated "talebearer" is elsewhere translated "slanderer." But there is little difference. A talebearer is a gossip peddler. He peddles to the neighbors what each said about the other, and puts the worst construction on what is said. The pity is that people will pay any attention to such a social monster, for such a person means no good to anyone. And yet people will give ear to such tales, and pass them on. The expression, "Neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor" is somewhat obscure, but its connection seems to indicate that a person was not to make an effort to procure a death sentence against his neighbor. A witness was required to tell the truth, but a witness who had a grudge against his neighbor might withhold truth that would free his neighbor.

### **Hatred Prohibited—Love Enjoined (Verses 17, 18)**

Here is a precept that goes deeper than outward conduct. "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart." Hate in the heart poisons the whole fountain of life. If cherished, it leads to bad deeds. But hatred may be banished from the heart, and yet the condition be not what it should be. A person might be indifferent toward his neighbor—take no thought of him one way or the other. "But thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But could a person love his neighbor, and obey the injunction, "Thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor?" The command to love the neighbor required a person to do good to his neighbor. If the neighbor needed rebuking, love required the rebuke. A person was required not to take vengeance. Vengeance should be taken by the proper authorities. Nor was he allowed to bear a grudge against his neighbor. Jesus said, "If thy brother sin, rebuke him." (Luke 17: 3.) Paul charged Timothy to "reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching." (2 Tim. 4: 2.) Again, "Who-soever hateth his brother is a murderer." (1 John 3: 15.) "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." (1 John 4: 20.)

### Honor the Aged (Verse 32)

Jehovah would have the young to have a tender regard for the aged. Nothing shows a refinement of heart and mind more than courtesy and consideration for the aged. The prevalent lack of this refinement grows out of the fact that children are not trained to reverence their parents. Paul charged Timothy: "Rebuke not an elder, but exhort him as a father; the younger men as brethren: the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, in all purity." (1 Tim. 5: 1.) The connection indicates that elder here merely means an older man. And Timothy was no boy at this time. Fifteen years before this, when he began his labors with Paul, he "was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium." (Acts 16: 1, 2.) When Paul wrote that letter, Timothy could not have been much under thirty-five years of age.

### Generous Treatment of Sojourners Required (Verses 33, 34)

Any but Hebrews were strangers. Such could own no land in Canaan. If any lived there, he was a sojourner. He must not be mistreated, but was to be treated as if he were one of their own number, "And thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt: I am Jehovah your God." Two things they were to keep in mind; namely, that they also had been sojourners, and that Jehovah was their God. They must deal fairly and justly with the sojourner, but must not go after his gods. It is hard for some people to be courteous to people of other religious groups. On the other hand, it is hard for some to be gentle and forbearing as they should be without becoming too soft and tolerant toward error. To be fair and gentle toward all, and yet firm and uncompromising, is too rare a combination.

### Just Measures and Weights Demanded (Verses 35-37)

In connection with these verses, the student should read Deut. 25: 13-16. A man was not to have two sets of weights and measures, one by which to buy and the other by which to sell. His weights and measures were to be just. The memory that Jehovah brought them out of Egypt should cause them, out of gratitude to him, to observe all his statutes.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

One fact is made to stand out clearly in the New Testament, namely, that the law of Moses, with all its legal enactments, all its forms, ceremonies, and penalties, ended at the cross; and it is surprising that any one who professes to believe the New Testament should think otherwise. If interested, read Rom. 7: 1-6; 2 Cor. 3: 4-18; Gal. 3: 11-22; 4: 21-31; Eph. 2: 14-16; Col. 2: 14. A thoughtful reading of the letter to the Hebrews will convince anyone that the Old Covenant passed away, and that we now have a new and living way.

But let us not overlook this point. There are certain fundamental principles of right that inhere in the very nature of our being, and of our relations to one another. Dissipation and drunkenness would be hurtful to a person, even if there were no statutes against such indulgences. There are certain moral principles binding on us on



account of our relations to one another. It cannot be shown that Cain violated any revealed law in murdering his brother, yet he sinned in doing so. It can be shown that the seventh-day Sabbath belongs to the class of moral laws in which a thing is binding on account of the nature of things. It was binding on the Hebrews solely because of God's law, and was therefore binding on no other people.

All people have the same natural rights. A man's life and property are his; no other person has any natural rights to them; but a man may forfeit his rights to his property, and even may forfeit the right to live. But in the nature of our relations to one another, murder, robbery, stealing, oppression, and all such things, are wrong. Hence, all the schemes that men resort to in order to get the better of their fellows are wrong, even if there is no specific law defining and condemning every such deed.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Moral laws and positive laws.

Was the Sabbath law moral or positive? And is it still binding?

The law as a schoolmaster or tutor.

The New Testament superior to the Old.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.

Does God now require obedience to the law of Moses?

On what are moral precepts based?

What contrast did Jesus make between his teaching and the law of Moses?

With what charge does the chapter of our lesson begin?

What was enjoined as duty to parents?

What does Paul say to children?

### *Verses 9, 10*

Give the substance of verses 9 and 10. What indicates that the gleaner was scant?

How would this law influence the character of the owner of field or vineyard?

In what way is New Testament teaching superior to the precepts of these verses?

### *Verses 11, 12*

Give the substance of verses 11 and 12. To what do stinginess and greed lead? What leads to telling lies?

On these points, what is said in the New Testament?

### *Verses 13, 14*

Give the substance of verses 13 and 14. Name some ways in which one may now oppress another.

What was said about paying the hired man?

### *Verses 15, 16*

Give the substance of verses 15 and 16. On what basis should judgment be rendered?

What is a talebearer?

### *Verses 17, 18*

Give the substance of verses 17 and 18. Instead of hate, what?

How can rebuking and loving go together?

What is said in New Testament about rebuking?

What does it say about hating?

### *Verse 32*

Give the substance of this verse.

Why is respect for the aged so lacking today?

What charge did Paul give Timothy on this point?

How old must Timothy have been at that time?

### *Verses 33, 34*

Give the substance of verses 33 and 34. Who was the stranger?

What two things must they keep in mind?

In what way do some Christians fail to be gentle and forbearing?

How do some fail to be firm?

### *Verses 35-37*

What is said of weights and measures? How would they cheat with two sets of weights and measures?

What does honesty require?

Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson XI—September 12, 1937

## A NATION NEEDS RELIGIOUS HOMES

Deut. 6: 4, 5; 11: 18-25

4 Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah:

5 And thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

18 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul; and ye shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes.

19 And ye shall teach them your children, talking of them, when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

20 And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates:

21 That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which Jehovah sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of the heavens above the earth.

22 For if ye shall diligently keep all this commandment which I command you, to do it, to love Jehovah your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him:

23 Then will Jehovah drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves.

24 Every place whereon the sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the hinder sea shall be your border.

25 There shall no man be able to stand before you: Jehovah your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath spoken unto you.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it.”* (Prov. 22: 6.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—2 Tim. 1: 3-6.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

September 6.	M.	Teaching the Bible in the Home (Deut. 6: 1-9)
September 7.	T.	Obedience to the Laws of God (Deut. 11: 18-25)
September 8.	W.	Gentleness in the Home (Prov. 15: 1-9)
September 9.	T.	Contentment in the Home (Prov. 17: 1-8)
September 10.	F.	Spiritual Cooperation (Eph. 6: 1-9)
September 11.	S.	The Church Family (Luke 2: 41-51)
September 12.	S.	Godly Influence (2 Tim. 1: 3-6)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1451 B.C.; according to Hales, 1609 B.C. The speeches recorded in the book of Deuteronomy began on the first day of the eleventh month in the fortieth year after the children of Israel departed out of the land of Egypt (Deut. 1: 3), and were finished within a few weeks.

*Place.*—The plains of Moab, or the Arabah. “These are the words which Moses spake unto all Israel beyond the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah over against Suph, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Di-zahab.” (Deut. 1: 1.) “Beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law.” (Deut. 1: 5.) Arabah means an arid region. This district is also called “the plains of Moab.” (Num. 33: 50; 35: 1; 36: 13.) Before the time of our lesson, the Amorites had driven the Moabites south of the Arnon, and had possession of the country between the Arnon and the Jabbok. (Num. 21: 26.) Moses had to conquer these Amorites before they could pass through their land. (Num. 21: 21-26.)



*Persons.*—Jehovah, Moses, and the children of Israel.

*Lesson Links.*—Deuteronomy means "the repetition of the law." It is the name given to the fifth book of Moses by the Greek-speaking Alexandrian Jews. It appears that the law had been given in full at Mount Sinai, but forty years had passed, and only the very young of that time were still living, excepting Caleb and Joshua. Since the law was given, others had been born and had grown to maturity. The law was repeated for the benefit of all these, and some details were added. When the children of Israel left Mount Sinai, they journeyed by easy stages to Kadesh, or Kadesh-barnea, in the wilderness of Paran. "It lies forty miles south of Beer-sheba and one hundred and sixty-five miles northeast of Horeb, immediately below the southern border of Palestine." Here twelve spies were sent to spy out the land of promise. Ten of these spies reported that the people of the land were too powerful to be driven out; but Caleb and Joshua begged that they go up at once and take the land. The people sided with the majority report, and murmured against Moses and Aaron. They even blamed Jehovah for their troubles. "And wherefore doth Jehovah bring us unto this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will be a prey: were it not better for us to return into Egypt?" They thought they knew better what was good for them than Jehovah did. For their rebellion Jehovah condemned them to wander in the wilderness forty years, till all who were over twenty years old when they were numbered at Sinai should die, excepting Caleb and Joshua. (Num. 13: 14.) Had it not been for this great sin, they would have been in the promised land within the year they left Sinai; but as it was, they had to spend thirty-eight more years in the wilderness, moving from place to place, wherever pastureage could be found. When the time drew near for them to move into Canaan, they were led by Jehovah around the borders of Edom and Moab. Moses sent messengers to Sihon king of Heshbon, king of the southern Amorite kingdom, asking the privilege of passing through his country, promising to travel the king's highway and to disturb nothing. Sihon refused and made war on the children of Israel, but was thoroughly defeated. (Num. 21: 21-32; Deut. 2: 26-37.) Then in the plains of Moab, east of the Jordan, over against Jericho, Moses delivered the words that make up the book of Deuteronomy.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Israel Exhorted to Hear Jehovah (Verses 1-3)

Whether Moses meant to make a distinction between "the commandment, the statutes, and the ordinances," or used the three words to give emphasis, is not clear. Some have thought that "the commandment" referred to "the decalogue"; "the statutes" to "the ceremonial laws"; and "the ordinances" to the "moral requirements." Jehovah had commanded Moses to teach them to the children of Israel, and gave the reason for teaching them—"that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it; that thou mightest fear Jehovah thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life." The wording of the command, and the reason for it, shows clearly that it applied only to the children of Israel. Yet some far-reaching principles are set forth. The people had to be taught.



People cannot keep commands if they know nothing of the commands. And that is as true today as it was in the days of Moses. To enjoy the rest Jesus provides, we must take upon us his yoke, and learn of him. (Matt. 11: 28-30.) Some people stop their ears to keep from hearing what they should do. (Matt. 13: 15.) And if people do not fear Jehovah, they do not obey him. To fear Jehovah is to stand in awe of him—to recognize our own helplessness in the presence of his might and glory. The children of Israel were to fear Jehovah and keep his commandments that their days might be prolonged. Their enjoying the promises Jehovah had made to them concerning the land that flowed with milk and honey depended upon their doing what Jehovah had commanded them. This fact is stated in even more emphatic language in Deut. 28: 15-68.

### The Great Commandment of the Law (Verses 4, 5)

Before announcing the great commandment of the law, Moses earnestly calls on Israel to hear—to give heed. He then announces the authority back of this commandment, as well as all other commandments of the law. "Jehovah our God is one Jehovah." The American Standard Version has in its marginal readings several other possible translations of the Hebrew here, but they all amount to practically the same thing, namely, that Jehovah the God of the Hebrews was "one Jehovah," and not a number of gods, as some of the nations had. This one Jehovah is the one Supreme Being, and demands their entire devotion and service. He would have no rivals; he would not have their affections divided between him and other gods. "Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Surrounded by nations that had false gods, there was danger that Israel might drift into idolatry. Perhaps you have been reading this command with the idea that Moses was emphasizing how much they should love Jehovah; but that is not the point of emphasis. The who and not how much is the point of emphasis. If they loved Jehovah only, they would have no other gods to whom they might be tempted to devote some of their love. When a certain lawyer asked Jesus, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets." (Matt. 22: 35-40.) It will be noticed that neither of these two commandments is found in the ten commandments. If a man loves Jehovah supremely, if he puts Jehovah first, he will do all that Jehovah commands; and if he loves his neighbor as himself, he will treat his neighbor right. Hence, the ten commandments and all the other commandments are based on these two commandments.

### Teaching Their Children Required (Verses 6-9)

The Hebrew was commanded to keep God's word upon his heart. He was not to allow the knowledge and the memory of it to grow dim. This required a frequent reading of it or hearing it read. Even that which we know will grow dim and lose some of its force if the memory is not frequently refreshed. Hence, Peter said, "This is now, beloved,



the second epistle that I write unto you; and in both of them I stir up your sincere mind by putting you in remembrance; that ye should remember the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour through your apostles." (2 Pet. 3: 1, 2.) And, too, the word must be fresh in a person's mind, if he would be successful in teaching it to others. And it was bound upon every Hebrew to teach his children. Teaching children in a Hebrew home at that time was not a very complicated matter. The home was the school. Children did not come home from school as they do now, loaded down with lessons to prepare for the next day, leaving them little time to listen to the instruction of their parents. For centuries after the law was given there was not much else in a Hebrew home to study but the law of the Lord. And there were not so many things of an entertaining nature to attract the attention of the Hebrew child away from the law of Jehovah. The Hebrew was required to be diligent in teaching his children the precepts and commandments of the law. In the home, morning and evening, he was to teach his children the law of Jehovah, and also when he walked by the way. And it is just as necessary today that children be taught the word of God. It was a blessing to Timothy that he had known the holy scriptures from childhood. (1 Tim. 1: 3-5.) "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6: 4.) The eighth verse required that their hands and eyes be guided by the commandments of God as if banned by them. Later Jews, mistaking the beautiful significance of this verse, wore written portions of the law on their hands and between their eyes, as amulets, or charms. And thus the charge that the law be a constant guide to hands and eyes was converted into a superstition. But even now some people imagine that a Bible in their home is worth something to them, even if they do not read it; and that is a sort of superstition.

### The Duties of Parents Repeated (Deut. 11: 18-21)

These verses are a repetition of what we have just studied. The requirements were repeated by Moses, so as to impress them firmly on the minds and hearts of the children of Israel. Their happiness, their welfare, and their continued dwelling in the promised land depended upon their diligence in observing all the requirements of Jehovah. The results of obedience are set forth in verse twenty-one, as a motive to stir in them diligence in doing God's will. Moses informed them that, if they did not obey Jehovah, they would be carried out of their land, and would "become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword" among all the people where they went. The Jew today is a living witness to the folly of disobedience. The effort to curb the crime wave should begin in the home; and not much will be done in the home, unless children are impressed with the truth that they are personally responsible to God, who holds in his hands the destiny of all things. The tragedy today is that the Bible has been ruled out of child training. Restore it to its proper place in the education of every child, and the crime wave will recede. Till then no permanent improvement can possibly be made.

### The Promised Results of Obedience (Verses 22-25)

The children of Israel were soon to pass over the Jordan into the land of promise. Moses would not be with them, but he desired that

they prosper in their new home. He sets before them plainly the conditions on which they might continue in that land and prosper. It would be a fatal mistake for them to think they could disregard Jehovah and his commands, and still prosper. If they gave him whole-hearted obedience, he would give them his richest blessings. He would be with them, giving them wisdom and strength to overcome the nations greater than they were. In obedience to him and by his help, they would drive out of Canaan the powerful nations dwelling therein. They would be able to possess, not only Canaan, but every place whereon they set the sole of their feet—"from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the hinder sea shall be your border." No man would be able to stand before them. To encourage Joshua, this promise was made to him: "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." (Josh. 1: 5.) So long as they obeyed Jehovah, the people, wherever they went, would dread and fear them.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

There are only two things that a person can do with a command—he can obey it or disobey it. One whose heart is right toward God will do whatever God commands him to do.

Jesus said, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." (John 14: 15.) Again, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." (John 14: 21.) Again, "He that loveth me not keepeth not my words." (John 14: 24.) Obedience is love in action. Hence, it is said, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." (1 John 5: 3.)

God has always blessed the obedient and punished the disobedient. He saved righteous Noah, and destroyed the disobedient sinners. He blessed faithful Abraham. He blessed those who looked on the serpent of brass. (Num. 21: 4-9.) The same principle holds good under the gospel dispensation. The interested student can see that this is true by reading such passages as Matt. 7: 21-27; Rom. 2: 4-11; 2 Thess. 1: 7-10; Heb. 5: 8, 9.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- What the two great commands of the law required.
- The need of the Bible in character building.
- The blessings of obedience.
- The evils of disobedience.

### QUESTIONS

- Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.
- Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

- Give the time.
- Give what information you can about the place.
- Name the persons.
- What does Deuteronomy mean?
- Why the special need of repeating the law?

- Tell about sending the spies, and the result.
- How long were they condemned to wander, and why?
- How did they get through the territory of the Amorites?

#### *Verses 1-3*

- What were they to teach their children, and why?
- Discuss the need of knowing the commandments.
- What is it to fear Jehovah?



*Verses 4, 5*

Whom did Moses exhort Israel to hear?  
 Whom were they to love?  
 Discuss this great command.  
 Discuss the incident when Jesus quoted this command.  
 What command was next in greatness?  
 How are all other commands based on these two?

*Verses 6-9*

What was meant by keeping the word upon the heart?  
 Why is it necessary to refresh the memory?  
 On this point what does Peter say?

Name some present-day hindrances to teaching the Bible.  
 How diligent were Hebrews to be in teaching their children?  
 On this point what does Paul exhort?  
 How did later Jews misapply verse 8?

*Deut. 11: 18-21*

Upon what did the happiness and welfare of the Hebrews depend?  
 If they did not obey Jehovah, what then?  
 What would do most to check crime?

*Verses 22-25*

Read and discuss verses 22-25.  
 Discuss the reflections.

*Lesson XII—September 19, 1937*

## CHOICES AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES IN A NATION'S LIFE

## Deut. 11: 8-12, 26-32

8 Therefore shall ye keep all the commandment which I command thee this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go over to possess it;

9 And that ye may prolong your days in the land, which Jehovah sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land flowing with milk and honey.

10 For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs;

11 But the land, whither ye go over to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven.

12 A land which Jehovah thy God careth for: the eyes of Jehovah thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.

26 Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse;

27 The blessing, if ye shall hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah your God, which I command you this day;

28 And the curse, if ye shall not hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.

29 And it shall come to pass, when Jehovah thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt set the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal.

30 Are they not beyond the Jordan, behind the way of the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites that dwell in the Arabah, over against Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh?

31 For ye are to pass over the Jordan to go in to possess the land which Jehovah your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein.

32 And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and the ordinances which I set before you this day.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Choose you this day whom ye will serve." (Josh. 24: 15.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Deut. 7: 6-11.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

September 13.	M.	Rewards of Obedience (Deut. 11: 8-12)
September 14.	T.	A Blessing or a Curse (Deut. 11: 26-32)
September 15.	W.	A King Chooses Wisdom (1 Kings 3: 4-14)
September 16.	T.	Choosing the True God (Ruth 1: 11-18)
September 17.	F.	A Nation's Wise Choice (Josh. 24: 14-19)
September 18.	S.	Jerusalem's Choice (Matt. 23: 37-39)
September 19.	S.	The New Jerusalem (Rev. 21: 1-7)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1451 B.C.; according to Hales, 1609 B.C.

*Place.*—The plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, Moses, and the children of Israel.

*Lesson Links.*—There are some things concerning which we have no choice. "A choice offers the opportunity, without compulsion, of choosing between two or more things." Nations are made up of individuals, and, like individuals, have the opportunity of choosing their course of action. Instinctively we recognize this, even though we try to be fatalists. All human responsibility is based on the fact that people are free to choose what they will do. In circumstances where there is no opportunity to choose what one will do, there can be no responsibility for what is done. Where different courses of action are possible, a man can choose which course he will follow, and so can a nation. Moses had two courses open before him. He could remain in the royal family of Egypt, and promote his own future interests; or he could forsake that family, and cast his lot with his enslaved people. He made his choice, and it was not made in a halfhearted way. "By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to share ill treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he looked unto the recompense of reward." (Heb. 11: 24-26.) All voluntary acts are prompted by motives, and the motive is not always selfish. If Moses had been moved by a fleshly or worldly motive, he would have remained in the royal family. Moses was human; a life of ease and luxury, with the prospects of the highest worldly honor, presented a powerful appeal to him. On the other hand were service, self-denial, and a constant worry; but he looked forward to the opportunity of helping his downtrodden race, and beyond that, to the richer blessings of Jehovah and the eternal reward. He chose not to be a timeserver.

As their leader and lawgiver, Moses greatly influenced the choices his people made and the courses they pursued. It is true of all nations that the leaders have much to do with shaping the policies and directing the courses of the nation. After Moses died, Joshua became the leader of the children of Israel. He led them in successful wars against the nations in the promised land. After they had subdued the land, and each tribe had been assigned its territory, Joshua called them together at Shechem. He there recounted to them what Jehovah had done for them, and added, "Now therefore fear Jehovah, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt; and serve ye Jehovah. And if it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah." (Josh. 24: 14, 15.) Here a nation was called on to make choice as to whether they would serve Jehovah or the gods of the nations; the people promptly answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake Jehovah, to serve other gods." Even now a nation can choose to recognize Jehovah in its affairs, or refuse to consider him at all. If a nation rejects him, it must suffer the consequences.



## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## Israel Called on to Obey Jehovah (Verses 8, 9)

The eighth verse begins with "therefore," which shows connection with the preceding verses. In these verses Moses recounts some of the great things which Jehovah had done in calling them out of Egypt and in leading them in their journeys—how he had destroyed the Egyptians and also the sinners of their own number. Because the Egyptians had perished for defying Jehovah, and some of their own number had perished for a like reason, it behooved those who were to cross over the river Jordan into the promised land to keep the commandments of Jehovah, lest they also perish. However, Jehovah gives every man and every nation their choice; he forces no one to serve him. But in serving Jehovah the children of Israel would be strong. He alone could give them strength to possess the land of promise, and then to maintain it against their enemies. "I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed." (Deut. 30: 19.) If the nation of Israel could not have chosen its own course of action, there would have been no use in warning them against disobedience, nor of promising them rewards for obedience. Hence, men and nations really choose their destiny when they choose their course of action.

*Israel Thoroughly Warned.*—No other nation in the making was ever so thoroughly taught, and warned, and exhorted, as was the nation of Israel. If they failed, it was because they deliberately chose to disregard Jehovah and his teaching. They were warned against all forms of moral corruption and against every form of idolatry, and were repeatedly exhorted to serve Jehovah and live. The life of the nation depended on their serving Jehovah.

## Canaan Not as Egypt (Verses 10-12)

Egypt was, and yet is, a productive land in the midst of desert wastes. It has been called the gift of the Nile; for the overflowing Nile fertilized the lands, and from it water was drawn for irrigation. "Where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs." In their smaller irrigation ditches and in the ditches in their growing crops, they could turn the water into other ditches or cause it to overflow on their growing crops by setting their foot in the ditch. It was a tedious process; and even more tedious and laborious was their method of getting the water from the river into their irrigation ditches. But Canaan was a land of hills and valleys, not so suited to irrigation; it was watered by the rains of heaven. In that land they would be free from the labor attending irrigation. Jehovah cared for that land, for it was the land he had selected for his chosen people. He would make that land productive so long as his people obeyed him. If they would choose to serve him, he would bless them abundantly. His eyes would be over them and over their land "from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year."

*Palestine Then and Now.*—Some skeptical writers of late years have sought to make it appear that Moses spoke extravagantly about that land. They base their charge on the land as it now is; but if a person would think a little, he would not make the charge. Hill land, not properly cared for, deteriorates rapidly. About thirty-four



centuries have passed since Moses praised that land. Even in this country of ours many once fertile fields are now worthless for cultivation. The remains of ancient cities and towns show that the land once supported vast numbers of people.

### 3 A Blessing and a Curse Set Before Israel (Verses 26-28)

"Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse." During their history, they experienced both the blessing and the curse, but whichever came upon them was of their own choosing.

*Motives.*—Jehovah treats people as rational beings, capable of choosing their own course of action. He has conferred upon man and nations the highest possible honor, the opportunity to decide for themselves their own course and destiny. But to induce men to choose the right course, he sets before them the highest possible motives. If there were no motives, there could be no intelligent choice; for there must be motive in every intelligent choice. To overcome the allurements of the world, God sets before man a blessing and a curse; both are powerful motives to induce right conduct. If the fear of punishment had not been a proper motive to induce people to do right, God would never have made any threats of punishment to move people to do right, nor would he have recorded the calamities that befell sinners to induce right living in others. When the children of Israel chose to forsake Jehovah for the gods of the nations around them, they suffered all sorts of calamities. After they were settled in their possessions in the land of Canaan, it was said of them: "And the people served Jehovah all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of Jehovah that he had wrought for Israel." (Judges 2: 7.) Then they soon fell to worshiping Baal and Ashtaroth, "the gods of the peoples that were round about them." For that Jehovah "sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies." (Judges 2: 11-15.) Their early history, as recorded in Judges, is a series of falls, punishments, and restorations. They did not remain true to Jehovah very long at any time during their history in Canaan. It seems strange that, with all their teaching and their experiences, they should so often choose the way of sin and rebellion. As the results of each such departure were so disastrous, it seems that they would have been warned and corrected by the dire results of their own folly. But so wayward are human beings that Jehovah's warnings and punishments are soon forgotten.

### 4 At Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal (Verses 29, 30)

Further directions concerning the matter contained in these verses are given in Deut. 27: 4-26. As Moses had not been in Canaan, he could know of Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal only as God had revealed them to him. When, in their conquest of the land of promise, the children of Israel reached Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, they were to make an altar of unhewn stones, and offer on it burnt offerings and peace offerings. The people were then to be divided into two companies; one company to be stationed on the side of Mount Gerizim, the other on the side of Mount Ebal. The blessings and the curses were to be read, and the people were to say, "Amen." The



fulfillment of these requirements is recorded in Josh. 8: 30-35. "About halfway between Shechem and the mouth of the valley in which it stands there is a deep, semicircular recess in the face of Mount Ebal, and a corresponding one precisely opposite to it in Mount Gerizim. . . . As soon as I saw it, I recognized it as the place of Joshua's reading. It has been asserted repeatedly by travelers that, although two men stationed on the opposite slopes of these two mountains are a mile apart, they can read so as to be heard by each other. We preferred to try the experiment in stricter accord with Joshua's example; so I took a position, Bible in hand, in the middle of the valley, while Brother Taylor and Frank, to represent six tribes, climbed halfway up the slope of Mount Gerizim; and Brother Earl, to represent the other six tribes, took a similar position on Mount Ebal. I read, and they were to pronounce the amen after each curse or blessing. Brother Taylor heard me distinctly, and I could hear his response. Brother Earl, though he could hear my voice, could not distinguish the words. This was owing to the fact that some terrace walls on the side of the mountain prevented him from ascending high enough, and the trees between me and him interrupted the passage of the sound. The experiment makes it perfectly obvious that if Joshua had a strong voice—which I have not—he could have been heard by his audience without the assistance of the Levites." (J. W. McGarvey, in "Lands of the Bible.")

### Israel Exhorted to Obedience (Verses 31, 32)

"Ye are to pass over the Jordan to go in to possess the land which Jehovah your God giveth you." It was a gift, but they had to pass over into it, and then subdue it, in order to come into possession of it. When they had conquered it and were settled in their allotted inheritances, they would then have a better opportunity to observe with regularity all the requirements of the law. "And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and the ordinances which I set before you this day."

### SOME REFLECTIONS

From the things which we learn from God's dealings with nations, it can be safely said that no nation falls so long as it serves a purpose in God's plans. That was true anciently, and there is no reason why it is not true today.

On the surface, it may seem that the destruction of a nation was due solely to the fact that it was crushed by a superior force; but nations fall more from their own internal corruption than from any other cause. No nation ever fell if God willed that it should stand.

Even during the reign of the law of Moses, God demanded that even heathen kings conduct their governments on the principles of right. Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if there may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity." (Dan. 4: 27.)

Jehovah rules in all the universe. Because Nebuchadnezzar did not recognize this, but arrogated to himself great power and glory, Jehovah led him through a humiliating experience, "to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of

men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the lowest of men." (Dan. 4: 17.)

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Why no other nation can be like Israel.

The results of obedience and disobedience to Israel.

How nations can now recognize Jehovah in their affairs.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.  
What is meant by choice?  
Can you name some things concerning which we have no choice?  
On what is human responsibility based?  
What did Moses choose?  
What might he have chosen?  
What moves people to make a choice?  
Who mostly decides the choices of nations?  
Discuss their responsibility.  
Who led Israel in the conquest of Canaan?  
What exhortation did he give Israel, and what did they reply?

### *Verses 8, 9*

What is the connection of verse 8 with the preceding verses?  
In what way would Israel be strong?  
What do we learn from Deut. 30: 19?  
What proves that men and nations can choose their course of action?

### *Verses 10-12*

What comparison is made between Canaan and Egypt?  
Why did Jehovah care for Canaan in a special way?

Why is that land not as fertile now as then?

### *Verses 26-28*

What was set before Israel?  
What honor does Jehovah confer upon people?  
How does Jehovah induce people to do right?  
Is the fear of punishment a scriptural motive?  
What happened to Israel when they turned to the worship of idols?  
How long is it said that the people served Jehovah?  
What then did they do?

### *Verses 29, 30*

Did you read carefully Deut. 27: 4-26?  
How did Moses know of Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal?  
What were the children to do at these mountains?  
Where is the fulfillment of these requirements recorded?  
How were the people arranged so as to hear the reading by Joshua?  
Did you profit by the quotation from McGarvey?

### *Verses 31, 32*

When would the people be the better prepared to observe regularly all the requirements of the law?  
Read and discuss the reflections.

## *Lesson XIII—September 26, 1937*

## GOD IN THE MAKING OF A NATION

Deut. 8: 11-20

11 Beware lest thou forget Jehovah thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his ordinances, and his statutes, which I command thee this day;

12 Lest, when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

13 And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

14 Then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget Jehovah thy God, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage;

15 Who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirsty ground where was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;

16 Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not; that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end:



17 And lest thou say in thy heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.

18 But thou shalt remember Jehovah thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth; that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as at this day.

19 And it shall be, if thou shalt forget Jehovah thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.

20 As the nations that Jehovah maketh to perish before you, so shall ye perish; because ye would not hearken unto the voice of Jehovah your God.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—*"Beware lest thou forget Jehovah thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his ordinances, and his statutes, which I command thee this day."* (Deut. 8: 11.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Isa. 51: 4-8.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

September 20.	M.	.....	Recognizing God's Leadership (Deut. 8: 11-20)
September 21.	T.	.....	God Saves a Nation (Psalm 114: 1-8)
September 22.	W.	.....	God Provides Judges (Judges 2: 16-22)
September 23.	T.	.....	God Keeps a Nation (Psalm 121: 1-8)
September 24.	F.	.....	God's Wonderful Works (Psalm 105: 1-8)
September 25.	S.	.....	God's Commands Concerning Rulers (Deut. 17: 14-20)
September 26.	S.	.....	God's Righteous Rule (Isa. 51: 4-8)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—According to Usher, 1451 B.C.; according to Hales, 1609 B.C.

**Place.**—The plains of Moab.

**Persons.**—Jehovah, Moses, and the children of Israel.

**Lesson Links.**—In many respects, too numerous to mention here, the nation of Israel was unlike any other nation that ever existed, or ever will exist. It was designed in the mind of Jehovah, and developed according to the plans of Jehovah and by his providential oversight. Abraham was selected to be the father of that nation. Jehovah called him while he was in his native land, saying, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation." (Gen. 12: 1, 2.) When Abraham in his journeys reached the land of Canaan, Jehovah said to him, "unto thy seed will I give this land." (Gen. 12: 7.) After he and Lot were separated, Jehovah renewed to him the land promise, and also promised him a numerous posterity. (Gen. 13: 14-17.) As a distinguishing mark, he gave him the sign of circumcision. All males were to be circumcised. If one was not circumcised, he was cut off from his people. (Gen. 17: 1-14.) In the providence of God, the chosen people became sojourners in Egypt, where they became government-owned slaves. But God's eye was still upon them; and when they became sufficiently numerous to form a strong and independent nation, he sent Moses from Midian to be their leader in delivering them from Egypt. It was through God's power that they were delivered. When they reached Sinai, Jehovah said to them, "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." (Ex. 19: 5.) This nation was to be unlike any other nation. God was to be their king; he would give them their laws, and organize their government. God has never done that for any other earthly govern-

ment. But we live in a world that God made, "The earth is Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." (Psalm 24: 1.) No man or nation therefore has any right to use any part of the world in a way that is displeasing to God. God does not now take a direct hand in bringing into existence human governments; nor did he ever do so, except in the making of the government of Israel. But he does use human governments. (See Rom. 13: 1-6.)

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### "Beware Lest Thou Forget Jehovah" (Verse 11)

The material things before the eye are more interesting to the majority of people than the unseen things of God. To forget does not always mean to let a thing depart entirely from our memory. To forget Jehovah is to be so taken up with other things that he ceases to be a factor in our thoughts and deeds. The language of verse eleven shows that to cease to do Jehovah's will was to forget him—Israel would forget him in not keeping his commandments, ordinances, and statutes. To forget his covenant, to cease to do his will, and to worship idols was to forget him. "Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of Jehovah your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image in the form of anything which Jehovah thy God hath forbidden thee. For Jehovah thy God is a devouring fire, a jealous God." (Deut. 4: 23, 24.) In later years, when Israel had filled to the full their cup of iniquity, Jehovah said, "Can a virgin forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number." (Jer. 2: 32.) And because the nation had plunged so far into all sorts of crime, and was therefore no longer fit to continue as a government, the Lord allowed them to be carried into captivity.

#### Forgetting Jehovah When Prosperous (Verses 12, 13)

Jehovah had promised to give Israel the land of Canaan as their inheritance. It was described as a land flowing with milk and honey—a figure of speech used to express the abundance of its products. When they served him, he would make them to prosper. And yet prosperity had its dangers. Forgetfulness of Jehovah is not a necessary result of prosperity. Gratitude for prosperity should lead people to be more thankful to Jehovah, and more devoted to him. And some people in their prosperity become more and more useful servants of God: but it seems that the majority cannot have much material interest without forgetting Jehovah. Jehovah, therefore, warns Israel not to forget him when they become prosperous in the land of their inheritance. Moses, using the poetic term "Jeshurun" for Israel, draws a picture of Israel in their future prosperity: "But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxed fat, thou art grown thick, thou art become sleek; then he forsook God who made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation." (Deut. 32: 15.) These words are a part of a song which Jehovah had commanded Moses to write, and then to teach it to the children of Israel. "Put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel. For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swore unto their fathers, flowing with milk and honey, and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxed fat; then



will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and despise me, and break my covenant." (Deut. 31: 19, 20.) This song would be a national song which they would not forget; and it would come to them vividly in the days when calamities came upon them. A national song has a powerful influence on a nation. (Verse 21.) There should, therefore, be in every national song something that calls the people back to God. But the Hebrew nature was not different from others. Even now the cares, and the riches, and the pleasures of this life frequently choke out the word of God. (Luke 8: 14.) Riches give their possessor power, and that power is often used to oppress the less prosperous. (James 2: 6, 7.) It is still true that "they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after . . . have pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Tim. 6: 9, 10.) But Paul's language in verse seventeen shows that a rich man can make his riches serve useful purposes, but it shows also that riches may lead a person to be high-minded, "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate." When nations and individuals set their hopes on riches instead of God, they are on the downgrade.

### What Jehovah Had Done for Israel (Verses 14-16)

Moses relates some of the things Jehovah had done for Israel. Their heart must not be lifted up so as to forget Jehovah and what he had done for them. It does not seem possible that they ever would have forgotten that Jehovah delivered them out of Egypt. Perhaps they never did forget their deliverance from Egypt, but they soon forgot that Jehovah brought them out. Even at Sinai, only a very short time after their deliverance from Egypt, while Moses was in the mount, the people said to Aaron, "Up, make us gods, which shall go before us." Out of the golden ornaments, Aaron made a calf; and the people shouted before these metal images, "These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." (Ex. 32: 1-8.) It is strange that people should so soon forget Jehovah. Jehovah had miraculously delivered them from dying by the bite of fiery serpents. He had done this in such a way that no one could fail to see his hand in the matter. He had given them water from the rock of flint. In this, too, he gave them unmistakable evidence of his presence, of his power, and of his care for them. And so also in feeding them with manna from heaven. They were slow to learn and quick to forget. If they had considered matters properly, they would have known that Jehovah was seeking their good, and that their own sins brought their troubles upon them. To humble the children of Israel, and to teach them that they must recognize Jehovah as their ruler, he kept them in the wilderness forty years. They might have gone directly into Canaan had they been obedient. But when they reached Kadesh, they were still too rebellious, still too forgetful of Jehovah, to be allowed to go in and possess the land. He led them in these forty years of wilderness wanderings that he might discipline them as to do them good later. The Lord develops character



by teaching and discipline, and not by some direct, miraculous power. He makes neither nations nor individuals what they should be by an instantaneous operation, or by a miracle.

### Jehovah the Source of Their Wealth (Verses 17, 18)

All their prosperity would be due to the blessings of Jehovah—without his blessings they would perish. In their obedience, he made them to prosper; in their disobedience, he made them poor. As Jehovah was the source of their prosperity, it is singular that they were likely to forget him in their prosperity. It seems that neither extreme poverty nor great wealth is good for people. "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me: lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is Jehovah? or lest I be poor, and steal, and use profanely the name of my God." (Prov. 30: 8, 9.) To be puffed up by wealth shows a shallowness of character, and to forget God in prosperity is ingratitude. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights." (James 1: 17.) Your natural endowments, no matter what they are, are of God, and should be used to glorify him. Are you an impressive speaker? Why be puffed up about it? It is God's gift—make humble use of it in his service. Are you a great singer? Dedicate that wonderful gift of God to his service. Are you a good financier? Do not use that God-given ability to oppress your fellows, but rather to bless them. Do not say that it is by your own might that you do great things.

*The Covenant Conditional.*—The children of Israel were to remember Jehovah, and that their prosperity came from him, that he might establish the covenant which he had sworn unto their fathers. That was the covenant concerning the making of their descendants into a nation and giving them the land of Canaan for a possession. In reality the covenant was renewed at Sinai when Jehovah told them that they would be his people if they would obey his voice, and they promised to do all that he commanded them to do. (Ex. 19: 5-8.) That covenant would be established with them so long as they obeyed his voice.

### If Israel Forgot Jehovah and Served Idols They Would Perish (Verses 19, 20)

In these last speeches Moses made to the children of Israel, he sought earnestly to impress upon them the fact that their future happiness and prosperity would depend on their own conduct. If they rebelled against Jehovah and worshiped idols, they would perish. They must not think that, because they were the seed of Abraham and God's chosen people, they could remain in prosperity and in possession of the land God gave them, no matter how they loved. Nothing of that sort was ever stated, or implied, in any promise Jehovah ever made to them or to Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob. The reverse is true. "As the nations that Jehovah maketh to perish before you, so shall ye perish; because ye would not hearken unto the voice of Jehovah your God." These nations were driven out of Canaan and perished as nations; and Moses solemnly affirms that Israel would perish as these nations did if they did not obey him. They finally were driven out of their land as were the nations before them, and, like these nations, their national existence came to a miserable end.



## SOME REFLECTIONS

God made the nation of Israel for a special purpose. They were to keep alive in the earth the idea of one God, and that he is the living God, the creator and ruler of all things. It was to be through this nation that Christ should come.

There can never be another nation like that nation, because there will never be again the same purpose to serve. In studying how God made that nation, we learn something as to how nations should be today. It was unique among all nations of all time, but some things may be copied by any other nation.

Israel was God's nation; but when it reached the point where it was no longer fit to exist, it was destroyed. May not the church in any place become so worldly, or otherwise so sinful, that it is no longer fit to exist? May it not reach the point where God no longer owns it? The things that happened to the Hebrews are examples to us, and should teach us that only in faithful obedience may we expect to be blessed.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The bringing of Israel out of Egypt.

The covenant of Ex. 19: 5-7.

The twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.

How did the origin of the nation of Israel differ from the origin of other nations?

Repeat the promise made to Abraham.

Repeat the land promise.

How were the Israelites called out of Egypt?

Repeat the promise in Ex. 19: 5.

Why are nations and people obligated to Jehovah?

*Verses 11*

Against what did Moses warn Israel?

What is meant by forgetting Jehovah?

Discuss Deut. 4: 23, 24.

*Verses 12, 13*

What danger attends prosperity, and why?

Why is that not a necessary result of prosperity?

In Moses' song, what was said about Jeshurun?

What may choke out the word of God?

What does Paul say about those who want to be right?

What charge was Timothy to deliver to the rich?

*Verses 14-16*

Name some of the things Jehovah had done for Israel.

What incident shows how soon they forgot Jehovah?

Why did Jehovah keep Israel in the wilderness forty years?

How does God change the character of people?

*Verses 17, 18*

To what would Israel's prosperity be due?

Discuss Prov. 30: 8, 9.

Whence came all good things?

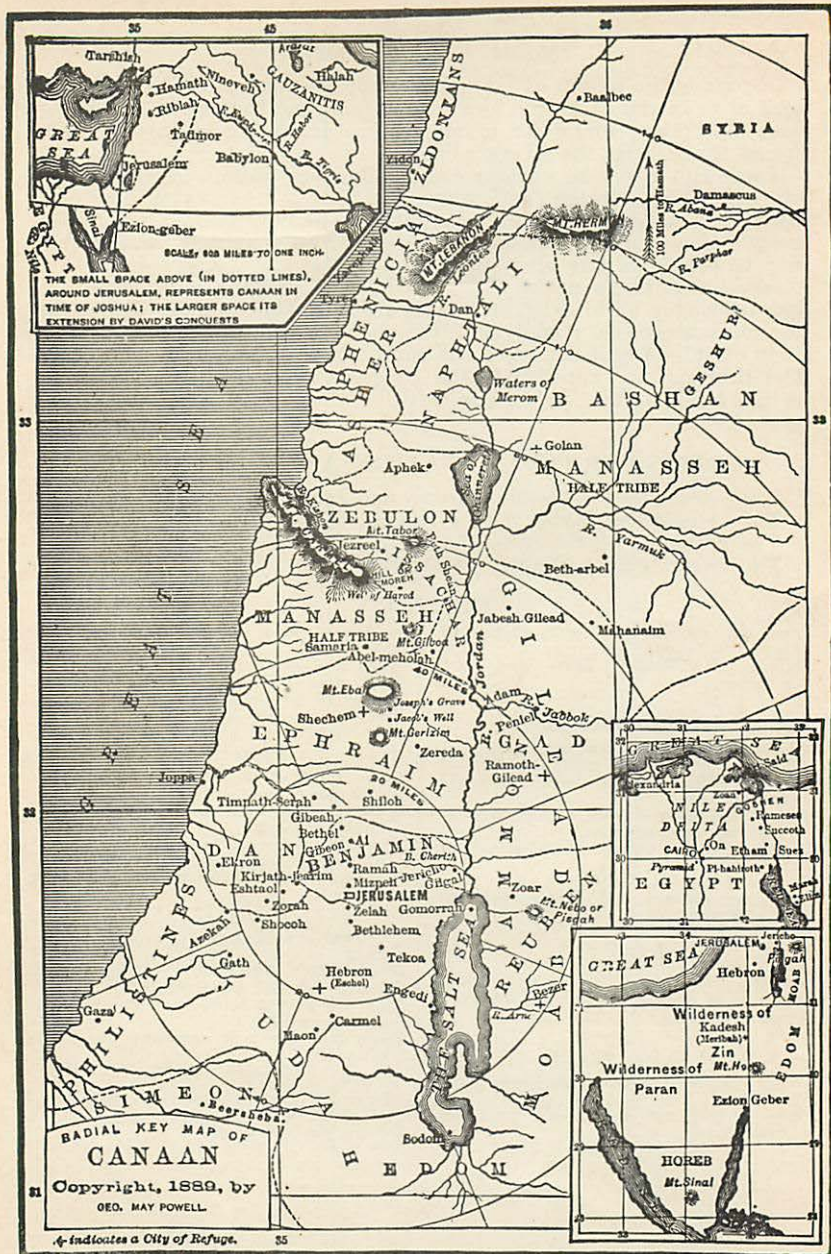
What use should be made of our natural endowments?

Show that the land covenant was conditional.

*Verses 19, 20*

Discuss the fate of Israel in the light of these two verses.

Discuss the reflections.





## FOURTH QUARTER

### STUDIES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

**AIM:** *To create and deepen individual fellowship with Christ and to quicken the conscience of Christians that they may carry the spirit of Christ into all their activities and relationships.*

Lesson I—October 3, 1937

### CHRISTIAN SONSHIP

1 John 3: 1-6, 18-24

1 Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and *such* we are. For this cause the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

2 Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is.

3 And every one that hath this hope *set* on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

4 Every one that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.

5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away sins; and in him is no sin.

6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither knoweth him.

18 *My* little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth.

19 Hereby shall we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before him:

20 Because if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, we have boldness toward God;

22 And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.

23 And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as he gave us commandment.

24 And he that keepeth his commandments abideth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he gave us.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—“*But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name.*” (John 1: 12.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—John 15: 1-8.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

September 27.	M.	Christian Sonship (1 John 3: 1-6)
September 28.	T.	Christian Confidence (1 John 3: 18-24)
September 29.	W.	Begotten of God (1 John 4: 7-21)
September 30.	T.	Heirs of God (Rom. 8: 12-17)
October 1.	F.	God's Discipline (Heb. 12: 4-13)
October 2.	S.	Fruits of Discipleship (John 15: 1-8)
October 3.	S.	Kinship with Christ (Matt. 12: 46-50)

### THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—The date of the writing of the First Epistle of John is not known. Some place the writing as early as A.D. 68; others, near the close of the first century. As it is impossible to arrive at a definite conclusion as to the date, speculation is useless.

*Place.*—It is not known where John was when this epistle was written. Some suppose he wrote it in Judea before he went to Ephesus; others suppose it was written somewhere in Asia Minor; still others, on the Isle of Patmos.

*Persons.*—The apostle John and the children of God. It does not appear that the letter was written to any special group or congregation of Christians.

*Lesson Links.*—The First Epistle of John was written to the children of God. The Bible makes a clear distinction between children of God and those who are not children of God. If a person is not a child of God, he is not an heir of God. A child of God is one who has been saved from his sins. Jesus came to save the lost, but he does not save the unbelieving and disobedient. "Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." (John 8: 24.) The second chapter of Acts sets forth clearly how people become children of God. Peter preached to them, and convinced them that Jesus, whom they crucified, was the Christ. Realizing their guilt, and greatly desiring to be saved from their sins, they cried out, "Brethren, what shall we do?" The Holy Spirit, speaking through Peter, answered, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." Peter exhorted them with many words, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." By his death and resurrection Jesus had made reconciliation to God possible. But still the people did not know how to appreciate the benefits of Christ's death till, through inspired men, the Holy Spirit told them plainly what to do. This was done, as related in the second chapter of Acts. Since the plan of salvation has been prepared, and the people were told what to do, the next move was theirs; and Peter exhorted them to make it. Many of them made the move that day. "They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16.)

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON "What Manner of Love" (Verse 1)

The first verse connects closely with the last verse of the preceding chapter. "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one also that doeth righteousness is begotten of him." If we are begotten of God, then we are children of God. God's love made it possible for us to become his children. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3: 16.) By this love those who had been sinners and enemies of God are made children of God. Never otherwise has there been such a manifestation of love. It caused John to exclaim, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God." No man can be more closely related to God than to be his child. It is that relationship that enables us to say, "Our Father who art in heaven." No greater thing can come to any one on earth than to become a child of God; "and such we are." Because we are children of God, the world does not know us, because it does not know God. The world does not know the hopes and the desires of the children of God; it does not know the motives that guide their lives. God and his family are strangers to the world.



### "We Shall Be Like Him" (Verses 2, 3)

We are children of God now, even in this world of sin. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8: 17.) Christ is the Christian's ideal, and to be transformed into his likeness is both his aim and his effort. No Christian hopes to become like Christ in power, wisdom, and glory. We cannot become deity, as he is; but we can seek to become like him in unselfish service and in purity of life. Even this is not accomplished in a day. Character is not made by an instantaneous miracle. "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." (Rom. 12: 2.) By studying him, loving him, and imitating his life, we are constantly being transformed into his likeness. "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3: 18.) The transformation of character begun here will not be perfected in this life. But John says it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we shall be like him. If we now knew the Lord as he is, we would know what we shall be, for we shall be like him. If the Lord were now before us in all the perfection of his being, we are too blinded by sin and selfishness to see the perfection of his glorious character. See how ignorance, sin, prejudice, and envy prevented the people from seeing Jesus as he was while he was here. But when we shall have laid aside this veil of the flesh with all its prejudices and passions, we shall see him as he is, and be like him. It is a consummation to be longed for. "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself." (Phil. 3: 20, 21.) The hope of this glorious transformation is a powerful incentive to move us to put forth our best efforts. "And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." If a person would be like Christ, he must purify himself, that is, he must put away impure thoughts and impure deeds. He must live a clean life; he must not let the lusts of the flesh control him. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof." (Rom. 6: 12.)

### Sin Is Lawlessness (Verses 4-6)

Law is intended to regulate conduct. Any deed performed without regard to law, or not regulated by law, is a lawless deed. Any such deed is sin. The language shows that we are under God's law, and that any deviation from it is sin. The idea that one way is as good as another is itself a lawless idea, and is sin. He came into the world to bring a lawless world back into harmony with God—back into harmony with God's law and God's order. There was no lawlessness—no sin—in him. His life was a perfect demonstration of absolute obedience to God. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." (John 4: 34.) "For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6: 38.) There was therefore no sin in him. Had he lived a lawless life, and had therefore been a sinner, he could not have taken away sin. "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." To say that this means that a child of God never commits a sin makes



John contradict himself; for he says, "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1: 8.) Sinnereth indicates continued action. The one who abides in Christ does not practice sin—he does not live a sinful life. The one who does live in sin has not seen Christ, and does not know him.

### Love in Word, Deed, and Truth (Verse 18)

The eighteenth verse is a form of expression not often found outside the Bible. The same form of expression is found in the following passages: John 6: 27; 12: 44; 1 Pet. 3: 3, 4. It is a contrast in which one thing is seemingly denied or prohibited in order to emphasize the more important item. When Jesus said, "Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life," he did not actually prohibit working for material food. We would now state the matter somewhat like this: Work not mainly for the food that perishes, but rather for the food that abides unto eternal life. And the plain meaning of John 12: 44 may be stated like this: He that believeth on me believeth not only on me, but also on him that sent me. And so with the eighteenth verse of our lesson, John was not prohibiting the use of words that express love, but that must not be the only way that we express love. Love not only in word, but also in deed and in truth. It is easy to say, I am sorry, or, you have my sympathy, or, I wish you well, but such words do not feed the hungry or clothe the naked. John had just said, verse seventeen, "But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?"

### An Element of Acceptable Prayer (Verses 19-22)

If we love in deed, as well as in word, and let our deeds be such as truth directs, such conduct assures (Greek, persuades) our hearts before him, that is, we feel assured that God is pleased with us. If we know we have failed to do the right thing toward others, our hearts condemn us. If we have failed to do right, God, who knows all things, will certainly know it. We cannot hide from him nor deceive him. If our heart condemn us not, if we know we have done right, we have boldness toward God; we can pray to him in confidence. Confidence is an essential part of faith. To pray in faith is to pray with confidence that God will hear us. "And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight." If a man refuses to obey God, he need not pray to God. If he hear not God, God will not hear him. "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination." (Prov. 28: 9.) "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear." (Psalm 66: 18.) But the Lord will hear any one whose heart is set on doing God's will. "For all these things hath my hand made, and so all these things came to be, saith Jehovah: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." (Isa. 66: 2.) Obedience to God is therefore an essential element of acceptable prayer. Our verses show that one thing in which we are to obey God is to love in deed and in truth. It is to help those in need. If we will not hear the cries of the poor and needy, we need not expect God to hear our prayers.



## Abiding in Him and He in Us (Verses 23, 24)

The commandment that we must obey in order that our prayers be heard is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to love one another in deed and in truth. Much is involved in believing in the name of Jesus the Son of God. It is not enough that we merely believe that a person named Jesus lived on earth, and that he was a good man and a great teacher. We must believe that this Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. And we must believe that truth with all the heart—must believe it so strongly that this belief takes possession of us and controls our whole life. A person does not believe in Jesus Christ as he should till doing his will is the chief business of his life. "He that keepeth his commandments abideth in him, and he in him." On the night of his betrayal Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14: 23.) We will believe these wonderful promises without speculating as to their full meaning.

## SOME REFLECTIONS

In one respect, at least, people have grown better. They are more ready to help the distressed. Let some great disaster come to a community, and people everywhere readily send money to them, and help them in every way they can. Anciently it was not so.

To be a Christian means much. There is first a death to sin, then a resurrection to a new life. When a person professes to become a Christian there should be one sinner less in the world as effectually as if the person had actually died and been buried. And there should be one more Christian in the world as if God had really created one from nothing.

In Paul there was a radical change. He expressed it thus: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me." (Gal. 2: 20.) A sinner died as effectually as if Paul's body had become lifeless. The persecuting Saul was not living any more.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The need of a pure life.

Our duty to the poor and to those in distress.

What it means to believe in Christ.

What it means to be a Christian.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons, in so far as possible.  
Why is it important to know how to become a child of God?  
Discuss the things one must do to become a child of God.

When was it proper for Peter to exhort people to save themselves?

### *Verse 1*

How did God's love make it possible for us to become children of God?

Repeat verse 1 of our lesson.

In what sense does the world not know children of God?

### *Verses 2, 3*

What is the result of being children of God?

In what sense do we become like Christ?  
When and why does John say we will  
be like Christ?  
What does Paul say about our bodies?  
This hope leads us to do what?

## Verses 4-6

What is sin?  
What is lawlessness?  
Why did Christ come?  
How did he treat his Father's will?  
Discuss verse 6.

## Verse 18

What is peculiar about verse 18?  
Give some other verses of similar construction.  
How, then, are we to love?

## Verses 19-22

Discuss verse 19.  
What gives us boldness toward God?  
On what condition will God hear our prayers?  
Whose prayers are an abomination to him?  
To whom does the Lord look with favor?

## Verses 23, 24

What commandment does John mention?  
What is it to believe on Jesus Christ?  
On what condition does he abide in us?  
Repeat what Jesus said in John 14: 23.  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson II—October 10, 1937

## THE CHRISTIAN IN GOD'S KEEPING

Jude 1-4, 17-25

1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:

2 Mercy unto you and peace and love be multiplied.

3 Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.

4 For there are certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old written of beforehand unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

17 But ye, beloved, remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ:

18 That they said to you, In the last time there shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These are they who make separations, sensual, having not the Spirit.

20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

22 And on some have mercy, who are in doubt;

23 And some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

24 Now unto him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of his glory without blemish in exceeding joy.

25 To the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, before all time, and now, and for evermore. Amen.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." (Jude 21.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 23.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

October 4.	M.	Kept for Christ (Jude 1-4)
October 5.	T.	Kept in the Love of God (Jude 17-25)
October 6.	W.	God Our Keeper (Psalm 121: 1-8)
October 7.	T.	Kept by the Power of God (1 Pet. 1: 3-10)
October 8.	F.	Kept in Temptation (Rev 3: 7-13)
October 9.	S.	God a Refuge (Psalm 31: 19-24)
October 10.	S.	Living with God Forever (Rev. 7: 9-17)



## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Not known.

*Place.*—Not known.

*Persons.*—Jude and Christians. "In the catalogue which Luke gives of the apostles, chapter 6: 14, 15, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon called Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James, are mentioned. In the catalogue, Acts 1: 13, we have the same persons named, and in the same order. But in the catalogue, Matt. 10: 3, in the place of Judas there is Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus; and in Mark 3: 18, Thaddeus simply. Wherefore, as all the evangelists agree that there were only twelve apostles, we must suppose that Judas the brother of James was surnamed Lebbeus and Thaddeus . . . In the Preface to the Epistle of James, Section 1, we have shown that James the son of Alphaeus was our Lord's brother or cousin-german. From this it follows that Judas the brother of James stood in the same relation to Christ. Accordingly we find James and Joses, and Simon and Judas, expressly called the brethren of Jesus, Matt. 13: 55; Mark 6: 3." (Macknight.)

*Lesson Links.*—From the contents of Jude's Epistle it seems that much corruption had grown up in the church. As a warning to the brethren, he reminds them "that the Lord, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." And even some angels "that kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Then he refers to the fate of others of the past. Then in verses twelve and thirteen he mentions some among themselves who had utterly abandoned themselves to sin. Notice the striking figures of speech he uses in describing them: Hidden rocks, shepherds that feed themselves; clouds without water, carried along by the winds; autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved forever. And we are inclined to think the church is now in a worse condition than it was then! However, we are not warranted in saying that there are no such people in the church today. Human nature is the same now as then. There are pretended teachers in the church today, who live off the flock, and give them little in return. And there are some who drift with public opinion, like clouds driven by the wind. And there are wandering stars, men who have no connection with any local church. "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their lusts (and their mouth speaketh great swelling words), showing respect of persons for the sake of advantage."

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## Jude's Signature and Salutation (Verses 1, 2)

The writer of a letter now places his signature at the conclusion of his letter, but it was not so anciently. Notice that Paul puts his name at the beginning, and so do Peter, James, and Jude. Jude identifies himself as "a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." He modestly refrains from mentioning his blood relation to Jesus—only a servant of Jesus Christ. The letter is addressed to the called-



out ones—those who had been called out of sin into the service of God. All such are beloved of God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ—kept by the power of the gospel. But the language of verses five to sixteen shows that they are not unconditionally kept. God will do all to keep his servants that is consistent with the freedom of the human will. He keeps no one against his will. Jude's salutation is a prayer that mercy, peace, and love attend them.

### Contend Earnestly for the Faith (Verses 3, 4)

*Our Common Salvation.*—The word "common," like many other words, has a variety of meanings. It does not here mean cheap, or of low degree; nor does it imply that there is an uncommon salvation. A common salvation is a salvation shared alike by a group—it is common to all. Though Jude was an apostle and possessed miraculous powers, his salvation was the same as theirs—"our common salvation." Paul addresses Titus as his "true child after a common faith"—a faith belonging to all Christians. Both apostles make the same use of the word "common." Both the faith and the salvation belonged alike to all Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles. Jude exhorts the brethren to contend earnestly for the faith, and yet it is wrong to be contentious. (Tit. 3: 2.) But a person can contend for the right without being contentious. A contentious person is one possessed of a contentious spirit—he loves a dispute. Such a person would contend for the gospel, not because he loves the gospel and wants it to triumph, but because he loves contention and wants to triumph over his opponent. But one who loves the faith will not stand idly by and see it abused or perverted. He will contend for it, not because he loves contention, but because he loves the faith. "The faith" refers to the gospel. It was "once for all" delivered to the saints—a complete plan of salvation revealed for all time. The language shows that it was a final revelation. There would be no other system of religion revealed. The brethren were to contend for this faith against the false teachers that were springing up among them. "Jude, being informed of the assiduity, and perhaps the success, with which the false teachers were spreading their pernicious errors, found it necessary to write this letter to the faithful without delay." (Macknight.) The brethren were not to make a halfhearted defense of the gospel, but were to contend for it, to contend for it earnestly—contend with all their force, as one would in the Olympic games, for so the word indicates. To fail to do this is to be disobedient.

*False Teachers Crept In.*—In one sense impenitent sinners do not get into the church, for the real blood-bought church is composed of those who have been called out of sin; but false men become nominal members. No one could know that he was not sincere when he was baptized. Sometimes men who were sincere at the beginning fall into error, and stir up trouble, and can usually succeed in deceiving some good people. It was these false teachers in the fellowship of the church against whom Jude exhorted the brethren to contend earnestly. They were ungodly men. A godly man is a man of piety and reverence; an ungodly man is an impious, irreverent man. He has no proper regard for the sacredness of divine things. He will make havoc of the church to have his own way. "Turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness." Grace is favor; and some even now contend that, since salvation is of grace, we do not have to do



anything. Macknight says, "For these ungodly men interpreted the gospel doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the law, in such manner as to free believers from all obligation to obey the law of God, and taught them, that they might commit the worst actions without being liable to punishment, if they possessed faith." Such teaching is extremely hurtful, and he who loves the truth and man will contend earnestly against it.

### Other Apostles Spoke of These False Teachers (Verses 17-19)

The language of these verses shows that Jude wrote this letter after the other apostles had written. In the eighteenth verse Jude seems to refer to what Peter said: "Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts." (2 Pet. 3: 3.) Paul also had said, "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts." (2 Tim. 4: 3.) The church members, not satisfied with the plain gospel, would get preachers who would preach to suit them—false members and false teachers. Such preachers make separations—cause divisions. No matter how many good people such preachers deceive, Jude says they walk after their own ungodly lusts, and are sensual, having not the Spirit. If such men could not deceive any one, it would not be necessary to contend against them. Concerning such men Paul says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent." (Rom. 16: 17, 18.) No class of men are more severely condemned in the Bible than those who cause separations in the family of God. The man who destroys a church has his sentence already written. (1 Cor. 3: 16, 17.)

### Saving Themselves and Others (Verses 20-23)

A person's salvation is not complete when he becomes a Christian, nor is he then a full-grown Christian. His character is yet to be built. He must build himself up in the most holy faith. Here again "faith" must refer to the gospel. It is called a most holy faith in contrast with the sensual teaching of the false teacher. If the false teacher did not actually teach indulgence in sin, he nevertheless taught a doctrine that gave an excuse for corrupt living. But this most holy faith, this gospel, leads men out of sin into holiness of life. It gives no excuse for sin; it teaches that men must live clean lives, or be lost. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5: 19-21.)

*Building—Praying.*—A well-rounded Christian character is not attained in a moment. The development of the Christian character is sometimes spoken of as a growth. A new Christian is as a newborn babe. "Putting away therefore all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes,



long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation." (1 Pet. 2: 1, 2.) And sometimes, as in the text of our lesson, character development is referred to as a process of building. "Wherefore exhort one another, and build each other up, even as also ye do." (1 Thess. 5: 11.) And so we need the help of one another in this character building. We also need the help of God—"building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit."

*Save Some.*—A Christian cannot be indifferent to the salvation of others. Christ gave himself a sacrifice to save men; the Christian must possess the same spirit. "On some have mercy." Some who sin are downcast, brokenhearted. Such do not need harsh rebukes, but gentleness, mercy, sympathy. Others may be about to plunge into a wrong from which they must be snatched away at once, or they are likely never to recover. Something must be done before they take the fatal plunge—snatch them back, if possible, as you would one who was about to fall into the fire, or was about to be run over by a car. Be harsh with them, if you must be. Under some circumstances the only way to be kind is to be harsh. "On some have mercy with fear." Make them fear the consequences of sin—nothing else will influence some men to cease from sin. Later they may serve from love, but they forsake sin through fear. But in any case we must seek to save others. "Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. 4: 16.) So it appears that we cannot save ourselves unless we seek to save others.

### Jude's Doxology (Verses 24, 25)

"We walk by faith." As living the Christian life is represented as walking, so when one sins he is said to stumble. God is able to guard us from stumbling, and will do so, if we will let him. We stumble only when we break away from him. No one should fear God's part in the matter of our salvation. He is able to guard us from falling, and to set us finally before the presence of his glory. It is his design that we be without blemish. If all the members are without blemish, so will the church be. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; . . . that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5: 25-27.) One striking thing about inspired writers is they never use endearing terms in addressing Jehovah, or in speaking of him. They use terms expressive of glory, might, dominion, majesty, etc. Notice particularly the words of Jude. It does not seem that a higher conception of God could be expressed in human language. Let those who use so many endearing terms in their prayers think seriously about such practice.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

The law of Moses was for a certain race of people. It was the embodiment of the Jews' religion. It was an exclusive religion. The gospel of Christ offers salvation to all. Our salvation is therefore a common salvation.

Jesus and Paul were not contentious, yet they contended earnestly for the truth. They were the greatest fighters of all time. They



were moved by two loves. They loved man so much that they fought with determination anything and everything that would hurt man. They loved the truth so much that they fought everything that was in the way of its progress. And they stirred people as none others ever did.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Opposing false teachers in and out of the church.

Jesus and the false teachers.

Stephen's debate and the result.

Who loves God?

The terms used in the Bible in praying to God or in speaking of him.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

### *The Lesson Settings*

Give what information you can about Jude.

What does Jude's letter indicate as to conditions then in the church?

What examples does he give as warnings?

Give some of Jude's figures of speech. To whom did he apply these descriptive figures?

Are any such characters in the church now?

### *Verses 1, 2*

Give the substance of Jude's salutation. To whom is his letter addressed?

### *Verses 3, 4*

What is meant by "our common salvation"?

What does Jude exhort the brethren to do?

Mention some great contenders.

What is the difference between contending for the faith and being contentious?

How were the brethren to contend?  
Who are real members of the church?  
In what sense do false men get in?  
What did these false teachers do?  
In what way did they turn the grace of God into lasciviousness?  
What doctrine tends to do that?

### *Verses 17-19*

Of what had the other apostles spoken?  
What does Jude say of those who cause separations or divisions?  
What does Paul say do with such men?

### *Verses 20-23*

What does Jude say about building?  
Out of what and into what does the gospel lead men?  
What does Paul say are works of the flesh?  
To what is making a Christian character compared?  
What does Jude say about saving some?  
How may one save himself and others?

### *Verses 24, 25*

Read carefully and discuss verses 24, 25.  
How may a church be without blemish?  
Discuss the reflections.

## *Lesson III—October 17, 1937*

## CHRISTIAN SPEECH AND CONDUCT

James 3: 1-18

1 Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment.

2 For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also.

3 Now if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths that they may obey us, we turn about their whole body also.

4 Behold, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small rudder, whither the impulse of the steersman willeth.

5 So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire!

6 And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell.

7 For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly poison.

9 Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the likeness of God:

10 Out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

11 Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter?

12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs? neither can salt water yield sweet.

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? let him show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom.

14 But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth.

15 This wisdom is not a wisdom that cometh down from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

16 For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed.

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth.*” (Eph. 4: 29.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 51: 10-17.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

October 11.	M.	Christian Speech (James 3: 1-12)
October 12.	T.	Christian Conduct (James 3: 13-18)
October 13.	W.	Good Neighbors (Eph. 4: 25-32)
October 14.	T.	Christian Behavior (Matt. 5: 38-48)
October 15.	F.	Godly Living (Titus 2: 1-15)
October 16.	S.	Walking Worthily of God (1 Thess. 1: 3-12)
October 17.	S.	Pleasing God (Psalm 51: 10-17)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—The Epistle of James seems to have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem, though the exact date is not known.

*Place.*—Probably Jerusalem.

*Persons.*—James and Jewish Christians. There were two, perhaps three, prominent men named James, in the early church. (1) James the son of Zebedee, one of the twelve apostles. He was put to death by the order of Herod. (Acts 12: 1, 2.) (2) James the son of Alphaeus. (3) James the Less. There are grounds for believing the last two were the same person. The matter is discussed in the commentaries and in Bible dictionaries. By comparing the first verse of the letter of James with the letter written to the Gentile Christians (Acts 15), it seems that the same James wrote both. No other composition in the New Testament has “greeting” for a salutation. The Epistle of James was written to Christian Jews.

*Lesson Links.*—The nature of the teaching in the epistles to churches and to individual Christians throws much light on conditions then prevailing in the churches. Christians were beset by the same weaknesses then as now. Strife and divisions sometimes occurred then just as they do now. When people become Christians, they are still human beings, with all their appetites and passions. Our lesson today touches on some things that Christians need frequently to ponder seriously.



## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## "Be Not Many of You Teachers" (Verses 1, 2)

Christianity is propagated and Christian character is built up by teaching. Where the gospel has never been taught to the people, there are no Christians. In our zeal to advance Christianity we may try to teach when we still need to be taught the simplest things of the gospel. This eagerness to become a teacher as soon as converted seems to have then been, and yet is, characteristic of the Jews. Paul speaks of some of them at Ephesus as "desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm." (1 Tim. 1: 7.) The responsibility of the gospel teacher, as preacher, is great; a young convert cannot prepare himself for teaching within a few weeks or months. If the teacher fails to teach people right, he will receive the greater condemnation. James softens what might seem to the brethren a personal thrust, by including himself—"we shall receive heavier judgment," and also, "in many things we all stumble." The first twelve verses of this third chapter are closely connected with chapter one, verses nineteen and twenty-six. Verse nineteen says, "But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak." The connection shows that it is the word of God that we are to be swift to hear and slow to speak. We are to be attentive to the word and seek to learn it, before we try to teach it to others. James was not, therefore, prohibiting the brethren from being teachers, but admonishing them not to rush into teaching before they were prepared. That admonition, if followed, would cut down the number of people who are trying to teach.

## Two Illustrations (Verses 3, 4)

James begins to show how the tongue may shape the course of life. In these verses he illustrates the matter, and assigns some reasons in the following verses. Bits are put into a horse's mouth so as to guide his whole body. James 1: 26 says, "If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he brideth not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain." In that part of the chapter James was speaking of the word of God. That is the only thing with which the tongue can be effectively bridled. A ship is a large thing, but the steersman guides it with a very small rudder. "So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things," and in doing so, it may change the whole course and destiny of a man's life. The tongue may be a blessing or a curse. A person whose tongue is not properly bridled is like an automobile without the steering gear. The illustrations James uses are all the more striking when we remember that he is talking about teachers of religion. They especially need the tongue properly bridled with the word of truth.

## The Tongue Is a Fire (Verses 5, 6)

Do not discount the evil that the tongue may do, because it is a little member of the body. Remember that all the wood that can be brought together may be burned with one small spark. "The tongue is a fire." It is a small member of our body, and yet it is a world of iniquity. That is a strong expression, and seems to mean about what we mean when we say that a thing causes a world of trouble. At



first glance it may not be apparent how the tongue defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the wheel of nature, being itself set on fire by hell. By a figure of speech hell means the devil, as sometimes heaven means God. The devil is back of the evil use of the tongue—sets it on fire. And when the tongue begins to say evil things, the whole being is stirred. When a person becomes angry, if he can control his tongue, he is master of his own being, but if he does not control his tongue, the more he talks, the angrier he becomes, and the angrier he becomes the more he talks, until he wants to fight. And, also, a man will never be carried very far with a false theory in religion, if he does not talk it; but the more he talks it the more his whole being becomes absorbed in it. And then the tongue and the feelings act and react on each other. Hence, the wrong use of the tongue not only injures others, but it has a decidedly evil influence on the person who does the talking.

### The Tongue Can No Man Tame (Verses 7, 8)

When God created man, he gave him "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." (Gen. 1: 26.) There is the fear of man in all animal creation. (Gen. 9: 2.) This enables man to master and tame even the largest animals. But no man can tame the tongue. The reason is easy to discover. The tongue is an irresponsible member of the body—the tool of the thoughts, notions, and impulses of the inner man. The tongue has no mind of its own; how then can it be tamed? The tongue expresses what is in the heart. Filthy words come from a filthy heart. Slander and words of hate and malice originate in the heart. The tongue gives voice to words framed by the mind. Instead of trying to tame the tongue, purify and clean up the heart, and keep it with all diligence. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts. If there were no evil thoughts, there would be no evil words. All hurtful teachings originate from wrong thinking. The tongue is full of deadly poison, because the heart has generated poisonous thoughts. Correct thinking is the cure for all evilspeaking, whether that speaking be done in the pulpit or in private. If you get your heart right, the tongue will not go far wrong.

### The Tongue Blesses and Curses (Verses 9-12)

"Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the likeness of God." Before God created man he said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." (Gen. 1: 26.) To curse man is, therefore, to curse the image of God. To bless God is to praise him, or to pronounce him blessed. It is inconsistent and sinful to bless God and curse his image; and yet professed Christians do that very thing. "My brethren, these things ought not so to be." Nothing like that occurs in inanimate nature. No fountain sends forth good water and bitter water. Nature is not so inconsistent and deceiving. A fruit tree bears fruit after its nature. The fruit tree does not bear both sweet fruit and sour fruit. Man alone is so inconsistent.



## James Warns Against Bitter Jealousy and Faction (Verses 13-16)

Not every person is wise and understanding. His speech and conduct show whether he is wise and understanding. A person of wisdom and understanding is not blustery and arrogant. If he is wise and understanding, he will "show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom." Meekness is gentleness. It is the opposite of rebellion and self-will. It is to be submissive to God, and is manifested by living a good life. To be wise and understanding is to live a life of obedience to God. Feelings are liable to be very intense in matters of religion. Hence, James warns against bitter jealousy and faction. It is significant that he connects lying with jealousy and faction. A faction is a party. When people in religion become full of the party spirit, they become unreliable in their statements concerning those who oppose them. An intense party spirit will make liars of people who are truthful in all other matters. And one party glories when it can triumph over the other, regardless of the right or wrong of it. To outscheme others in a factional fight may be considered a mark of wisdom; but that sort of "wisdom is not a wisdom that cometh down from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." The party spirit—the spirit of faction and strife—should be avoided as a deadly thing. "For whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men? For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not men?" (1 Cor. 3: 3, 4.) "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them that are of the household of Chloe, that there are contentions among you." (1 Cor. 1: 10, 11.) The church member who is possessed of a party spirit is an enemy of Christ, for he tends to destroy the church for which Christ died. Among the base characters that the Lord hates is "he that soweth discord among brethren." (Prov. 6: 16-19.) God will destroy all such characters. "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye." (1 Cor. 3: 16, 17.) The party spirit ruins character; "for where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed." Partyism is, therefore, a thing to be shunned as one would avoid a deadly poison or a fatal contagion.

## The Wisdom from Above (Verses 17, 18)

No one can deny that the devil is wise in his own way; he is skilled in working his own plans and purposes. But his wisdom is used only for evil purposes. But God's wisdom—the wisdom that is from above—works only that which is good for man. The wisdom that is from above is peaceable, and yet not so peaceable as to make peace with corruption and sin. It is first pure, then peaceable: it first makes a person pure, and then peaceable. It is gentle, easy to be entreated. There is no harsh party spirit about the wisdom that is from above. It is not tyrannical—it is not overbearing and blustery, but gentle and considerate. It is full of mercy. It is not harsh and radical in judging others. Moved by this wisdom that is from above, the Chris-



tian knows that if he shows no mercy he will be judged without mercy. And yet, this wisdom from above is steadfast and unvarying, it shows no such partiality as called forth the rebuke James delivered in chapter two, verses one to nine. It is without hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is acting a part, it is pretending to be what one is not. A hypocrite will show partiality to gain some advantage. A hypocrite is also a flatterer. The flatterer also praises people, because it is to his advantage to do so. No one ever flattered others for their good. Flattery is the basest of hypocrisy. By living righteously, the Christian sows the fruits of righteousness. The fruit of righteousness is sown by those who make peace—that is, by those who advocate and practice peace. If a man preaches and practices the truth of God, he is not responsible for any turmoil that the opponents of truth may raise.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Every sane person prizes highly the gift of speech. It is one of God's choicest gifts to man. In gratitude, if for no other reason, men should use that gift in a way that is pleasing to God.

Your speech may be a comfort and a blessing to you and to others; or it may poison the minds of others, or stir them to anger, or blast their reputations. It is a deadly poison. Some professed Christians delight in filthy jokes, and poison the minds of others, especially the young, by telling them. Only a corrupt mind delights in such speech.

The teacher of religion should keep the bridle of truth on his tongue. He has no right to deliver his unsupported opinions. The peace and welfare of the church depend on his doing so. He should be firm and uncompromising in presenting the truth, yet gentle and forbearing. He may defeat his own purpose by using fiery words that wither and scorch, instead of using words of soberness that stimulate to action and save the lost.

The Epistle of James contains more practical teaching on character and right conduct than is to be found in all the writings of uninspired men. He takes up the development of the Christian from the time the principle of divine life is planted in his heart. Nothing is more practical than the chapter we have just studied.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- The qualifications of a teacher or preacher.
- The harm the tongue may do.
- The good the tongue may do.
- The evils of faction and strife in a church.

### QUESTIONS

- Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.
- Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

- Give the time, place, and persons.
- How do we learn of the condition of the early churches?

#### *Verses 1, 2*

- How is Christianity propagated?
- To what may overmuch zeal lead?

- What did Paul say of some would-be teachers?
- What does James say about not stumbling in word?
- What had he said on this point in chapter 1?
- Discuss the admonition—"Be not many of you teachers."

#### *Verses 3, 4*

- Give the two illustrations of verses 3 and 4, and their application.



*Verses 5, 6*

Why call the tongue a fire and a world of iniquity?  
 What fires up the tongue?  
 Illustrate or explain how the feelings and the tongue react on each other.  
 How does a person keep himself interested in a false theory?

*Verses 7, 8*

Over what did God give man dominion?  
 Why can man tame animals?  
 Why can he not tame the tongue?  
 What is the remedy?

*Verses 9-12*

What inconsistency does James mention as to the use of the tongue?  
 Give his illustrations, and show their application.

*Verses 13-16*

How does a person show whether he is wise and understanding?

What is meekness?  
 Against what does James warn?  
 What evil effects does the party spirit have on character?  
 What does James say about the wisdom displayed in factions?  
 Give the substance of 1 Cor. 3: 3, 4 and 1 Cor. 1: 10, 11.  
 What is the doom of one who destroys a church?  
 What does James say accompanies jealousy and faction?

*Verses 17, 18*

What does James say of the wisdom that is from above?  
 Can a Christian afford to be at peace with corruption and false teaching?  
 The wisdom from above is without what?  
 What is hypocrisy?  
 Why is flattery hypocrisy?  
 Discuss the reflections.

*Lesson IV—October 24, 1937*

## CHRISTIAN RENEWAL

## Titus 3: 1-11

1 Put them in mind to be in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every good work.

2 To speak evil of no man, not to be contentious, to be gentle, showing all meekness toward all men.

3 For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.

4 But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man, appeared,

5 Not by works *done* in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

6 Which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

7 That, being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

8 Faithful is the saying, and concerning these things I desire that thou affirm confidently, to the end that they who have believed God may be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men:

9 But shun foolish questionings, and genealogies, and strifes, and fightings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

10 A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse;

11 Knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men."* (Titus 2: 11.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 26.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

October 18.	M.	-----	A New Life in Christ (Titus 3: 1-11)
October 19.	T.	-----	Abundant Life in Christ (John 10: 7-18)
October 20.	W.	-----	A New Creation (Eph. 4: 17-24)
October 21.	T.	-----	Born of the Spirit (John 3: 3-8)
October 22.	F.	-----	Daily Renewal (2 Cor. 4: 7-17)
October 23.	S.	-----	A New Creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5: 11-19)
October 24.	S.	-----	All Things Made New (Rev. 21: 1-7)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 67.

*Places.*—Paul was probably at Ephesus when he wrote to Titus. Titus was on the island of Crete, one of the larger islands of the Mediterranean Sea.

*Persons.*—Paul the Apostle and Titus. We know nothing of Titus, excepting what we learn of him in Paul's letter to him and from the references Paul makes to him in some of his other letters. It is singular that Luke does not mention him in his Acts of Apostles. We learn from Titus 1: 4 that he was Paul's convert.

*Lesson Links.*—It appears that Paul had preached extensively in Crete, and had made many converts. On leaving the island he left Titus there to put things in order and to appoint elders in the churches. (Chapter 1: 5.) The Judaizing Christians had already begun to agitate matters among the brethren there. (1: 13-16.) Zenas the lawyer and Apollos were in the island when Paul wrote to Titus, or were soon to be passing that way, for Paul charged Titus to set them forward on their journey, "that nothing be wanting unto them." Titus was to see to it that they had sufficient funds to meet their traveling expenses. (Titus 3: 13.) But Titus was not to remain permanently in Crete. "When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, give diligence to come unto me to Nicopolis: for there I have determined to winter." (Titus 3: 12.)

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## Subjection to Rulers (Verse 1)

The Jews were not willingly subject to Roman dominion. There was, at the time this letter was written, a growing restlessness among them, which culminated about two years later in open revolt against the Romans, and the destruction of Jerusalem. These extreme Judaizers among the Christians shared in this agitation against Rome. They did not think it was right for Christians to render obedience to heathen authorities. Their attitude toward the Roman authorities made it hard on the Christians generally. To save the church from the influence of these dangerous agitators, and from being considered a group of rebels against the Roman government, Paul commands Titus to urge upon the brethren the duty of being in subjection "to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient." To Romans Paul has written: "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment." (Rom. 13: 1, 2.) The Christian, therefore, should be the most law-abiding person in his community, for in obeying the laws of the land, he is obeying God; and in disobeying the laws of the land, he is disobeying God. Obedience, therefore, to the laws of the land is a matter of conscience with the Christian. (Rom. 13: 5.) And the Christian must also "be ready unto every good work." He must do what he can to clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and also relieve the distressed in every possible way.



### The Christian Must Be Gentle (Verses 2, 3)

It is an easy matter to get a wrong idea as to what a Christian is really required to be and do. Paul's requirement to speak evil of no man may be, and often is, misapplied. He certainly practiced what he preached, and yet he denounced some characters in severe terms. He endorsed the statement that "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons." (1: 12.) He had just referred to some men as unruly, "vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped; men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." "They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." A glance through his letters will show many severe things he said about various false teachers; in none of these things did he violate his requirement not to speak evil of anyone. It is one thing to speak of the evil men do; it is quite another thing to speak evil of them. It is prohibition against using abusive and slanderous language. It is sometimes necessary, for the protection of others, to speak plainly about the character of some man, or men. A person can contend for the right without being contentious. But the person who likes to argue and dispute, and who stirs up contention and confusion when nothing of vital importance is involved, is a nuisance and a troublemaker. It is hard to get people to be as gentle and considerate as they should be, without their becoming so soft and yielding as to be practically worthless. To be firm without being dogmatic, and gentle without being soft, is a rare accomplishment. If a person is right and knows he is right, he is liable to become boastful and arrogant; he forgets that he must be meek toward all men.

*We Forget.*—Redeemed from ignorance and sin, the Christian is prone to forget his former state. To make his language less harsh to the Cretans Paul includes himself in referring to what they formerly were. "For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another." That was the condition of the Cretans before they obeyed the gospel of Christ; they should remember that, and be gentle toward those who were still in sin. The remembrance of his former state should have a sobering and mellowing influence on every child of God.

### According to His Mercy He Saves Us (Verses 4-8)

"God our Saviour" in verse four is God the Father, for the same person is said in verse six to have poured out on us the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ our Savior. The Father is our Savior, because the plan of human redemption originated with him, and Jesus Christ is our Savior because we are saved through him. (John 3: 16, 17.) God's kindness and love toward men was manifested in sending his son to die for man. It really appears to people when the gospel is preached to them. In this way God's grace, or favor, appears to man. Paul had just said in chapter two, verses eleven and twelve, "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present



world." The grace of God brings salvation to us and teaches us how to appropriate it. Men are saved by the mercy of God, and not by their own works of righteousness. That "saved" here is used in the sense of to "justify" is seen by referring to verse seven—"being justified by his grace." No amount of works of righteousness will justify a person for sins formerly committed. One can get rid of sin only by forgiveness, and forgiveness is always an act of grace, or mercy, no matter what conditions of forgiveness may be required of the guilty. Even in this passage the sinner is said to be saved by the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Spirit. Commentators are almost unanimous in saying that the washing of regeneration is baptism. It is argued by some partisans that the expression, "not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves," militates against the idea that baptism has anything to do with our salvation; but they err, not knowing the scriptures. Baptism is not a work which a man does himself. In baptism the candidate is passive; in no other act of obedience is a man so passive as in being baptized. If the language militates against the sinner's doing anything, it would come nearer militating against his believing and repenting than against his being baptized; for in both believing and repenting the sinner is active—they are acts the sinner performs, but in being baptized a person is passive—baptism is something that is done to him. The language of the Bible shows this. "Believing," "respect," but "be baptized"—so run the commands. John 4: 1-3 throws light on the matter: "When therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples), he left Judæa." Jesus baptized people through the agency of his disciples. In the same way he baptizes every person today who is baptized in obedience to his command. The administrator of baptism is the Lord's agent, and does it in his name. Hence, baptism is not what the candidate himself does, but what the Lord does to him through his agent, the administrator. Hence, when we are saved in obedience to the command to be baptized, we are not saved by what we ourselves have done, but we are saved by being buried by the Lord in baptism. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16.) "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2: 38.) "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." (Acts 22: 16.) Two things are made plain in these passages, namely, that in baptism we are passive, and in baptism our sins are forgiven. "We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6: 4.) The baptized person begins a new life.

*The Renewing.*—The Holy Spirit was poured out abundantly on the apostles. The Holy Spirit preached through the apostles, and by this preaching men were begotten. (1 Cor. 4: 15; 1 Pet. 1: 23.) The word which the Holy Spirit preached through the inspired men is the seed of the kingdom, in it is the germ of life. (Luke 8: 11, 12.) The word of the Holy Spirit produces life—this is the renewing of the Holy Spirit, or the renewing and the washing of regeneration, we are saved—justified by the grace of God. To be justified is to be declared



free from guilt. When a man's sins are forgiven, he is at the moment free from guilt; he is justified, and is therefore an heir according to the hope of eternal life. Believers must maintain good works. (Verse 8.) When Jesus was on earth, he went about doing good. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20: 28.) "I am in the midst of you as he that serveth." (Luke 22: 27.) Jesus showed us how to live, how to do good. We must imitate him—must follow his example. The teacher of the gospel must also be an example to those whom he teaches. An example of right living would be especially needed among those who but recently had been converted from heathenism. So Paul admonishes Titus, "in all things showing thyself an ensample of good works." (Chapter 2: 7.) "And let our people also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful." To be careful to maintain good works is to exercise diligence in helping those who in any way need our assistance. Jesus "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works." (Chapter 2: 14.) "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2: 10.) "Created in Christ Jesus for good works"—that expresses one of the purposes for which God redeemed us from sin. There are so many people in the world that need help; Christianity is a religion of helpfulness. It brought to a selfish world the spirit of helpfulness, so that wherever its influence has gone, various means have been devised for the help of the needy and for the relief of human suffering.

### "A Factious Man" (Verses 9-11)

Some professed Christians among the Jews were never fully converted to Christ. They tried to be both Jews and Christians, and wanted all Gentile converts to become as Jews. With them, Christianity was merely a sect of the Jews' religion, and obedience to the gospel alone was not sufficient. They put stress on genealogies, their line of ancestors back to Abraham. In their estimation all heathen converts had to be questioned about the law. In these matters and in their persistent fightings about the law, they caused strifes, confusions, and factions. Titus was to avoid such profitless contentions. But, what was Titus to do about it, if others persisted in creating trouble with such contentions? He was to admonish them once, and even twice, when necessary. Then what? "A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse." He was to deny to such a one any right to further fellowship in the church. A factionist and troublemaker forfeits his rights to fellowship; "Knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned." In creating a faction and heading a party, he condemns himself as not entitled to fellowship by the main body of believers.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

"Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." (1 Pet. 2: 13.) Violation of traffic laws has become a problem. Christians should be very careful to obey these laws for two reasons: (1) The Lord requires obedience. (2) Every violator of traffic laws

is a possible murderer, or killer; for to kill some one while you are violating a traffic law is little, if any, different from murder.

Every body of people has the right to protect itself from being destroyed or injured by its own members. When a member is destroying fellowship by creating strife and division, it is the duty of the church to rid itself of him. And it sins against the Lord and his cause if it refuses or neglects to do so.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The Christian's duty to his government.

Why observe the traffic laws?

The Christian and good works.

What to do with factionists.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, places, and persons.

Give what information you can about Titus.

Why had Paul left Titus in Crete?

Locate Crete on the map.

Who were making trouble in Crete?

Whom was Titus to assist on their journey?

What shows that Paul did not expect Titus to remain permanently in Crete?

### *Verse 1*

What was the attitude of the Jews toward the Roman government?

What was likely to turn Rome against Christians?

What had Paul said to the Roman brethren on this point?

Why should Christians obey the laws of the land?

### *Verses 2, 3*

What did Paul say about speaking evil? What severe language did he use?

What is the difference between speaking evil of a person and speaking of his evil deeds?

What is the difference between contending for the right and being contentious?

What danger attends the cultivation of gentleness?

What danger attends the cultivation of firmness?

Why should a Christian remember his former state?

### *Verses 4-8*

What two Saviors are mentioned?

Who originated and executed the plan of salvation?

Read and discuss chapter 2, verses 11 and 12.

Why does a sinner need grace, or favor?

How do these verses say we were saved?

What is the washing of regeneration?

What do some think affects baptism as a condition of salvation?

Show that baptism is not a thing done by the person baptized.

Show who does the baptizing, and how he does it.

Quote passages to show that we are saved in the baptism, and that we are passive in baptism.

How are people received by the Holy Spirit?

In what did Jesus set us an example?

What is said about maintaining good works?

We are redeemed for what?

What spirit has Christianity developed in the world?

### *Verses 9-11*

How did some Jewish converts make trouble?

What was Titus to do about it?

What do with troublemakers?

How do such men condemn themselves?

Discuss the reflections.



## Lesson V—October 31, 1937

## THE MORAL ISSUE IN THE DRINK PROBLEM

Rom. 13: 12-14; 1 Cor. 6: 9-11; Gal. 5: 16-24

12 The night is far spent, and the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

13 Let us walk becomingly, as in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy.

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

9 Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.

16 But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties,

21 Envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 Meekness, self-control; against such there is no law.

24 And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.” (Gal. 5: 16.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Cor. 8: 8-13.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

October 25.	M.	.....	Sinning against One's Neighbor (Rom. 13: 12-14)
October 26.	T.	.....	Sinning against One's Body (1 Cor. 6: 9-20)
October 27.	W.	.....	Sinning against One's Soul (Gal. 5: 16-24)
October 28.	T.	.....	Sinning against One's Parents (Prov. 23: 20-32)
October 29.	F.	.....	How Strong Drink Deceives (Isa. 5: 18-23)
October 30.	S.	.....	Safety in Abstinence (Jer. 35: 12-17)
October 31.	S.	.....	Self-Denial for Others (1 Cor. 8: 8-13)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

Note.—This lesson is made up of three selections from three of Paul's epistles, which were written at different times, at different places, and to different people. It seems better therefore to give time, place, and persons of each letter in connection with the comments on the selection from that letter.

## Letter to the Romans

Time.—Probably A.D. 58, or a year earlier. It is easy to determine the relative time of the writing of the letter to the Romans. Paul was about to start on his journey to Jerusalem with the funds he had collected for the poor saints in Judea. (Rom. 15: 25-28.) By re-

ferring to Acts 20: 1, 2 we learn that he had come into Greece by way of Macedonia, after his long stay at Ephesus. He spent three months in Greece before starting on his journey to Rome. It was during this time that he wrote the letter to the Romans. Soon after reaching Jerusalem he was seized by the Jews, and his long imprisonment began.

*Place.*—The letter to the Roman brethren was written at Corinth, where Paul had preached the gospel and established the church, as told in Acts 18: 1-18. Rome, of course, was the capital city of the Roman Empire. We have no way of determining when the gospel was first preached at Rome, nor by whom the preaching was done. A later claim that the church there was established by Peter is devoid of any proof. When the gospel was first preached in Jerusalem and three thousand converts were made, there were present "sojourners from Rome." (Acts 2.) Probably some of these were converted and returned to Rome. Then when the church at Jerusalem was scattered by persecution, the disciples went into various countries preaching the word. Some of these may have gone to Rome. But from the numerous acquaintances Paul had among the brethren at Rome (Rom. 16: 1-15), it seems that Paul had induced a number of active workers to go to Rome to establish the cause more firmly in the central city of the empire.

*Persons.*—Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, and the brethren at Rome. It is singular that he did not address this letter to the church, but to the beloved of God, the called saints.

*Lesson Links.*—Paul's plan of operation was to establish churches in the larger and more important cities first, to be radiating centers from which the gospel would go out into the regions round about. People went to Rome from all points of the empire. A strong church in that city would therefore have an opportunity to reach people from all sections. For that reason Paul had often purposed to visit Rome, but had always been hindered from doing so. (Rom. 1: 8-13.) At the time of writing this letter he planned to visit Rome so soon as he had carried to Jerusalem the contributions he had collected for the poor saints in Judea. (Rom. 15: 22-28.)

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### The Christian's Clothing (Verses 12-14)

"Because knowledge and ignorance are to the mind what light and darkness are to the body, the scriptures often represent the former by the latter. Thus the heathens, who lived in utter ignorance of God and religion, are said to be in darkness; and their state is called night; and they themselves sons of the night and of darkness. Whereas they who enjoyed the knowledge of God and religion are said to live in light; and their state is called day, and themselves sons of the light and of the day. (1 Thess. 5: 5.) Wherefore, the night, which is represented as far advanced, or almost at an end, is the night of heathenish ignorance; and the day, which is said to have been at hand, is the more clear shining of the light of truth, by the repeated preaching of the gospel in all those countries where the darkness of ignorance and idolatry formerly reigned; the effect of which was that doctrines and precepts of the gospel were brought nearer to the understanding of the disciples than when they first



believed." (Macknight.) No sane person wants to walk about in the light of day without being properly clothed. As the darkness of ignorance is passing and the light of the gospel is shining more brightly let us put off the works of darkness, as one would put off the clothing of the night, and put on the clothing that one should wear in the light of the gospel, just as people put on garments to wear in the light of day. Of course, Paul's language is figurative, but very expressive. He speaks of evil deeds as clothing worn by people who are in the darkness of ignorance, and of good deeds as clothing to be worn by people who walk in the light of the gospel. Hence, as people walking in the light, let us walk becomingly, clothed in deeds of righteousness; "not in revelling and drunkenness." Their revelling was a feast with drinking and music. Dancing is almost always an invariable accompaniment of such feasts. When people are brought together for feasting, drinking, and making music, dancing is almost sure to be present. Such things go together; no good ever comes of such gatherings. Other evils are almost sure to follow. Moral inhibitions are held in check, if not broken down, by intoxication, and other immoral deeds are almost sure to follow. The Christian must not clothe himself with such evil things; he must keep himself from all indecent practices, just as sane people refrain from wearing indecent clothing in the blazing light of day. In those feasts the drinkers would become quarrelsome and jealous. Christians must not be like that. Congregations too often indulge in strife and jealousy, acting like a group of heathens in their revelling. Instead of clothing themselves with such indecent habits, the Christian must put on the Lord Jesus Christ. He must live a pure, unselfish life, as Christ did. "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart; who being past feeling gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye did not so learn Christ; if so be that ye heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus: that ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit; and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth." (Eph. 4: 17-24.) "And make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." This does not mean that we are not to provide for the needs of the flesh, but that we are not to make plans and provide means to gratify the lusts of the flesh. It is bad enough to be overwhelmed by some unexpected temptation, and fall into sin; it is inexcusable for a Christian to plan and to make provision for indulgence in sin.

### First Corinthian Letter

*Time.*—A.D. 57 or 58. The first Corinthian letter was written near the close of Paul's three years' stay at Ephesus. Compare Acts 19, 20, 31; 1 Cor. 16: 8.

*Place.*—Ephesus.

*Persons.*—Paul and the church at Corinth. The church at Corinth was planted by Paul, as related in Acts 18: 1-18.

*Lesson Links.*—Corinth was an important commercial city of



Greece, situated on the Isthmus of Corinth. Both its wealth and its moral corruption were proverbial. The worship of Venus was carried on with the most shameful and immoral practices. At Paul's first visit to Corinth he spent a year and six months in preaching the gospel in that corrupt city, and made many converts. The peace of the church was soon disturbed after his departure to other fields of labor. (1 Cor. 1: 10-19; 3: 1-5.) Parties were springing up in the church. Judaizing teachers had also come into their midst; all such teachers were much opposed to Paul, because they were opposed by him. Certain immoral practices also existed. One man had taken his father's wife; others were engaged in lawsuits. (Chapters 5 and 6.)

**"The Unrighteous Shall Not Inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6: 9-11)**

Paul had been rebuking the brethren for harboring the man who had taken his father's wife and for having lawsuits among themselves. He told them that it was better to suffer wrong than to do wrong. He then made this serious charge; "Nay, but ye yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren." (Verse 8.) He then affirms that those who practice such unrighteous deeds shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Such people, though they profess to be Christians, shall never enjoy of the heavenly inheritance. "Be not deceived." A person may deceive himself, or allow some one else to deceive him, into thinking that his conduct will not shut the gates of heaven against him, but Paul warns them against allowing themselves to be deceived. Fornication, idolatry, and adultery were closely associated even with the religious practices of the people of Corinth. Such practices were so imbedded in the social and religious life of the people of Corinth that the brethren there needed special teaching against such things. Not only were fornication and adultery prevalent, but the unnatural and debasing crime of sodomy was also common. People with such low standards of morality would certainly be covetous. Excessive covetousness—an inordinate craving for gain—gives rise to thievery. If a man takes advantage of another man's ignorance to obtain his property, whether he does it lawfully or unlawfully, he is a thief. Drunkards are here classed with all these other criminals. Drunkenness is a crime—a crime against one's self, against one's family, and against society in general. Revilers are those who speak contemptuously or abusively of others. An extortioner is one who takes advantage of the weakness or misfortune of another to gain possession of the other's property. Much of it is done in such a way as to violate no specific law of the land. No such characters as here outlined shall inherit the kingdom of God. But this does not mean that such people cannot turn from their sins, and be saved; for Paul immediately adds, "and such were some of you." And it seems that some of them had again fallen into their old habits. However, they had been washed, sanctified and justified. "Ye were washed." This refers to their baptism. They had all been baptized. "Ye were sanctified." To be sanctified is to be set apart from worldly living to the service of God. A sanctified person is not of the world. He may still commit sin, as did the sanctified people at Corinth. Sanctification does not take out of a person his carnal nature, for to these sanctified people at Corinth Paul said, "Ye are yet carnal." (3: 3.)



"Ye were justified." When they obeyed the gospel, all their sins were forgiven. There was then nothing against them; hence, they were justified.

### Galatian Letter

*Time.*—Opinions differ greatly as to when the letter to the churches of Galatia was written. Internal evidence points to its being written soon after Paul's return from the council at Jerusalem, for it appears from chapter two that the results of that meeting were not then generally known. This would be about A.D. 50 or 52. Others put the date at a later period in Paul's history, or about A.D. 55.

*Place.*—Macknight contends for Antioch as the place of writing; others, Ephesus.

*Persons.*—Paul and the churches of Galatia.

*Lesson Links.*—The churches of Galatia, like most of the churches outside of Judea, were composed of Jews and Gentiles. The Jews were inclined to drift back to Judaism, and the Gentiles to idolatry. Paul marveled that these churches had been so soon removed to a perverted gospel. The letter is a strong effort to reclaim them from the evils into which they had fallen.

### The Flesh and the Spirit (Gal. 5: 16-18)

Man has a body of flesh with its appetites and passions. To follow these—to look only to the needs and demands of the body—is to live an animal life. The spirit and the flesh differ in nature and destiny. A man's spirit may be led by his flesh, or by the Spirit of God, but not by both at the same time, for they are contrary one to the other. We must refrain from some things that we would do. "But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law." In the Greek there is no the before law. But this does not mean that the one who is led by the Spirit has no law by which to live; it means that the person led by the Spirit does no wrong while so led, and is therefore not under the sentence, or condemnation, of law. As expressed in verse twenty-three, "against such there is no law."

### The Works of the Flesh (Verses 19-21)

The works of the flesh are such deeds as the unrestrained appetites and passions of the flesh lead to. The impulse comes from the flesh, but the mind directs in their accomplishment. For that reason Jesus says they come from the heart. (Matt. 15: 19, 20.) Again Paul puts drunkenness in a list of abominable crimes. While drunkenness is a work of the flesh, it benumbs the mind, and even destroys its operations, so much so that a drunken man has less sense than an animal. Paul had warned them, and again warned them, "that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

### The Fruit of the Spirit (Verses 22-24)

The fruit of the Spirit is good—good for the individual, and for the people with whom he associates. What a contrast there is between the fruit of the Spirit and the works of the flesh. Study the fruits of the Spirit word by word, and then see how superior they are to the works of the flesh. Laws are made everywhere to restrain the works of the flesh; but against the fruits of the Spirit there is no law.

The Christian has crucified the flesh; he has put to death the deeds of the body; he lives after the Spirit.

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The evils of social drinking.

How the drunkard is an enemy to self and to others.

The defects in the church at Corinth.

In there a solution to the liquor problem?

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject of our lesson.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

Where is our lesson found?

### *Letter to the Romans*

When was the Roman letter written?

At what point in Paul's history was it written?

Where was the letter written?

What was the probable origin of the church at Rome?

Give the persons.

Why did Paul seek first to establish churches at central points?

### *Rom. 13: 12-14*

Discuss verse 12.

How does Paul express the idea of quitting evil and doing right?

In what sense are Christians walking in the light?

What is the darkness to which he refers?

What evil deeds does he mention?

What was included in revelling?

How may drinking intoxicants lead to other evils?

How do churches sometimes act?

What must the Christian put on?

For what must we make no provision?

### *First Corinthian Letter*

When was the first Corinthian letter written?

At what point in Paul's history was it written?

Where was it written?

Locate Ephesus on the map.

Who planted the church at Corinth?

Give some information about Corinth.

Name some evils that sprang up in the church at Corinth.

### *1 Cor. 6: 9-11*

For what had Paul rebuked the brethren? What serious charge did he make against them?

About what did he warn them against being deceived?

What evil practices did he mention?

What evils were common at Corinth?

In what ways is drunkenness a crime?

What does he say about the future of such criminals?

What shows that such people can reform?

Discuss verse 11.

### *Galatian Letter*

When was the letter to the Galatians written?

At what place?

At what did Paul marvel concerning the churches of Galatia?

### *Gal. 5: 16-18*

What results from being led by the flesh?

What is meant by being under law?

### *Verses 19-21*

What are works of the flesh?

Repeat Paul's list of the works of the flesh.

What does drunkenness do for the mind?

### *Verses 22-24*

What are the fruits of the Spirit?

Why are there laws to restrain the works of the flesh?

Why are there none against the fruits of the Spirit?



## Lesson VI—November 7, 1937

## CHRISTIAN CHARACTER AND PEACE

Col. 3: 1-17

1 If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God.

2 Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth.

3 For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory.

5 Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6 For which things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience:

7 Wherein ye also once walked, when ye lived in these things:

8 But now do ye also put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth:

9 Lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings,

10 And have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all.

12 Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye:

14 And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God.

17 And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body."* (Col. 3: 15.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Mic. 4: 1-5.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

November 1.	M.	.....	New Life in Christ (Col. 3: 1-11)
November 2.	T.	.....	The Peace of Christ (Col. 3: 12-17)
November 3.	W.	.....	Christian Ethics in the Home (Eph. 6: 1-9)
November 4.	T.	.....	Christian Ethics in Society (Eph. 4: 25-32)
November 5.	F.	.....	The Gift of Peace (John 14: 25-31)
November 6.	S.	.....	Peace among Brethren (Matt. 5: 21-26)
November 7.	S.	.....	When Peace Reigns (Mic. 4: 1-5)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 62 or 63. Some assign an earlier date.

*Place.*—Some authorities contend that the epistle to the Colossians was written at Cesarea, while Paul was a prisoner there; but it is more likely that it was written later at Rome.

*Persons.*—Paul and the Colossian saints. The church at Colosse was probably planted by Epaphras. At least, Epaphras had labored much for them. (See Col. 1: 7; 4: 12, 13.)

*Lesson Links.*—Colosse, a city of Phrygia, was situated in the valley of the river Lycus. Near it were Laodicea and Hierapolis, in which cities there were churches. Two corrupting influences had invaded the church at Colosse, and perhaps also the near-by churches.

The Judaizing teachers had got in some of their teaching; and the pure doctrine of Christ was also being corrupted by some form of philosophy. Epaphras had gone to Rome from Colosse, and was with Paul when the letter was written. He had, of course, reported to Paul the condition of the church at Colosse, and likely urged Paul to write the letter in an effort to correct the evils springing up in that church.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Seek the Things That Are Above (Verses 1-4)

In chapter two, verse twelve, Paul mentions the fact that they had been buried with Christ in baptism. They had therefore died to sin—died to the world and all its ways and philosophies. Based on that fact, Paul asked them why they were still subjecting themselves to the ordinances of men. But they had not only been buried with Christ; they had also been raised with him. That being true, they should seek the things that are above. Paul adds a significant qualifying clause, “where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God.” They had died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, had been buried with him in baptism, and raised with him, and he now occupied the seat of authority in heaven; they should therefore now seek his guidance and blessings, instead of listening to Judaizing teachers, or to those who corrupt the gospel with heathen philosophy. They should set their minds on things above, not on earthly things. Christians are prone to have their mind set too much on earthly pleasures, earthly goods, and earthly philosophy. We strive to obtain the things upon which our mind is set. We go where we have our mind set.

*The Sinner Died.*—“For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” This is a strong expression; the sinner dies, and his life is henceforth hidden from view. He lives the Christ life. “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me.” (Gal. 2: 20.) Christ is now our life; we are not living our own lives. Someday he will be manifested again; then we also shall be manifested with him in glory. “We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is.” (1 John 3: 2.)

#### Christ Is All, and in All (Verses 5-11)

Christ should fill the whole horizon of the Christian. No other authority, no other religion, no other teaching, and no other life, but his, should have any attraction for the Christian. Because the Christian is his, he must put to death the sinful things of his former life—the sexual sins, all evil desires. These immoral and degrading practices, some of which are too filthy to mention, were common among the people of that time. Another great sin, but of a different nature, is covetousness. The covetous person has his heart set on gain and trusts in money as the chief source of good things. Because covetousness is, in reality, trust in money, it is idolatry. Measured by this standard, there are many idolaters in all civilized countries.

*God's Wrath.*—Because of such sins as those just mentioned, the wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience. People like to forget that God is a God of wrath as well as a God of love. “Our God is a consuming fire.” (Heb. 12: 29.) “For the wrath of God is



revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness." (Rom. 1: 18.) But if the sinner turns from his sins, he is no longer a son of disobedience. The Colossians had been guilty of such sins, but are now exhorted to put them all away.

*Other Sins.*—They were also exhorted to put away anger, wrath, and malice. These are expressions of different degrees of ill feelings toward one for a wrong or fancied wrong. When anger arises, it should not be cherished lest it lead to wrath and even malice. When one's feelings are aroused, it is easy to rail at others and to indulge in shameful words. Such things frequently lead to serious trouble. There is no use for a person to seek to excuse himself on the grounds of his temper. He can cure himself of any such outbursts, if he wants to do so; and the language of Paul demands that we do so.

*Lie Not.*—It seems strange that it is necessary to warn Christians not to lie to one another. Christians have put off the old man, that is, the old way of living, and have put on the new man. The new man is the new way Christians must live. It should be an easy matter for a Christian to keep from telling lies.

*The Renewing.*—When a person becomes a Christian, all his sins are forgiven him. He is then free from all guilt—as free from guilt as if he had never sinned. He is a new creature—a mere babe in Christ. He must build a new character; and that is not done by a sudden miracle, nor by a single impulse. It is a growth, a continuous renewal. "Though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day." (2 Cor. 4: 16.) This continued renewing requires constant effort. "Be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Rom. 12: 2.) There can be no improvement in the life without a renewing of the mind. People live out in their lives what they have in their minds. Fill the mind full of God's thoughts, and the life will be a divine life. In this way the life is renewed.

*All Nations One in Christ.*—For centuries the law of Moses stood as a wall between Jews and Gentiles; but that wall was broken down when Christ died for all men. "For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." (Eph. 2: 14-16.) All now stand on an equal footing before God. In Christ "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all." Jews considered all other people as Gentiles. The Greeks regarded others than Greeks as barbarians. The Scythians were considered the fiercest of the barbarians. Of course, slaves had no social standing. But in Christ all such distinctions were banished. They were all one in Christ—all racial and social barriers were broken down, and the slave was as important as the master.

### The Gentler Christian Graces (Verses 12-14)

Some of the required Christian characteristics are apparently contradictory, but these opposing traits are essential to a well-developed



character. They give balance and poise, and keep one from being lopsided. Love and hate are opposites, yet a Christian must love and hate. "Hate the evil, and love the good." (Amos 5: 15.) The New Testament uses even stronger language: "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." (Rom. 12: 9.) We must fight sin and false teaching with all our might, but must not become harsh and tyrannical in doing so. The memory that we were once sinners, and some of us wrapped up in false doctrine, should fill us with compassion for those who are yet in sin and ignorance. Compassion is a Christ-like quality. He was moved with compassion at the sight of physical suffering; he also had compassion for people in sin and ignorance. "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd." (Matt. 9: 36.) Jesus rebuked severely the selfish leaders, but dealt gently with the common people. He dealt kindly with all, even with the false leaders, for a person must sometimes be severe in order to be kind. The surgeon's work is an illustration.

*Forgiving Each Other.*—The only hope any of us have in heaven is based on the forgiveness of God. If he does not forgive us, we are doomed. We are to forgive each other; even as the Lord forgave us. To forgive another is to cease to regard him as guilty of any wrong. Repentance makes forgiveness possible, for when a person repents he ceases to be guilty at heart. He can then be regarded as not guilty. That is forgiveness. God forgives only those who repent. But as my brother is required to forgive me, it is my duty to make it possible for him to forgive me; and not only to make it possible for him to do so, but to make it easy for him to do so.

*Above All, Love.*—"Above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." Love is above all, or superior to all, because it regulates all. If a person loves as he should love, he practices all the other required graces; for genuine love seeks the greatest good of the object loved. If we love others, we do what we can to save them, and to bring to them every good thing possible. It is the bond that binds all the other graces into a perfect whole.

### Called in One Body (Verse 15)

Christians are all members of the one body, which is the church. (Col. 1: 18.) "The peace of Christ" is the peace of which Christ is the author. The law was taken out of the way so that Jew and Gentile might be brought together into this one body, "so making peace." (Eph. 2: 16-18.) The one body should be at peace with itself. We were reconciled to God in the one body so that we might be at peace with him and with one another. This peace should rule our hearts.

### Singing (Verses 16, 17)

To let the word of Christ dwell in us is to cherish it in our hearts, and not merely to memorize it; and to let it dwell in our hearts richly is to be full of the word of Christ. When this is done by the whole church there will be improvement in the singing, both in the kind of songs sung and in the spirit in which they are sung. This is important, for Christians are to teach and admonish one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. This requires (1) that



the songs be more than a mere jumble of rimes, (2) that they be true in sentiment, and (3) that they be sung so that people can understand the words of the song. No provision is here made for instrumental music to accompany the singing; in fact, such music hinders the teaching and admonishing required, for such music tends to hinder the hearing of the words of the song. Another requirement must not be overlooked, namely, "singing with grace in your hearts unto God." This requires that the heart accompany the singing, that we enter into the spirit of the song. Singing should not be mere lip service. For comparison, notice Eph. 5: 18, 19: "And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." Each passage throws light on the other. If one would be filled with the Spirit, he must let the word of Christ dwell in him richly. If we would teach and admonish one another in singing, we must speak to one another in singing. A little attention to this will show how necessary it is for singers to speak so they can be understood. To make melody with the heart and to sing with grace in the heart is the same thing. But we must sing, as well as do other things, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our King, and we do things by his authority. We cannot do anything by his authority, which he has not authorized. He is also our High Priest; in worship we approach God through him, or in his name. We cannot ignore him, and approach God in worship. He is our go-between, our mediator. In our prayers we must come to God through him, or in his name. He is our all, and must be in all we do.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Did you ever ride a bicycle? If so, you know that you missed a rock in the road by setting your mind on where you wanted to go, and not on the rock. How natural, then, the admonition: "Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth."

Good resolutions avail nothing, if we do not fill our minds with new ideas and new ideals. You cannot improve if you still retain the same old stock of ideas and motives. Growth comes not by resolution, but by food and exercise.

Do you sing or do you just play a tune with your mouth? Did you ever listen to a congregation singing a song that was new to you? Could you understand the words of the song? People should sing with the spirit and with the understanding, that is, they should put heart into their singing, and sing so people can understand the singing.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The well-balanced character.

How is character renewed, or built?

Whom should we forgive?

How to make singing more pleasing to God.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.  
Locate Colosse.  
What was disturbing the church at Colosse?

*Verses 1-4*

What fact had Paul stated in chapter 2, verse 12?  
What does a burial presuppose?  
What question did Paul ask?  
What now does he exhort them to do?  
Discuss verse 1.  
We are likely to have our minds too much on what?  
"For ye died"—what does this expression mean?  
How is our life hid with Christ in God?

*Verses 5-11*

What is Christ to the Christian?  
The Christian is to put to death or put away what?  
Why is covetousness idolatry?  
Give the Bible teaching on the wrath of God.  
What other sins must the Christian put away?  
What is the condition of the new convert?

How is character renewed, or built?  
What passages show it to be a gradual process?  
What is said as to racial distinctions?  
What made it possible for the Jew and Gentile to be in one body?

*Verses 12-14*

How is a balanced character developed?  
What must be the Christian's attitude toward sin and false teaching?  
Discuss the gentler graces Paul mentions.  
What is forgiveness?  
What makes forgiveness possible?  
Why is love above all?

*Verse 15*

Of what are all Christians members?  
Show that the body is the church.

*Verses 16, 17*

Repeat from memory verse 16.  
How can we fulfill the requirement to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly?  
How may we fulfill the command to teach in singing?  
In what respect does our singing need improving most?  
Discuss verse 17.  
Discuss the reflections.

*Lesson VII—November 14, 1937*

## THE GOSPEL PREACHER

1 Tim. 4: 6-16; 2 Tim. 2: 1-4

6 If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed *until now*:

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables. And exercise thyself unto godliness: 8 For bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come.

9 Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance.

10 For to this end we labor and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe.

11 These things command and teach.

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity.

13 Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15 Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all.

16 Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee.

1 Thou therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

3 Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

4 No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier.



GOLDEN TEXT.—“Neglect not the gift that is in thee.” (1 Tim. 4: 14.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 20: 31-35.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

November 8.	M.	-----	A Good Minister of Christ (1 Tim. 4: 6-16)
November 9.	T.	-----	A Good Soldier of Christ (2 Tim. 2: 1-13)
November 10.	W.	-----	A Faithful Witness (Acts 20: 18-30)
November 11.	T.	-----	A Good Pastor (1 Pet. 5: 1-7)
November 12.	F.	-----	God's Steward (Titus 1: 5-9)
November 13.	S.	-----	A Faithful Minister (Acts 20: 31-35)
November 14.	S.	-----	The Good Shepherd (John 10: 7-18)

### THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—First Timothy was probably written A.D. 64 or 65. Some assign an earlier date. Second Timothy was written probably A.D. 67. These dates rest on the assumption that Paul was released from his Roman imprisonment which Luke records in Acts, First Timothy being written while he was free, Second Timothy after he was again made a prisoner. To set forth the facts and suppositions on which this theory is based would require more space than can be devoted to it in this work.

*Places.*—First Timothy may have been written at Nicopolis; Second Timothy was certainly written at Rome. Timothy was at Ephesus.

*Persons.*—Paul and Timothy.

*Lesson Links.*—On Paul's second missionary journey from Antioch, when he reached Lystra, he found a young disciple of promise named Timothy. He was of good report both at Lystra and Iconium. Later Paul calls him his son. It is almost certain therefore that Paul converted him during his visit to that section on his first missionary journey from Antioch. (See Acts 14: 1-7.) Paul induced Timothy to accompany him as a helper. (Acts 16: 1-3.) From that time on Timothy was much with Paul in his labors. However, at the time of this first letter, Timothy was at Ephesus. Paul had exhorted him to remain there to correct certain false and hurtful theories that were being propagated there. (1 Tim. 1: 3-6.) It seems that these disturbing teachers were Judaizers, seeking to bind the law of Moses on the Gentiles; for Paul says they were “desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm.” These false teachers, whom Timothy was to seek to correct, were professed Christians, posing as gospel preachers. Some of these had already made shipwreck concerning the faith. (1: 19, 20.) He gave Timothy instructions concerning elders and deacons. (Chapter 3.) He hoped to visit Timothy at an early date; but, if he should be delayed, he wanted Timothy to be able to teach men how to behave in the family of God. (3: 14, 15.) It had been expressly spoken by the Spirit, “that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron.” They were seeking to bind on Christians the requirements of the law concerning the eating of meats. It is not clear on what grounds they based their contention against marriage. But they were wrong both as to eating meats and as to marriage.



## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

## A Good Minister (Verses 6, 7)

"These things" perhaps referred to all the things Paul had said, but certainly the things mentioned in verses one to four were included in "these things." To counteract the Jews' teaching on eating meats, it would be necessary for Timothy to show that the law of Moses, which prohibited the eating of certain meats, had been abolished, and was therefore no longer binding. He would have to show then that, as Christ is now king, he has the supreme authority. He could show them that even Moses had said, "Unto him ye shall hearken." (See Deut. 18: 15-19.) By being faithful to the task assigned him, Timothy would be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine which he had followed. In the New Testament the word minister means servant. Timothy would be a good servant, if he performed faithfully his duty as a preacher. "But refuse profane and old wives' fables." It seems that this language applies to the contentions of Judaizing teachers; such teaching was as worthless as the fables which old women told for the entertainment of children.

## Godliness Is Profitable Here and Hereafter (Verses 8-10)

"Exercise thyself unto godliness." Godliness is piety, reverence. To be pious requires that rebellion, egotism, and arrogance be subdued. This requires effort, exercise. The word translated exercise is the word the Greeks used to express their activities in training for their athletic contests. Timothy was to exercise—train—himself for godliness. To be godly therefore requires self-discipline. "For bodily exercise is profitable for a little." Paul is not condemning bodily exercise; he rather endorses it. It is profitable. But there is a more important exercise. "But godliness is profitable for all things." It promotes happiness and contentment in this life, and all the glories of heaven in the life to come. No good thing is lost by being a pious servant of God, but the real, worth-while things are gained. To the worldly-minded this does not seem worthy of all acceptance. On this point Jesus makes a very definite statement in Mark 10: 29, 30.

*We Labor and Strive.*—Labor and strive are strong words, expressive of determined effort. Christianity is not merely a diversion in which to pass our time when there is nothing else to be done. It is a life to be lived, a mission to be fulfilled. The word from which we have strive refers to the contest in the Grecian games. So we have the training and the actual contest. Both in his training and in the contest the athlete had only one thing in view, namely, to win. Nothing was allowed to interfere. This should give the Christian an idea as to the singleness of purpose that should characterize the Christian. The athlete had his hope set on the prize; the Christian has his "hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe."

## Timothy's Youth and Authority (Verses 11, 12)

"These things command and teach." It takes authority to command. Whence came Timothy's authority? He was Paul's representative. He was an apostolic delegate. He also had a measure of



inspiration. Timothy is first introduced to us in these words: "And he [Paul] came also to Derbe and to Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewess that believed; but his father was a Greek. The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium." (Acts 16: 1, 2.) He must have become a disciple during Paul's former visit to this section three or four years before this visit. At this visit he must have been at least eighteen years of age, more likely twenty; for he had become well known in that region as an active Christian. This was about A.D. 49 or 50. The first letter to Timothy was written fourteen or fifteen years later, or when Timothy was thirty-five years of age, or nearly so. That he was still called a youth is explained by the fact that the ancients divided life into three periods—childhood, youth, and old age. Timothy was not a boy, but he was yet in the vigor of manhood. It was necessary that he guard well his steps, lest people regard him as too gay and frivolous, and his influence be injured.

*An Example.*—A preacher is looked upon as an example, though he may not be a good example. A good example is helpful in that it stimulates and guides. Hence, Paul exhorted Timothy to be an example to the believer, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity. His preaching should be true to the word, his faith should be sincere. His love should be centered on the right things, for a man's love determines greatly what he is. His manner of living counts for much. He should not be extravagant nor wasteful; neither should he be slouchy and filthy. Honesty and integrity should characterize all his dealings. And he should be pure and clean morally. He should be firm and courageous in advocating and defending the truth; but should avoid all senseless wrangling and strife. "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses." (6: 11, 12.)

### "Be Diligent in These Things" (Verses 13-15)

No progress in any worth-while thing is made without diligence. Paul would have Timothy to give attention to reading. Like all other preachers, he needed to increase his fund of information. No preacher should allow himself to be mentally lazy and dull. But the preacher should read with a purpose. That is implied in this charge to Timothy: "Give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching." Timothy was not to read for his own personal benefit only, but also that he might be the better able to exhort and to teach.

*The Gift.*—The gift that was in Timothy must have been some spiritual gift, most likely a measure of inspiration. It seems, therefore, that any of these miraculous gifts of the Spirit, if neglected, would be taken away. It also appears that the gifts might be increased by a proper use of them. "For which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying on of my hands." (2 Tim. 1: 6.) It appears therefore that the gift was conferred on Timothy by the laying on of the hands of Paul and the elders. Timothy was commanded to



give himself wholly to his work as a preacher. If a preacher gives attention to his study and uses his knowledge to help others, he will grow in power. Paul exhorted Timothy to be diligent in these things that his progress might be manifest to all. "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2: 15.)

### How to Save One's Self and Others (Verse 16)

Jesus the Christ is the Savior of men. "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." (Acts 4: 12.) And yet Paul says to Timothy: "Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." Jude also said, "And some save, snatching them out of the fire." (Verse 23.) A Christian can be an instrument in God's hands in leading people to Christ. He is therefore an agent of God in saving men. This is God's way of saving people, and the only way any one has been saved since Jesus ascended on high. To save people he sent his apostles and others out to preach the gospel everywhere. But a preacher must take heed to himself first. He must prepare himself by giving attention to reading. He must give attention to his conduct—he must live soberly, righteously, and godly. With these qualifications, he is prepared to teach others and lead them to Christ. In so doing, he saves himself and others. A Christian is not compelled to save others, for one man's salvation does not depend upon the salvation of another; but he must do his duty in an effort to save others. He cannot be Christ-like unless he seeks diligently to save others.

### Pass the Gospel On to Others (2 Tim. 2: 1, 2)

Timothy was evidently Paul's convert—his son in the gospel. Grace, in this first verse, may refer to the favor God bestowed upon Timothy in assigning to him the great work at Ephesus; or it may refer to the spiritual gift bestowed upon him; or it may refer to the gospel. If the latter, then Paul was exhorting him to be strong in the gospel, strong in preaching it to others. This is likely the true meaning. Timothy was therefore to be strong for the gospel, and not to yield to the Judaizers nor to other false teachers. Paul had been Timothy's wise and faithful teacher. Timothy must not keep to himself what he had learned. "The same commit thou to faithful men." There are in every church some men who are more faithful than others. The stability of the church depends on such men. Timothy was to make a special effort to fill such men full of the word of God. They would be able to use the knowledge to good advantage. To make a special effort to drill such men is not favoritism; it is common sense. Such men would be faithful in teaching others.

### A Good Soldier of Christ Jesus (Verses 3, 4)

Christians are soldiers in the army of the Lord, but men who have devoted their lives to preaching are soldiers in a special way. Soldiers are required to suffer many hardships. A good soldier endures the necessary hardships without complaint. It comes in the



line of soldiering. A soldier who tried to evade the dangers and hardships would not be counted a good soldier. The preacher who seeks the soft places, and leaves others to endure the hardships, is not a good soldier of Jesus Christ. The Roman soldier was not allowed to have any other occupation while he was in the service. Preachers now sometimes scatter their energies in too many directions.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Paul's final charge to Timothy was, "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching." (2 Tim. 4: 2.)

With Paul the word of God, and the gospel of God's son, was the only remedy for sin. It was God's power for saving men. To him every other doctrine, every other religion, was false and hurtful to men. He loved God and he loved men; and he loved the gospel because it was of God and because it saved men.

He loved Timothy, and he knew what sufferings he would have to undergo in preaching the gospel; yet he exhorted Timothy to be faithful in preaching it. He would have gladly spared Timothy that suffering had he not known that Timothy's own salvation and the salvation of others depended on his preaching the word. Paul himself had set Timothy a worthy example. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing." (2 Tim. 4: 7, 8.)

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Why preach the gospel.

Paul the model preacher.

Timothy's training before Paul left him at Ephesus.

Wherein preachers sometimes fail.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, places, and persons.

Where do we find Timothy first mentioned?

Where was Timothy when Paul wrote to him?

What was his mission there?

What is said of the false teachers?

What had the Spirit said about these teachers?

#### *Verses 6, 7*

How could Timothy meet the false teachers?

How can a preacher be a good minister?

What is the meaning of the word minister?

#### *Verses 8-10*

What is the meaning of the word godliness?

How can one become godly?

What is said of bodily exercise and godliness?

What illustrates the diligence a Christian should exercise?

#### *Verses 11, 12*

What authority did Timothy have to command?

What is said of Timothy in Acts 16: 1, 2?

From all the facts, how young could he have been at that time?

How old then must he have been when

First Timothy was written?

Explain how he was called a youth.

In what was he to be an example?

Discuss the terms used.

What was Timothy to follow after?

## Verses 13-15

What is necessary to progress?  
To what was Timothy to give heed?  
Why should a preacher study?  
He was not to neglect what?

## Verse 16

Who is our Savior?  
How then can one person save another?  
To what must a person take heed?  
Why must we seek to save others?

## 2 Tim. 2: 1, 2

Why did Paul call Timothy his child?  
In what was he to be strong?  
What was he to do with what he had learned?  
Why make a special effort with faithful men?

## Verses 3, 4

Why are Christians called soldiers?  
What may a soldier always expect?  
What other thing does Paul say about a soldier?  
Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson VIII—November 21, 1937

## CHRISTIAN WORKERS

1 Cor. 3: 10-15; Gal. 6: 6-10

10 According to the grace of God which was given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder I laid a foundation; and another buildeth thereon. But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 But if any man buildeth on the foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire.

6 But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.

9 And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Gal. 6: 9.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 130.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

November 15.	M.	.....	The Christian a Builder (1 Cor. 3: 10-15)
November 16.	T.	.....	Sowing and Reaping (Gal. 6: 6-10)
November 17.	W.	.....	True Riches (1 Tim. 6: 11-21)
November 18.	T.	.....	The Workers' Reward (John 4: 32-38)
November 19.	F.	.....	The Works of God (John 6: 26-35)
November 20.	S.	.....	The Greater Work (John 14: 11-14)
November 21.	S.	.....	Spiritual Service (Rom. 12: 1-8)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—First Corinthians was written A.D. 57 or 58. Galatians was probably written A.D. 50 or 52.

**Places.**—First Corinthians was written at Ephesus; Galatians, probably at Antioch.

**Persons.**—Paul, the Christians at Corinth, and those in Galatia.



*Lesson Links.*—Paul labored more abundantly than any other apostle. (1 Cor. 15: 10.) He felt a deep concern for all the churches. (2 Cor. 11: 28.) It was natural for him to be especially interested in the churches that he had planted, such as the church at Corinth and the churches of Galatia. These letters to the churches reveal to some extent the condition of the churches; some of the churches were far from what they should have been. In some cases the condition of the churches called forth the letters. That was true respecting the letters to the church at Corinth and to the churches of Galatia. The church at Corinth had written Paul a letter of inquiry. (1 Cor. 7: 1.) Conditions were bad in that church. In his first letter he gave attention first to the divisions that were springing up in that church. Among the Greeks each outstanding teacher of philosophy had his following. It was easy for their untutored minds to think of Christianity and its outstanding teachers in the same light, and to adopt certain preachers as the heads of their parties. Paul shows them that Christianity is a matter of revelation from God, and that preachers were only the agents through whom God made known his will. His revelation was the same, no matter who made it. The preacher was merely the minister through whom they had been led to believe the gospel; or, adopting a figure, Paul reminds them that they were God's cultivated field, which he had planted and Apollos had watered. The field belonged to neither him nor Apollos. Changing the figure, he calls the church "God's building." On that conception of the church the first part of our lesson is based.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### The Foundation of the Church (Verses 10, 11)

A good building must have a substantial foundation. The church of God can be built upon only one foundation, namely, Jesus as the Christ the Son of the living God; not on Jesus as a man, not on him as a great teacher, but upon him as the Messiah, the Son of God. If Jesus be no more than a man and a great teacher, there is no foundation, no excuse or reason, for a church to be built on him any more than on any other man. Paul laid the foundation for the church at Corinth. He preached to them Jesus as the Christ. (Acts 18: 5.) "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." (1 Cor. 2: 2.) "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Of course, Paul did not mean that there could be other foundations for other groups or societies. Every organization of men has a foundation of some sort. The foundation of any party or any organization is the excuse for its existence, the basis or principle upon which it operates. Take away its foundation, its excuse for existence, and it collapses. Any sort of notion, whim, or person may be a foundation for a party in the church. But a church of Jesus Christ can be built only on the great truth that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God. That is the foundation rock upon which Jesus said he would build his church, and that is the foundation Paul laid for the church at Corinth.

*Another Buildeth Thereon.*—A wise master builder lays a foundation that is suitable for the structure to be built upon it. Paul was a wise master builder. He did not preach himself, nor the wisdom



of men; he did not preach in persuasive words of man's wisdom. He preached Christ Jesus. After his departure from Corinth, others built on the foundation which he had laid. His admonition then is needed now: "But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon."

### Building Material (Verses 12, 13)

Paul is not here talking about the building of Christian character, but of building the church. He had in mind the church at Corinth as a building, but the lesson will apply to the building of any church. Various kinds of material were used by the people in building their houses; Paul mentions six kinds, namely, gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, and stubble. These materials represent the different kinds of people who are added to the church. Some worthless material is brought into the church. Such people are a source of weakness to the church. Not being thoroughly converted to the Lord, they frequently cause troubles and disturbances in the church. That is one reason why builders should observe Paul's injunction, "Let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon." It seems that much of that worthless material had been built into the church at Corinth. It is better to build into the church gold, silver, costly stones, even if not such a great show is made.

*Every Man's Work Tested.*—But each builder's work will be made manifest. If not before then, it will certainly be made manifest in the day of judgment. Fire in this verse may refer to the severe trials—fiery trials—through which Christians must pass; such trials test men. That was especially true when governments persecuted people for being Christians. They were sometimes actually tested by literal fire, being given their choice of renouncing Christ or being burned. In such cases these words had their literal application: "The fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is."

### A Reward or a Loss (Verses 14, 15)

The highest rewards and the greatest losses are not material. Any parent can realize this when he brings it home to his own children. No material gain will bring to him so much joy and happiness as to see his children develop into devoted Christians of great power and ability, and no material loss would bring such sense of loss as to see his children drift into all sorts of sin, corruption, and crime. A man's converts to Christ are his children in the gospel. What great reward there is in seeing one's children in the gospel stand every test, and gain strength in the process; "greater joy have I none than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth." (3 John 4.) What a loss John would have felt to hear that his children in the gospel had departed from the truth. And these things are true of any genuine Christian worker. If the material a man now builds into the church abides the fiery trials and persecutions, he shall receive a reward; but if his building material is burned up, he shall suffer loss. It may be that the builder is sincere, that he is overly enthusiastic, and that he overpersuades people to be baptized. If he is sincere and honest, though his work is burned up, yet he himself shall be saved.

*Additional Note.*—This section of our lesson is not complete unless we include verses sixteen and seventeen. In these verses we learn



the kind of building the church is. "Ye are a temple of God." Nothing but the finest material went into Solomon's temple. The church is a greater temple than Solomon's temple, and nothing but the characters represented as gold, silver, and costly stones should be built into it. But as the builder cannot look into the hearts of people, he will, of necessity, build into this temple some wood, hay, and stubble. But there is a warning to all who do not have a proper regard for God's holy temple. "If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye."

### "God Is Not Mocked" (Gal. 6: 6, 7)

"But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." Or more literally, "But let the one being taught the word have fellowship with the one teaching in all good things." Fellowship is partnership. The one who is being taught must share his good things with the teacher. Do not give him a mere pittance, not the scraps, but your good things. "Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel." (1 Cor. 9: 14.) That is God's ordained plan; and no one can dodge it and be saved. We may deceive others as to our liberality. We may even give a small portion of what we should give, and deceive ourselves into thinking that we are giving all we should; but we cannot deceive God. "God is not mocked." We reap as we sow. "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." (2 Cor. 9: 6.) Jesus gave abundantly; he gave his all. If the need arises, we should give our all. God is not mocked; he knows.

### Sowing to the Flesh or to the Spirit (Verse 8)

The connection shows that Paul is talking about the use of money. Sowing to the flesh does not necessarily mean living a morally corrupt life. A man sows to the flesh when he spends his money for luxuries and things to gratify his pride; that is, he is sowing to the flesh when he spends his money for his own ease, comfort, and pleasure, and neglects to give as he has been prospered. A man may sow to the flesh and live a morally clean life while doing so. The rich man of the sixteenth chapter of Luke sowed to the flesh. He wore fine clothing, and fared sumptuously every day. He spent nothing on poor Lazarus. The rich fool of the parable recorded in Luke 12: 16-21 sowed to the flesh. He was a fool because he sowed to the flesh. "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." So are thousands of respectable people of today. People sow to the flesh in squandering their money on sports. One important way to sow to the Spirit is to share our money with those who preach the gospel. In fact, that is the special point Paul had in mind. In fact, there are only two ways that we can make any personal use of money, namely, spend it for our own selfish gratification, or use it to help others. We have our choice, and we know the results. Sowing to the flesh, we reap corruption; sowing to the Spirit, we reap life everlasting. It is worthy of note that eternal life comes as a result of our sowing to the Spirit. Our sowing determines our reaping—determines our destiny. The language shows conclusively that eternal life is conditional—conditioned on



the kind of sowing we do. If we sow to the flesh, we reap corruption; if we sow to the Spirit, we reap eternal life. In this connection read the description of the judgment as recorded in Matt. 25: 31-46. Those who relieved no sufferings were lost. Those who sow to the Spirit by using their times and means to help those who were in distress or in need will hear the Judge say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And this, because they helped the needy and distressed.

### The Reward Sure, If We Faint Not (Verses 9, 10)

For various reasons men's promises often fail; but "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness." (2 Pet. 3: 9.) God has his own time for the fulfilling of his promises. Because he does not fulfill the promise at the moment, but is long-suffering toward us, let us not count him slack concerning his promises as some do. Let us not, in the meantime, become weary in well-doing. In due time, God's own time, we shall reap, if we faint not. To faint is to grow weary and fall by the wayside. If we do that, we shall not reap life everlasting.

*The Conclusion.*—In his conclusion on sowing and reaping, Paul makes a wide application of the principle. Not only are we to aid those who are preaching the word, but, as we have opportunity, we are to do good unto all men. No lines are to be drawn against any class or race. Here Christianity excels man's fraternal orders. Christian benevolence is not confined to Christians and their children. Human needs, and human suffering, wherever found, is the Christian's opportunity to do good. A Christian is not only to work with his hands to supply his own needs, thereby being able to live an honest life (1 Thess. 4: 11, 12), but he is to work at any honest thing so as to have something to give to those who are in need. Though he is to do good to all men, as he has opportunity, he is to make it a special point to do good toward those who are of the household of faith.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

The church is God's holy temple. Every professed Christian should shrink in horror at the thought of doing anything to mar it. Cultivate a deep regard for sacred things. David, though he frequently took the lives of enemies, would not lay violent hands on his greatest enemy, Saul, because Saul was the Lord's anointed. (1 Sam. 24: 6; 26; 9.) No man can injure the church and be guiltless. A party, or faction, in the church cannot be built on the truth that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God. Something else must give it existence. The thing that causes it to exist, the thing on which it is based, and without which it would not exist, is its foundation. No Christian should belong to any religious group that is not founded solely and wholly on the essential truth that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. Jesus cured the sick, healed the lame, and fed the hungry by miracles. We cannot do these things instantly and miraculously as he did; but in our limited way we can imitate him. Christianity has done much to stir up in the world the spirit of helpfulness. It has made living conditions better wherever its influence has gone, and it has stirred people to provide various means of helping the unfortunate and relieving distress.



## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The various foundations on which parties are built.  
 The regard we should have for the church.  
 Helping the needy and distressed.  
 The influence of Christianity on the world.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.  
 What does Paul say of his labors?  
 What of his interest in the churches?  
 What were the conditions of churches then?  
 Name some of the defects in the church at Corinth.

*Verses 10, 11*

On what is the church of God built?  
 How did Paul lay the foundation?  
 On what may parties be founded?  
 In what way is the church built?  
 What admonition does Paul give the builders?

*Verses 12, 13*

What building materials did Paul mention?  
 What is represented by these various materials?  
 How will these materials be tested?

*Verses 14, 15*

What do you consider the highest rewards?  
 Quote 3 John 4.  
 How may the builder suffer loss?  
 What kind of building is the church?  
 What sort of material went into Solomon's temple?

Of what should the church be built?  
 What is said of one who destroys a church?

*Gal. 6: 6, 7*

Give the meaning of Gal. 6: 6.  
 Quote 1 Cor. 9: 14, and comment on it.  
 What does Paul say about sowing?  
 What does he say in 2 Cor. 9: 6?  
 What is meant by the expression, "God is not mocked"?

*Verse 8*

How do people sow to the flesh?  
 What special application was Paul making?  
 Give some examples of sowing to the flesh.  
 How may we sow to the Spirit?  
 Give the results of the different ways of sowing.  
 What shows eternal life to be conditional?  
 How does the judgment scene of Matt. 25: 31-46 illustrate the results of sowing?

*Verses 9, 10*

What admonition does Paul give?  
 What does Peter say about God's promises?  
 How may we fail to reap life eternal?  
 What is Paul's conclusion about sowing?  
 How does Christianity excel?  
 How has it helped the poor and needy?  
 Who should be the special objects of our benevolence?  
 Discuss the reflections.

*Lesson IX—November 28, 1937*

## CHRISTIAN FRUITFULNESS

## John 15: 1-16

- 1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.
- 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit.
- 3 Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you.
- 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me.
- 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing.
- 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.
- 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you.
- 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples.

- 9 Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you: abide ye in my love.  
 10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.  
 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.  
 12 This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you.  
 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.  
 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you.  
 15 No longer do I call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known unto you.  
 16 Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples." (John 15: 8.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Gal. 5: 15-25.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

November 22.	M.	Christian Fruit Bearing (John 15: 1-16)
November 23.	T.	Fruit-Bearing Christians (Luke 8: 9-15)
November 24.	W.	The Fruit God Expects (Matt. 7: 15-23)
November 25.	T.	A Disappointing Yield (Isa. 5: 1-7)
November 26.	F.	The Fruit of Righteousness (James 3: 13-18)
November 27.	S.	The Secret of Fruit Bearing (John 12: 20-26)
November 28.	S.	The Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 15-25)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—A.D. 30. It was the night in which Jesus was betrayed, immediately after the Lord's Supper had been instituted, and before they went out to Gethsemane.

**Place.**—Jerusalem. They were in the upper room where they had eaten the Passover supper, and where the Lord's Supper had just been instituted.

**Persons.**—Jesus and the eleven apostles. Judas Iscariot had already gone out.

**Lesson Links.**—There is no direct historic connection between this lesson and any other lesson of this quarter. But as this quarter is devoted to "Studies in the Life of Christ," any lesson relating to Christian living is connected with every lesson of the quarter. There are so many things connected with the Christian life that a full discussion cannot be made of them in one quarter. However, the lessons of this quarter cover many phases of the Christian life. When Jesus spoke the words of this lesson, he was standing, as it were, in the very shadow of the cross. It was a solemn hour. Soon he would be dragged before the Sanhedrin and suffer their abuse and insults, and soon thereafter he would suffer the agony of the cross.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### The Vine and the Husbandman (Verses 1-3)

To the person who knows nothing of grape culture, the lesson is not so plain; but Palestine was a grape-growing country. In that country the vine and the wine were frequently used in figures of speech, and such figures were then easily understood by all. In the Old Testament the nation of Israel is spoken of as a vine; God was



the husbandman. In Psalm 80: 8-16 the nation is represented as a vine which Jehovah brought out of Egypt and planted in Canaan. The passage is worth reading even for the beauty of its imagery. That vine degenerated till it brought forth nothing but wild grapes, and Jehovah abandoned it. (See Isa. 5: 1-7.) Christ is now the true vine, and the Father is the husbandman. The vine bears fruit through its branches. Nothing is more worthless than the branch of a vine that bears no fruit; the husbandman prunes off all such branches. The branches that bear fruit are carefully pruned, and sprayed, when necessary. God knows how to care for his vine. "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you." They were cleansed of all unnecessary growths. Through the influence of the word they had been led to cast aside all evil and hurtful thoughts and practices. It is by means of the word that God dresses the vine and cleanses it.

### The Disciples, as Branches, Must Bear Fruit (Verses 4-6)

"I am the vine, ye are the branches." This expresses the close union that exists between Jesus and his disciples; there is no closer union than exists between the vine and its branches. The branch gets all of its life from the vine, and by it the vine is enabled to bear fruit. But the union must not be broken. Hence, the admonition, "Abide in me, and I in you." The meaning is, abide in me in order that I may abide in you. The very life of the vine abides in the branch so long as there is vital union between the two. A branch cannot bear fruit of itself; the vitality that produces the fruit comes from the vine. There must be a vital connection with Christ, or the disciple can bear no fruit. The disciple must be alive to Christ. Nothing is so fruitful as an active Christian who is fully alive to Christ. That requires reading the Bible, meditation, prayer, and faithful obedience. It requires, first of all, that we come into Christ. Certainly one who has never entered into Christ cannot abide in him. "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.) After we are baptized into Christ, we may, and should, abide in him. As nothing is so fine and useful as a fruit-bearing Christian, so nothing is so worthless as a professed Christian who has lost vital connection with Christ, and therefore bears no fruit. Such a one is cast forth as a branch, and is withered. The purpose of a branch is to bear fruit. If it will not bear fruit, then it is put to another use; it is used for fuel. Men gather the dead branches out of the vineyard and burn them. Men do not gather up worthless church members and burn them. In explaining another parable Jesus says the angels will burn the tares. (Matt. 13: 40-42.)

### Acceptable Prayer, and Discipleship (Verses 7, 8)

A man never becomes so powerful and conceited but that he, at times, feels dependent. He may not pray, but it is out of such feelings that prayer comes. But the Christian not only believes there is a higher power, he believes also that this higher power is his Father. If he will not hear the Christian's prayer, in what sense is he a Father? But there are limitations, two of which are stated here: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye



will, and it shall be done unto you." If his word, which is his will, abides in us, we will not pray for things contrary to his will. The Savior therefore tells us that if we abide in him and do his will, our requests will be answered. "Whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight." (1 John 3: 22.) In his prayer at the conclusion of the speech from which our lesson is taken, Jesus said, "I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do." (John 17: 4.) We can glorify the Father only by accomplishing the work he has given us to do; and that also is the only way in which we can bear fruit. By faithful obedience we bear much fruit, and so honor the Father. And that is the only way in which we can be the disciples of Jesus. Jesus was not talking about being his disciple merely in name, but in reality. "Jesus therefore said to those Jews that had believed him, If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8: 31, 32.)

### How to Abide in His Love (Verses 9-11)

There is no way for us to measure the love the Father has for the Son. We, the finite, cannot measure the infinite. We therefore do not know how much Jesus loves his disciples. We do know that he loved them enough to die for them. He loves the world, but he loves his disciples in a special way. We might forfeit that love, for he admonishes, "Abide ye in my love." This shows that we might get away from that love. But Jesus tells us plainly how to abide in his love. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." It is therefore clear that if we do not keep his commandments, we shall not abide in his love. "Even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." It is in the keeping of his commandments that his love and ours meet; for he says again, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." (John 14: 21.) If we love him, we keep his commandments; and if we keep his commandments, he loves us. It is strange that in the very shadow of the cross, Jesus should speak of his joy. But that is one of the glorious things about union with God; we never know the full heights of joy in God till we come to the place where all earthly things fail us, and we come to rely fully upon our heavenly Father. But we can be full of joy only when we keep his commandments and know that we are pleasing to him. Consciousness of guilt takes all the joy out of living; full assurance that we are pleasing to the heavenly Father fills us with joy unspeakable.

### The Greatest Love (Verses 12, 13)

There are degrees in love. There is love, and there is greater love. The strength of love is measured by the amount of the sacrifice one is willing to make for the object loved. Certain rulers who believed on Jesus did not love him enough to cause them to confess him; "for they loved the glory that is of men more than the glory that is of God." They loved the glory that is of God, or there could have been no comparison; but their love for God was not great enough to prompt them to sacrifice their standing with their fellows. The supreme proof of love is the giving of one's life for his friend.



"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." No man can do more for a friend. "But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5: 8.) In so doing, he died for his enemies; but he died for them that they might become his friends. In reality therefore he died for his friends, for his death brings no blessings to those who remain his enemies. Hence, we are commanded to love one another as he loved us. We must therefore make any needed sacrifice for one another, for if love leads one to make the supreme sacrifice, it will lead him to make any smaller sacrifice. "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth." (1 Cor. 13: 4-8.) This describes how love behaves toward the object loved. Love takes into consideration the other person's peace of mind, his physical comfort and well-being; and, above all, love seeks the eternal salvation of the object loved, for that is the greatest good. To aid another in reaching that goal sometimes requires us to sacrifice our own feelings, and reprove, rebuke, and exhort. It may require a resort to discipline, "to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. 5: 5.) If we do not love a person enough to sacrifice our feelings and to be severe when severity is necessary, we do not really love.

### The Friends of Christ (Verses 14, 15)

"There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." (Prov. 18: 24.) A friend is one who has more than a passing interest in you. He will stand by you when everybody else and everything fails you. He will look to your interests; he will not try to use you for his own gain. "Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you." In doing his commands we are helping him to carry out his plans and purpose. No matter how we feel about it, if we disobey him, and thus hinder him in his plans and purposes, we are practically his enemies. A friend helps, an enemy hinders. "No longer do I call you servants; . . . but I have called you friends." Numerous references show that the followers of Christ are still his servants; but they are more than servants. A servant knows nothing of the plans and purposes of his master, and cares nothing for them. But if a servant is also a friend, he takes a lively interest in promoting the prosperity of his master. The true disciple of Jesus is both a servant and a friend; he is a better servant because he is a friend. Being a friend of the Lord, he is interested in rendering faithful service to him. And a person confides in his friends; he talks confidently to his friends. He opens up his heart to a friend. As proof that Jesus regarded his disciples as friends, he reminds them that he had told them all things that he had heard from his Father.

### Jesus Chose the Apostles (Verse 16)

It is well to notice that Jesus was speaking of choosing the eleven, not that they might be saved, but that they might be apostles. They

did not choose themselves for that office; he chose them for that responsible position. He chose them out of his group of followers. (Mark 3: 13-19.) Out of the group of disciples whom he called up into the mountain he chose twelve men, and appointed them to the apostleship. He appointed them that they might go out into the world and bear fruit, that is, that they might convert others to be his disciples. He trained them for their great work, and, in giving them their final charge, promised to be with them. (Matt. 28: 18-20.) He assures them that their prayers would be answered. But they must ask in his name; prayers must go to the Father through Jesus.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

A branch of a vine may become infected so that it bears no fruit. Of course, a dead branch bears no fruit. So it is with church members. But this should be kept in mind: The dead branch was once alive. Dead branches do not grow on vines. But branches die, and are then cut off and burned. The once living branch is dead—lost.

Jesus puts much emphasis on keeping his commandments. Commands are given to be obeyed. Disobedience to these commands is lawlessness. For every one to follow his own notions is anarchy. One who loves Jesus wants to do the things that please him. "If a man love me, he will keep my word." (John 14: 23.)

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

A study of David's parable in Psalm 80: 8-16.

The degeneracy of Israel. (Isa. 5: 1-7.)

How the Christian bears fruit.

May a Christian fall away and be lost?

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.  
On what occasion did Jesus speak the words of this lesson?

#### *Verses 1-3*

Give the substance of David's parable in Psalm 80: 8-16.  
How did Isaiah describe the degeneracy of Israel?  
In the parable of our lesson, name the vine, branches, and husbandman.  
What does the husbandman do?  
How are branches purged, or cleansed?

#### *Verses 4-6*

How does a vine bear fruit?  
How is life maintained in the disciples as a branch?  
What is necessary before one can abide in Christ?  
How does one enter Christ?  
When is a professed Christian worthless?

What is the purpose of a branch?  
What becomes of the worthless branch?

#### *Verses 7, 8*

How can we honor the Father?  
How may one be a disciple of Christ?

#### *Verses 9-11*

How can we abide in the love of Christ?  
What did Jesus say of joy?  
How could he have joy at that time?

#### *Verses 12, 13*

How is the strength of love measured?  
What was the matter with certain rulers?  
What is man's greatest manifestation of love?  
What does Paul say love will do?  
What does love seek?  
What unpleasant things may it lead us to do?

#### *Verses 14, 15*

What does Solomon say about a friend?  
Who are friends of Christ?  
What are some characteristics of a friend?  
Who are enemies of Christ?



How can a professed friend be a real enemy?  
 What is the difference between a servant and a friend?  
 In what way are Christians both servants and friends?

## Verse 16

How did certain disciples become apostles?  
 Why did Jesus choose apostles?  
 What did he promise them?  
 Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson X—December 5, 1937

## CHRISTIAN CONSECRATION

Phil. 1: 12-26

12 Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel;

13 So that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole praetorian guard, and to all the rest;

14 And that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16 The one *do it* of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel;

17 But the other proclaim Christ of faction, not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds.

18 What then? only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this shall turn out to my salvation, through your supplication and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 According to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but *that* with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death.

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 But if to live in the flesh,—if this shall bring fruit from my work, then what I shall choose I know not.

23 But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better:

24 Yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith;

26 That your glorying may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my presence with you again.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*”  
 (Phil. 1: 21.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 108: 1-6.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

November 29.	M.	.....Christian Consecration (Phil. 1: 12-26)
November 30.	T.	.....Loving Christ Supremely (Matt. 10: 34-39)
December 1.	W.	.....Ready to Follow Christ (Mark 1: 16-20)
December 2.	T.	.....Giving What We Have (Acts 3: 1-10)
December 3.	F.	.....The Price of Perfection (Matt. 19: 16-22)
December 4.	S.	.....Christian Consecration Rewarded (Matt. 19: 23-30)
December 5.	S.	.....A Set Purpose to Praise God (Psalm 108: 1-6)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 61. The letter to the church at Philippi was written near the close of Paul's two years of imprisonment at Rome—the imprisonment Luke mentions in Acts. (Phil. 1: 13-17.) When he wrote the letter he expected to be released soon. (Phil. 1: 26; 2: 24.)

*Places.*—Paul wrote at Rome, the capital city of the Roman empire. The letter was written to the church at Philippi. This city is described by Luke as “Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony.” (Acts 16: 12.)

*Persons.*—Paul and the saints at Philippi.

*Lesson Links.*—Paul and his company were the first to preach the gospel at Philippi. Accompanying Paul were Silas, Luke, and Timothy—perhaps others. Timothy had joined Paul's company at Lystra, and Luke at Troas. Notice how Luke begins the use of "we" and "us" at Acts 16: 11. So far as the record shows, Lydia and her household were the first converts at Philippi. When Paul and Silas left Philippi, it seems that Luke remained there, for he begins again to use the pronoun "they." For a full account of these matters read the sixteenth chapter of Acts. Here we have the record of the beginning of one of the best churches that ever blessed the earth. This perhaps was due partly to the fact that there were not enough Jews at Philippi to stir up trouble over the law of Moses and the supremacy of the Jews. The church at Philippi was a source of comfort to Paul, and a great help to him in his labors in other fields. They helped him, as they had opportunity, while he was a prisoner at Rome. It was not only a self-supporting church, but it was a church that contributed to aid in preaching at other places, and that from its very beginning. "And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need." (See Phil. 4: 15-18.)

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Paul's Imprisonment Results in Gospel Progress (Verses 12-14)

No doubt but that, to all the brethren who were interested in Paul's labors, his imprisonment seemed to be a great calamity. If Paul thought so at the first, he had changed his mind before he wrote this letter to the church at Philippi. For a prisoner, he had unusual privileges. At Rome "he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him." (Acts 28: 30, 31.) Of course, during this time he was under guard, which furnished him a fine opportunity to preach to the different soldiers who were sent to guard him. Any soldier of sense and discernment would not fail to be impressed with the fact that he was guarding a remarkable man; such men would talk to other soldiers about the man and his preaching. The whole praetorian guard and all Rome learned of his bonds and the reason for them. Even some of the emperor's household, perhaps some of his slaves, became Christians, as is shown in Paul's salutation in chapter four, verse twenty-one. The number of Christians in Rome must have greatly increased as a result of Paul's labors while a prisoner. Paul states another good result of his imprisonment—"most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear." Paul's boldness in preaching Christ even while a prisoner had a stimulating effect on the brethren; his example bolstered up their courage and stimulated their zeal. As a result, they did more preaching, and preached with more zeal.



### Some Preached Sincerely, Others Not Sincerely (Verses 15-17)

Paul had many enemies who would have been delighted to see his sufferings increased, and his preaching entirely stopped. Even those Judaizing teachers, who professed to believe in Christ and to be preachers of the gospel, would have rejoiced to see the end of Paul's activities, for he was the greatest and most effective opponent they had. They would do what they could to increase his afflictions as a prisoner. If by preaching Christ they could increase Paul's afflictions without endangering themselves, they would gladly do so. Other enemies, those who did not believe in Christ, but wanted Paul's activities to cease, would lose no opportunity to repeat what they knew of Paul's preaching, thinking thereby to stir up more trouble for Paul. None of these preached Christ sincerely. The true brethren preached Christ sincerely, and of love for Paul as well as in the love of the truth. "What then? only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Paul did not rejoice at the motive that prompted some to preach Christ, nor did he rejoice at their preaching any false doctrine; he rejoiced only at the fact that Christ was preached.

### Paul Hopes to Be Released (Verses 18-20)

Though Paul's imprisonment had so far resulted in the furtherance of the gospel, he perhaps could not see that his longer remaining a prisoner would result in much more good, and felt that he could do more good, if he were set at liberty. He therefore desired to be set free, and had strong hopes of an early release. Besides, it was not at all pleasant to be a prisoner; naturally he would desire to be free. He speaks of his being set free as his salvation, an unusual use of the term for Paul. But to be freed from prison was to be saved from much inconvenience and annoyance. That was a salvation greatly to be desired. The Philippian brethren were praying for him. Of course, all true disciples, who knew of his imprisonment, were praying for his release. In God's own time he would be set at liberty, according to Paul's earnest expectation and hope. He certainly had good grounds for expecting to be set at liberty at an early date, for he said, "But I trust in the Lord that I myself also shall come shortly." (2: 24.) Tradition says he was set at liberty and preached extensively during the few years he was at liberty before he was seized again. Some facts mentioned in his letter to Titus and his second letter to Timothy support the contention that he did have a few years of liberty. His leaving Titus in Crete (Titus 1: 5) is not mentioned in Acts. Another fact: When he wrote to the Philippians he expected to be set at liberty soon; when he wrote his second letter to Timothy, he had no hopes of ever being released. Titus and Second Timothy must have been written during his second imprisonment in Rome. Paul desired that nothing be done to put him to shame—he did not want to fail in the least particular. He had all along preached Christ with all boldness, and desired to continue to do so. If he gave up his body in death for preaching him, Christ would be magnified in his body. If he continued to live, all the powers of his body would be used in proclaiming Christ, and in that way Christ would be magnified in his body. So whether he lived or died, he would magnify Christ by giving his body in his



service; for a man can magnify Christ by dying for him or by living for him.

### To Live Is Christ, to Die Is Gain (Verses 21-24)

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." The cause of Christ would gain by his labors, if he lived; if he died, he would be released from the toils and sufferings of this life, and also gain rest with Christ. The last clause of verse twenty-two is hard to understand: "But if to live in the flesh,—if this shall bring fruit from my work, then what I shall choose I know not." The alternate reading, as given in the margin in the American Standard Version, gives no special help. The connection would seem to indicate that he did not know whether to choose to live or to die; but that construction does not seem reasonable, for a man has no choice as between living or dying unless he contemplates suicide. Paul would never entertain such a thought as that. Yet the commentators seem to take it for granted that Paul did not know whether to choose to live or to die. It seems that they have not stopped to consider what such a construction of his language involves.

*Paul's Desire.*—Paul did desire to depart and be with the Lord. To depart meant to die—to leave the body. On the points of controversy between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, Paul held with the Pharisees. (Acts 23: 6.) The Pharisees believed that there are angels, that a man has a spirit that survives the death of the body, and that all would be raised from the dead. As Paul understood that man had a spirit that survived the death of his body, he could consistently speak of departing and being with Christ. A materialist would not have said what Paul said. Materialists claim that when a man dies there is nothing of him till the resurrection. If they are correct, Paul's departing would not have hastened his being with the Lord, for he would not have been with the Lord till he was raised from the dead. If materialism were true, Paul would have been with the Lord just as soon, had he lived till the resurrection. But Paul's teaching on this point is clear and emphatic. "Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day." (2 Cor. 4: 16.) "Outward man," "inward man"; outward man decays, inward man is renewed. Paul therefore could, consistent with his faith and his teaching, desire to die so that he might be with the Lord. For his own good and for his own comfort, it would have been better to go from this world and be with the Lord rather than to continue to live in the midst of strife, persecution, and suffering. "Yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake." To "live in the flesh" and to "abide in the flesh," as here used, is to live in the body. So long as he continued to live in the body, he would be absent from the Lord, but he would be helpful to the Philippian brethren. He desired to depart and be with the Lord, and he desired to be of service to the churches; which he desired most he could not tell. Perhaps this gives us a key to the understanding of verse twenty-two. When we read of Paul's sufferings for the gospel, we cannot wonder at his desire to be released from it all.



### Paul Confident of Being Set at Liberty (Verses 25, 26)

Men were not inspired for the purpose of revealing to them their own personal affairs and problems, but to reveal God's will and purposes concerning man. Yet it may be that God had revealed to Paul that he had further use for him out in the field of gospel preaching. Paul spoke of his release with great confidence. "I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all." When he was set at liberty, he would spend some time with the brethren at Philippi. Though it would be a comfort and pleasure to him to spend some time with these good brethren, that would not be his chief purpose in visiting them. His interest in them was not a selfish interest; he wished to be with them for their progress and joy in the faith. A man might wish to be with a good church because he wished to use them to increase his own prosperity, or he might be interested in promoting their joy and prosperity. He might use himself to promote their good, or he might use them to promote his prosperity financially. Paul was unselfish; he was willing to spend and be spent for the good of the churches. None knew this better than did the church at Philippi. For that reason they would glory in Christ Jesus in him, when he again was permitted to be with them. All preachers should imitate Paul's unselfishness.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

If a more devoted servant of the Lord ever lived than Paul, we have no record of him. So sure was Paul that he lived as Christ would have him live that he exhorted the brethren to imitate him. "I beseech you therefore, be ye imitators of me." (1 Cor. 4: 16.) By his manner of life he showed the new converts how to live, how to imitate Christ. "Brethren, be ye imitators together of me, and mark them that so walk even as ye have us for an ensample." (Phil. 3: 17.) "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ." (1 Cor. 11: 1.)

How Paul's imprisonment promoted the progress of the gospel illustrates an important truth. God rules in his servants—they willingly do his will and carry out his purposes. Paul did that. But God overrules the schemes of his enemies to make them serve his purposes. There are many examples of this in the Bible, such as Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar. If Paul had not been made a prisoner, so as to be under the protection of the Roman soldiers in Jerusalem, the Jews would have killed him. They caused him to be a prisoner in an effort to kill him. He was finally taken to Rome, where he had opportunity as a prisoner to preach to people, who, otherwise, would not have had an opportunity to hear the gospel of Christ. Thus the hatred of the Jews was overruled, and so became a means of promoting gospel preaching.

Paul's faithful life and the grace of God thoroughly prepared him for the great change that death brings to man. The future had no terrors for him, but rather the prospect of comfort and joy unspeakable and full of glory. He had suffered much for Christ. (2 Cor. 11: 24-28.) But what mattered a few days or a few years of toil and suffering? That was small in comparison with the reward awaiting him; for any task or suffering is great or small in comparison with the reward that comes of it. "For I reckon that the

sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward." (Rom. 8: 18.) "For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. 4: 17.) A great hope makes labor and suffering light.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- How the church at Philippi originated.
- How they helped Paul in his labors.
- Paul's unselfish service.
- Paul as model for other preachers.
- His hope for the future.

### QUESTIONS

- Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

- Give the time, places, and persons.  
Who first preached the gospel at Philippi?  
Who were in Paul's company?  
Who were the first converts mentioned?  
Where are these matters recorded?  
Give what information you can about the church at Philippi?

#### *Verses 12-14*

- How would the brethren naturally feel about Paul's imprisonment?  
What privileges did he have while a prisoner?  
What were some of the results of his preaching while in prison?  
What effect did his example have on other brethren?

#### *Verses 15-17*

- What does Paul say about the motives of some who preached Christ?  
How did he feel about it?  
How would their preaching Christ add to his afflictions?  
Should any rejoice that false doctrine is preached?

#### *Verses 18-20*

- Why would Paul desire to be set at liberty?  
What does he here mean by his salvation?  
Who were praying for him?  
What shows that Paul expected to be released soon?  
How might Paul glorify Christ in his body?

#### *Verses 21-24*

- How would dying be gain to Paul?  
What would gain by his living?  
What did he desire, and why?  
Show that Paul was not a materialist.

#### *Verses 25, 26*

- Read and discuss these two verses.  
Discuss the reflections.

### *Lesson XI—December 12, 1937*

### CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

#### 1 John 1: 1-7; Rev. 21: 1-7

- 1 That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life.
- 2 (And the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us);
- 3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ:
- 4 And these things we write, that our joy may be made full.
- 5 And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.
- 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:
- 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.



1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more.

2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God:

4 And he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more: the first things are passed away.

5 And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true.

6 And he said unto me, They are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—*"Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."* (1 John 1: 3.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 139: 1-12.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

December 6.	M.	.....	Christian Fellowship (1 John 1: 1-7)
December 7.	T.	.....	God with His People (Rev. 21: 1-7)
December 8.	W.	.....	Fellowship with Christ (1 Cor. 1: 1-9)
December 9.	T.	.....	Fellowship in Service (Col. 4: 1-12)
December 10.	F.	.....	Sharing What We Have (2 Cor. 8: 1-9)
December 11.	S.	.....	Christian Brotherhood (Acts 2: 41-47)
December 12.	S.	.....	The Ever-Present God (Psalm 139: 1-12)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—The time of writing the First Epistle of John is not known. Some place the time of its writing near the close of the first century of the Christian era, but Macknight is decidedly of the opinion that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem. When Revelation was written is not known. Some put the time before the destruction of Jerusalem; others toward the close of the century.

**Place.**—It is not known where either book was written. Revelation may have been written before John left Patmos.

**Persons.**—John and the Christians generally. The letter is not addressed to any certain class or church, neither was Revelation.

**Lesson Links.**—The contents of the First Epistle of John show that certain corrupt doctrines had begun to gain headway among the disciples. The letter was written to counteract these false doctrines, as well as to inculcate the principles of holiness of life. Some tell us that the false doctrines combated by John did not arise till toward the close of the first century; but this idea is based on the contention that the men who gave these doctrines prominence lived and preached in the latter part of that century. But these doctrines may have gained considerable headway before men of prominence arose advocating them. In fact, Jesus said plainly that before the destruction of Jerusalem many false prophets and false Christs would arise, and would lead many astray. (Matt. 24: 11, 24.) The letters of Paul show that there were many false teachers in his day, teachers who were corrupting the doctrine of Christ. Some were seeking to bind the law of Moses on Christians, thus making the church of God a mere sect of the Jews' religion. Others were seeking to explain it in the light of heathen philosophy. Some of these false teachers



apparently denied the divine nature of Christ. (See Gal. 1: 6-9; Col. 2.) One class of false teachers claimed that Christ did not really come in the flesh, and that his miracles, his death, and his resurrection were not real. All these things just seemed to be. Another class taught that Jesus was entirely human till his baptism, when the divine nature came to him in the form of a dove. John gives some attention to both of these doctrines.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### The Living Word (Verses 1-4)

In this introduction to the epistle John combats the notion that Christ did not come in a real body of flesh. He was writing concerning the "living Word." "Living Word" or "Word of life" either correctly represents the Greek, but "living Word" more correctly represents the point John was making. He was not speaking of the word as a living being; for he explains that the "life" was manifested, and that they had seen, and therefore bore witness and declared that the same life that was with the Father was manifested. Here John affirms that this life was with the Father, and that it was manifested to us. The word was manifest, a real appearance, and not a mere seeming appearance. As proof that he was really manifested, that he was really clothed in a body of flesh, John affirms that they heard him speak, that they saw him with their eyes, and that they handled him with their hands. They could not therefore have been mistaken; he could not have been a mere phantasy. John declared these things to the brethren, that they also might have fellowship with us, the uncorrupted believers, and also might have fellowship with the Father. The inference is plain, that those who held such views as he was combating did not have fellowship with the true believers, nor with the Father. It means that those who held such doctrines had fallen out of the favor of God—had fallen from grace. John wished to bring them back to the true faith so that they might again have fellowship with the true believers and with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. If he could reclaim them from their hurtful speculations, his joy would be full. Though they had departed from the true faith and were corrupting the church, John had an abiding interest in them and sought to bring them back into the favor of God. That is the spirit of every genuine Christian toward those who have fallen into error.

### Fellowship with God (Verses 5-7)

*The Message.*—"And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you." A message is tidings, news. A message is information some one sends by a messenger. Message and messenger are correlative terms; neither exists without the other. The apostles and prophets were messengers because they brought tidings from God—they brought a message from God. The man who voluntarily repeats and explains a message does not bring a message. Preachers now do not bring messages. The message which John announced was what he heard from God. A message is an original announcement. From God through Jesus Christ comes all the light we have. There is no darkness in God, and there is no darkness in anything he has taught us. Outside of that teaching all is dark-



ness. There is in fellowship the idea of partnership, a joint participation. When the apostles went out to preach, the Lord worked with them. (Mark 16: 20.) We have fellowship with God when we are in union with him and are working with him in carrying out his plans and purposes. In the very nature of the case, a man cannot have fellowship with God while walking in sin. Sin is darkness; ignorance is darkness; false doctrine is darkness. "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." That language is plain and emphatic. Its connection shows that John had in mind these false teachers. In holding to their false doctrine they were walking in darkness; and in saying they were in fellowship with God they lied. Along this same line Paul says, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? for we are a temple of the living God." (2 Cor. 6: 14-16.) Such teachers have no fellowship with God, nor with true believers. To pretend that they have is to lie. Light and darkness have no fellowship; neither can there be fellowship between those who walk in the light and those who walk in darkness. But "if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." Here is the true basis of fellowship. When fellowship is had on any other grounds, it is not worth the having. When two have the same aims and walk by the same rule, they have fellowship; and two people who have fellowship with God, have fellowship with one another. There could be no fellowship between John and the false teachers, for they walked in the darkness; but there was fellowship between him and all others who walked in the gospel light. And when people walk in the light, not only is there fellowship between them, but they also have the cleansing blood of Christ. This blood cleanses such people from all sin. This would include all those sins of which we may not be conscious. God graciously blots out such sins, as well as those of which we are conscious and of which we repent; and the next three verses of the chapter show that we all sin, whether consciously or unconsciously, and that God is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, if we confess our sins. And that is a blessing for which every sincere disciple of Christ is profoundly thankful.

### The New Heaven, the New Earth, and the Holy City (Rev. 21: 1, 2)

*The Judgment.*—In the last paragraph of the preceding chapter, we have a prophetic account of the judgment. The judge is on the throne of judgment. The dead, small and great, having been raised to life, are before the throne. Books were opened—the laws of the three dispensations. The dead were judged out of the books of the law under which they lived, according to their works. And there was another book, the book of life, in which the names of the righteous are written. It is not a book of law, but a book of names. (See such passages as Ex. 32: 31-33; Psalm 69: 28; Mal. 3: 16-18; Rev. 3: 5.) Those whose names were not found written in the book of life were cast into the lake of fire. The chapter which we are now studying, and also the next chapter, tells of the glorious state of the righteous. Great caution should be exercised in interpreting the



highly figurative language of the book of Revelation. The future abode of the faithful children of God is here described as the new heaven, and the new earth in which will be the holy city, the New Jerusalem. John does not say that this New Jerusalem is a bride, but that it was "made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." It will be prepared, and made ready just as a bride is made ready for her husband.

### God Shall Dwell with Them (Verses 3, 4)

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men." John gives us no description of this tabernacle. The word tabernacle connotes a tent, or movable structure, but that can hardly be true of this structure. It appears that it is to be God's dwelling place, the place where his presence was manifested, as in the tabernacle in the wilderness. God's people will be there, and he shall be their God. In setting forth the bliss and the comfort of that glorious home of the saints, John represents God as wiping away every tear from their eyes. "And death shall be no more." There will be no sickness, no accidents, nothing that causes or accompanies death. There will be no hurried calls for the doctor, no rushing to the hospital, no soft treading or turning the lights low in the sickroom, and no mourning or crying over the death of friends and loved ones. There will be no pain of heart or body. Sadness, sorrow, and sighing will flee away. "The first things are passed away." There will be nothing in that city to annoy or disturb its inhabitants. No murderers, no drunkards, nor liars, nor slanderers, nor thieves, nor robbers, nor pests of any sort will be in that city. Such characters will have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. (Verse 8.) In that city the people of God shall enjoy the Sabbath of rest that remains for them. These are the glories which the eye had not seen nor the ear heard till God, through his Spirit-inspired apostles, revealed them. (1 Cor. 2: 9, 10.) It is the eternal life into which the children of God enter.

### He That Overcometh Shall Inherit These Things (Verses 5-7)

God will be the ruler of that city; he it is who shall be sitting on the throne. John was commanded to write the things which he saw and heard; this was for the instruction and encouragement of all the generations that followed. Alpha and Omega are the beginning and the end of the Greek alphabet; but it is not likely that we understand the full significance of the expression, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end."

*The Fountain.*—"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life." It is a life-renewing and life-perpetuating fountain. When a person is really thirsty, nothing is more refreshing and satisfying than a drink of cool, pure water. Not only will there be no trouble and disasters in the city of God, but there will be there that which satisfies. After God has revealed to us the things which he has prepared for them that love him, our finite minds cannot fully comprehend their glories. But these glories will not be for all people. That city would not be a delightful place, if all the vile and sinful characters of all time were gathered there. There must be a separation, or there can be no heaven; and there will be



a separation. (See Matt. 25: 31-46.) "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Verse 27.) "He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." There have always been disturbing factors in the church, perhaps as many during the first century as at any other time. If you think the church of which you are a member is in a bad condition, think of the evils in the church at Corinth. A church could scarcely be in a worse condition than was that church.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

To be a genuine disciple of Christ is to be in union with God; the disciple is doing what he can to further God's plan of saving men. And this partnership pays dividends to the disciple, namely, rest here and eternal rest in the next world.

It is said that heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. People must be prepared for heaven in order to enjoy it. The wicked would not enjoy the society of heaven. To attend a prayer meeting here is more than they can stand. The tough youngster who said to his companions, "Boys, I've just been with a bunch of preachers and I'd sooner be in hell than with a bunch of preachers," revealed more of himself than he knew. If it was such a torment to him to spend a short time in the society of some preachers, what a misfit he would be in heaven. It would not be heaven to him.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Some disturbing things in the early church.  
What it means to have fellowship with God.  
The glories of heaven.  
How to reach heaven.

### QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### *The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, persons.  
What was John's purpose in writing his first Epistle?  
What had Jesus foretold about false prophets?  
What do the letters of Paul show as to false teachers?  
What were some of the false theories taught?

#### *Verses 1-4*

What notion does John's introduction combat?  
What does he say of the word?  
What proof does John give that the word in the flesh was real, and not a mere appearance?  
What shows that these false teachers did not have fellowship?  
What would give John joy?

#### *Verses 5-7*

What is the meaning of message?  
Who announced the gospel message?  
Do preachers now deliver messages?  
What is fellowship?  
Illustrate with some scriptures.  
How do we have fellowship with God?  
When can we not have fellowship with him?  
What emphatic statement does John make about it?  
Who walks in darkness?  
Discuss 2 Cor. 6: 16.  
When there is a lack of fellowship, who is responsible?  
If we walk in the light, what?  
What do the last verses of the chapter show?

#### *Rev. 21: 1, 2*

Give some facts about the judgment as told in Rev. 20: 11-16.  
By what will the dead of different dispensations be judged?  
For what is the book of life used?  
What did John see coming down out of heaven?

## Verses 3, 4

What is the meaning of tabernacle?  
 How does John describe the bliss of heaven?  
 What will not be there?  
 How do we know of the things God has provided for those who love him?

## Verses 5-7

Who will rule in that city?  
 What will be especially refreshing in that city?  
 For whom will these glories be?  
 Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson XII—December 19, 1937

## THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Luke 2: 8-20

8 And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock.

9 And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people:

11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.

12 And this is the sign unto you: Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.

15 And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger.

17 And when they saw it, they made known concerning the saying which was spoken to them about this child.

18 And all that heard it wondered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, even as it was spoken unto them.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"There is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2: 11.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Isa. 9: 1-7.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

December 13.	M.	.....	The Birth of Jesus (Luke 2: 8-20)
December 14.	T.	.....	The Magnificat (Luke 1: 46-55)
December 15.	W.	.....	Foretold by Prophets (Acts 3: 22-26)
December 16.	T.	.....	The Saviour (Matt. 1: 21-25)
December 17.	F.	.....	The Son of God (Gal. 4: 1-7)
December 18.	S.	.....	The World's Redeemer (Luke 1: 67-79)
December 19.	S.	.....	God's Gift to Humanity (Isa. 9: 1-7)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—"The precise date of the birth of Jesus the Christ is still disputable. The common reckoning or Vulgar Era as devised by Abbot Dionysius Exiguus (he died about A.D. 556) was based upon the notion that Jesus was born on December 25, one week before January 1 of the Julian year which we call A.D. 1, thus really upon December 25 of the year 1 B.C. But no chronologist now contends that December 25 was the natal day; the only attempt is to fix the year. As Herod died in March or April of the year 4 B.C., and Matthew



puts the birth of Jesus before Herod's death, the birth would fall in the still earlier part of the year 4 B.C., or in a previous year. Suffice to say that the very learned work, *L'Art de Verifier les Dates*, puts the birth in the year 7 B.C. to make Jesus two years old at the Christmas before the death of Herod, and other chronologists have adopted the years 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 B.C. and even A.D. 1, 2 or 3, giving a range of ten years."—(The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia.)

*Place.*—Bethlehem and some point in the hill country of the Bethlehem section. Bethlehem was a city about five miles south of Jerusalem. It now has a population of about 8,000.

*Persons.*—Joseph, the angels, and the shepherds.

*Lesson Links.*—Jesus was born into the world at God's own appointed time. Through the prophets God had foretold his coming. Through Abraham's seed God had promised to bless the world (Gen. 22: 15-18) and that promise referred to Christ Jesus (Gal. 3: 8, 16). To Moses Jehovah had said, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." (Deut. 18: 18, 19.) The prophecies foretelling the coming of the Messiah are too numerous to quote here, or even to mention. The student will be interested in reading such prophecies as Isa. 7: 14; 9: 6, 7; 53: 1-12; Mic. 5: 2. Isaiah foretold that the Redeemer would be born of a virgin, born in Bethlehem. The prophecies had created great expectations in the minds of the Jews, and also in the minds of some people of other nations. John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, was born six months before Jesus was born. (Luke 1: 5-38.) He also was a subject of prophecy. (Luke 3: 1-6.) A decree had gone out from the emperor of Rome that all the world should be enrolled. This enrollment was for taxation purposes. (Luke 2: 1, 2.) It was the custom of the Jews to enroll by families and tribes, each one in the city of his family inheritance. Joseph and Mary lived at Nazareth, but they were of Bethlehem by inheritance. This required a long journey at a critical time for Mary. Rooms were all taken at the inn when they arrived at Bethlehem. "And it came to pass, while they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." (Verses 6, 7.) They were not pushed off into the part of the inn where the stock were sheltered and fed because there was any antagonism to them; certainly not against the unborn infant. Lodging with the animals did not seem so bad to people of that time as to us of the present time. Crowds had gone to Bethlehem to be enrolled. Mary and Joseph had arrived too late to find better accommodations. There was not then the wide separation between the living quarters and the place where the stock were kept. But it is a fact that he who came to lift up the fallen and the lowly began life in as low surroundings as the most lowly. Had it been important for us to know the year and the time of the year in which Jesus was born, the Lord would have told us. Many other particulars are given, but not one hint as to the date of his birth. The way people have figured and speculated on the



date of his birth shows that they have not yet learned that secret things belong to God, and only revealed things belong to us.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### The Shepherds (Verse 8)

It seems that these shepherds had no available sheepfolds. They kept watch by night, or, as in the margin, night watches. No one could stay awake night and day. They took turns in guarding the sheep from animals and thieves. It is understood that the night was divided into watches of three hours each. There is no reason to suppose that these shepherds slept in the open in all sorts of weather. The stockmen usually had tents. The hills in the Bethlehem section had furnished grazing for ages past. It was in these hills that David cared for his father's sheep. Adam Clarke says, "It was a custom among the Jews to send out their sheep to the deserts, about the Passover, and bring them home at the commencement of the first rain; during the time they were out the shepherds watched them night and day." It will be noticed that Jesus was born during the time of the year in which shepherds kept their flocks out on the grazing lands.

### Shepherds Visited by Angels (Verses 9-14)

Jesus came into the world to be the Savior of men. He is not only the Savior of men, but he is King of kings and Lord of lords. Yet he was born in a stable, cradled in a manger, and his birth was first announced to shepherds. No human wisdom would have thought of such a way of ushering into the world one who was to be king. If any man had been going to write a story for the purpose of deceiving people into thinking it was real, he never would have thought of such a lowly beginning for one whom he was going to make king. "And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid." It seems to be impossible for men to remain composed and calm in the presence of a heavenly being. These men were more than excited; "they were sore afraid." "The glory of the Lord shone round about them." It lighted up the place where they were. But what the angel said to them gave them light of a different kind and of great importance. This messenger had a message to deliver to them, a message that the people of all nations should have been glad to hear. "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people." The angel would first quiet their fears. He had not come to bring any judgments on them; there was cause for rejoicing instead of fear. The good tidings were for all people—a Savior had been born. He would save the people from their sins. Before Joseph had taken Mary to himself as his wife, an angel said to him, "And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1: 21.) But the salvation Jesus was to bring was not what the Jews longed for; they longed for salvation as a nation from Roman rule; and they had their minds made up that the Messiah, when he came, would do that very thing. It is easy for people to fix up a theory to suit what they want. It had not occurred to them that the Messiah



would be a Savior for all people. But the angel had announced to Joseph that Jesus would save his people from their sins—no hint was given that he would save the Jews from Roman dominion. The city of David was Bethlehem; it was called the city of David because it was David's native city. This should not be confused with a portion of Jerusalem which was named the City of David, because David had taken it from the Jebusites. (2 Sam. 5: 7-9.)

*A Sign.*—"And this is the sign unto you." A sign that will enable you to know when you have found him, and not some other babe. It would also be a sign to them that the angel had told them the truth. "Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger." There was nothing miraculous in the way the child was wrapped, nor where he was lying; but it did take divine powers to know how he would be clothed and where he would be found. The shepherds could not fail to know when they had found the babe of whom the angels spoke. They would know when they found him who was to be Christ the Lord. Jesus was to be God's anointed, the long-looked-for Messiah.

*The Christ.*—"The Christ" means "the anointed," the Messiah. Jesus was to be prophet, priest, and king. It was the custom to anoint prophets, priests, and kings. A prophet was one through whom God spoke to the people; the priest was one through whom the people made their sacrifices to God; the king was the ruler. All these offices centered in Jesus. He it is through whom God speaks to the people—"hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son." (Heb. 1: 2.) He appeared in the presence of God with his own blood as an offering for our sins; he is our high priest. He has also been anointed king.

*A Multitude of Angels.*—When the angel had finished his announcement, "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God." This multitude are called angels in verse fifteen. Together they were saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased." In praising God they ascribed to him glory in the highest degree. On earth there was to be peace among men in whom he was well pleased. There is always peace among men in whom God is well pleased. There is no division, no strife, no fighting, among men whose lives are pleasing to God. All wars, and strife in churches, all community broils, and all family fusses that come, are due to the fact that somebody is not conducting himself in a way that is well-pleasing to God.

### The Shepherds Visit the Babe (Verses 15-20)

When the angels left the shepherds and returned to heaven, the shepherds lost no time in deciding what to do, nor in doing it. Their statement, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem," shows that they were not in the immediate vicinity of Bethlehem. They determined to "see this thing that is come to pass." "They came with haste," and found things as the angel said they would. They knew they had found the babe of whom the angel had spoken. His word was confirmed. What they had heard was too good to keep. They immediately told what the angel had said—what the Lord had made known to them through his messenger. It is not surprising that "all that heard it wondered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shepherds." For such demonstrations from heaven to accompany the



birth of a babe had never before been heard of. They knew that it meant something wonderful to them, but the full significance of it was more than they could fathom.

*The Mother.*—It seemed that Mary said little, if anything—she listened. No detail of what the shepherds said would miss her attention. She kept in her heart what the shepherds said—remembered every word of it, pondering them in her heart. In afterdays, in her quieter moments, she would meditate over the message of the angel and the song of the angels. A mother would miss nothing that promised wonderful things for her son. But not even the wise heart of this devoted mother could understand what the birth of her son meant to the world. The shepherds were profoundly impressed. They returned to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen. And these shepherds, so interested in what they had seen and heard, would delight in repeating the good news to all with whom they came into contact.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Nations are given to celebrating great events that affect their history, and also the birth of their great men. Jesus came of the Jewish nation, but they repudiated and crucified him. They are not interested in the date of his birth.

The desire to celebrate the birth of Jesus is easily understood. Such things belong to man's nature. But such celebrations as grow out of human nature usually, if not always, degenerate into fun and frolic and an orgy of drinking and carousing, not at all befitting that which they celebrate. Nothing could be less appropriate than the way the people celebrate the supposed birthday of Jesus.

Contrary to all human tendencies, God would have us celebrate the death of Christ instead of his birth. Had he wanted us to celebrate his birth he would not have left its date in obscurity. A little attention to the history or manner of shepherding in Palestine will convince any one that the twenty-fifth of December is not the correct date. In the Lord's Supper we celebrate his death; in observing the supper on the Lord's day we celebrate his resurrection. We honor Jesus by following in his steps and by doing his will; we dishonor him and disgrace his cause by celebrating his birth in the way it is usually done.

To us angels are mysterious beings; and yet they have played an important part in all of God's plans, and in all of his dealings with men. They are called angels because they are messengers. They brought messages to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to Moses, and to other Old Testament worthies. An angel foretold the birth of Jesus; an angel announced his birth; a multitude of them sang praises to God; an angel directed Joseph to flee into Egypt with the infant Jesus; an angel directed Joseph to return with the child Jesus to Judea; angels appeared to him in the garden of Gethsemane; angels were present at his resurrection and ascension. And yet to us they are mysteries.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Why Jesus came to earth.

How Christmas celebrations dishonor him.



How we may honor him.  
The Lord's day and the Lord's Supper.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give what facts you can as to time.  
Name the place and persons.  
Give some prophecies concerning Christ.  
What effect had these prophecies on the people?  
How came Joseph and Mary to be in Bethlehem?  
Why did they occupy such poor accommodations?  
What time of year was Jesus born?

*Verse 8*

What is said of the shepherds?  
How were they protecting their flocks?  
What noted man had once been a shepherd in that same territory?

*Verses 9-14*

Why did Jesus come into the world?  
How was his birth first announced?  
Describe the occurrence.  
What salvation had the Jews expected?  
What was Bethlehem called?  
What other place was so described?  
How would the shepherds know when they found the child of whom the angels spoke?  
What is the meaning of the word Christ?  
What offices does Christ fill?  
What is the significance of each office?  
What did the multitude of angels sing?  
Among whom is there peace?

*Verses 15-20*

How soon did the shepherds act?  
What effect did their words have on others?  
What is said of Mary?  
What then did the shepherds do?  
Discuss the reflections.

*Lesson XIII—December 26, 1937*

## CHRISTIAN REST

Matt. 11: 28-30; Heb. 4: 1-11

28 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.  
29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

1 Let us fear therefore, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into his rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it.

2 For indeed we have had good tidings preached unto us, even as also they: but the word of hearing did not profit them, because it was not united by faith with them that heard.

3 For we who have believed do enter into that rest; even as he hath said,

As I swear in my wrath,

They shall not enter into my rest:

although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he hath said somewhere of the seventh day on this wise, And God rested on the seventh day from all his works;

5 And in this place again,

They shall not enter into my rest.

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some should enter thereinto, and they to whom the good tidings were before preached failed to enter in because of disobedience,

7 He again defineth a certain day, To-day, saying in David so long a time afterward (even as hath been said before),

To-day, if ye shall hear his voice,

Harden not your hearts.

8 For if Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterward of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest hath himself also rested from his works, as God did from his.

11 Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest, that no man fall after the same example of disobedience.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11: 28.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Rev. 22: 1-5.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

December 20.	M.	Christ's Gift of Rest (Matt. 11: 25-30)
December 21.	T.	The Promised Rest (Heb. 4: 1-11)
December 22.	W.	Rest of Soul (Jer. 6: 16-21)
December 23.	T.	Needless Anxiety (Matt. 6: 24-34)
December 24.	F.	The Rest Cure (Isa. 40: 27-31)
December 25.	S.	The Blessedness of the Righteous Dead (Rev. 14: 13)
December 26.	S.	Life in Heaven (Rev. 22: 1-5)

## THE LESSON SETTINGS

**Time.**—The great invitation was given probably A.D. 29. The letter to the Hebrews was probably written A.D. 61 or 62. The contents of the letter show that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

**Place.**—The great invitation was given in Galilee. The letter to the Hebrews was written in Italy, probably in Rome. Chapter thirteen, verse twenty-four, shows that Hebrews was written in Italy. "They of Italy salute you."

**Persons.**—Jesus and the people, the writer of the letter to Hebrews, and the Hebrew Christians. The writer of Hebrews was most likely Paul; the contents of the letter seem to prove his authorship. In Paul's other letters he made special efforts to show that the law of Moses ended at the death of Christ. In writing to the Hebrew Christians we would expect him to make just such arguments as are made in Hebrews.

**Lesson Links.**—As Matthew made no attempt to record the doings and speeches of Jesus in chronological order, it is sometimes difficult to determine the circumstances connected with a speech; but it seems certain that the first part of the lesson is a part of a speech which began with verse twenty-five. We learn that God's revelations are made to those who will hear him. Some are too wise in their own conceits to accept any revelation from God. The revelations from God are for babes—people who are willing to learn.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### The Great Invitation (Verses 28-30)

There was a note of authority in all that Jesus said. People often speak of the humility of Jesus, but he did not speak in a tone of humility, nor yet of arrogance, but of authority. Concerning the impression he made on the people in his Sermon on the Mount, Matthew says, "And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes." (Matt. 7: 28, 29.) In that speech he referred several times to what Moses said, and each time added, "But I say. . . ." He closed the speech by declaring that men's destiny depended upon their treatment of his sayings. In the matter of his crucifixion he humbled himself, but not in his teaching. No mere man could have spoken with such authority and assurance as he did in this great invitation. Notice the commands and the promises—what mere man would have dared to



so speak? "Come unto me." This is a command issued in the form of an invitation. This command-invitation sets forth at least three things: (1) the authority of Jesus—his right to command; (2) the fact that people are away from Christ; (3) that they can come to him. The distance between Christ and the sinner is not a distance to be measured by miles, or even by feet and inches; it is a moral and spiritual separation. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, so that he will not hear." (Isa. 59: 2.) While the distance between Christ and the sinner is great, by the power of the gospel man is enabled to come to him; and the jailer's experience proves that it need not take long to do so. (Acts 16: 23, 24.) If a sinner wills to do so, he can come, and come quickly. "Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." (John 5: 40.) "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6: 37.)

*Those Who Are Invited.*—"All ye that labor and are heavy laden"—those who labor and are burdened with the perplexities and problems of life, and upon whom sin and the cares of life weigh heavily. These are invited to come to Jesus. No others will come, for no others feel the need of coming. If a man does not feel the guilt of sin, and does not long for release from its heavy burdens, he will not come. If a man thinks he is righteous and is satisfied with himself, he will not come. That is the class of men Jesus had in mind when he said, "I came not to call the righteous." Such men are not invited to come. A man must realize his guilt before he will seek release from it. Such people may join the church as a social club, but they do not obey the gospel, nor does the Lord add them to be saved. Those who delight in sin, those who take pleasure in unrighteousness, are not invited to come. Only those who feel the burden of sin and desire release from its guilt are invited to come; only such will come.

*Rest.*—"I will give you rest"; rest from the burden of sin; rest from the consciousness of its guilt; rest from the fear of punishment for sin. He will give rest here and now. Perhaps you are disturbed and worried with doubts; you have no rest because you fear you are not right, fear that you may not be following the right course. Nothing is more disturbing to the conscientious soul than to fear that he has not done, or is not doing, the things that please the Lord. To all such Jesus says, "Come . . . I will give you rest." Rest from the burden and guilt of sin—rest from harassing doubts and fears.

*The Yoke.*—"Take my yoke upon you." At first glance that yoke sounds like work instead of rest. But life has its problems and burdens which we cannot escape. If the oxen must pull a load, the yoke makes his load easier to draw. The yoke is the teaching of Christ, for he immediately adds, ". . . and learn of me." He teaches us how to live—how to make life's essential burdens lighter. He teaches the true philosophy of life. There are all sorts of political and social schemes to make life's burdens easier, but most of them make living more complex and bewildering. But if we will take Jesus as our teacher, he will lead us out of sin, point us to the true goal of life, put us on the right road, and help us bear the necessary burdens of life. But we must learn of him. Moses had said, "Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." (Deut. 18: 15.) A lot of unnecessary burdens come from an effort at high living.



Both by precept and example Jesus taught people to live the simple life, devoid of worldly ambitions. "I am meek and lowly." "Meek"—gentle, submissive to the Father's will. "Lowly"—he had no worldly ambitions. His teaching is against such harassing ambitions.

"Find Rest."—"I will give you rest." "Ye shall find rest." There is no contradiction in the two statements. He gives us rest by showing us how to find it. Rest is not inactivity, it is release from things that burden, harass, or annoy us, and the doubts and fears that beset us. "For my yoke is easy." It is not a hard and burdensome yoke like the law of Moses, which Peter said neither the Jews then nor their fathers were able to bear. The yoke of Jesus is easy to wear; it fits, and does not chafe or gall. "My burden is light." How can he give rest by asking us to take up an additional burden? But he does not do that. He gives us rest by relieving us of the heavier burdens, and gives us a lighter burden. To live the Christian life is a delight to the one who is thoroughly in earnest. But if a man tries to take the world along with him, and tries also to bear the lighter burden of the Christian life, he will find both to be an intolerable burden. No man can carry both at once.

### Why Many Failed to Enter Canaan (Heb. 4: 1, 2)

Eternal rest is the topic in the portion of our lesson taken from the letter to the Hebrews. We are to fear lest we fail to enter into the promised rest. The language shows that the writer was speaking of a rest into which the Hebrew Christians had not yet entered, and his exhorting them to fear lest they fail to enter that rest shows that they might fail, and that if they did fail, the responsibility would be theirs. In chapter three, verse twelve, the writer exhorted, "Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God." He had shown that God was not pleased with the Hebrews in the wilderness, and swore that they should not enter into his rest, that is, his rest promised for them in Canaan. They had had good tidings preached to them, good tidings concerning Canaan, but the good tidings preached to them by Caleb and Joshua did not profit them, because they did not believe it. (Num. 13: 30; 14: 1-9.) The writer of Hebrews referred to this to show that we also may fail to reach our promised rest.

### The Disobedient Fail to Enter the Rest (Verses 3-6)

The Bible plainly teaches that there is a future rest, and it also teaches that some will fail to enter into that rest. The Hebrews in the wilderness failed to enter their promised rest because of disobedience. We who believe enter into our promised rest. Of others God says, "They shall not enter into my rest." In the day of the judgment the Lord will say to the righteous, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This may help us to understand the clause, "Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." This rest is not the same as that of which Jesus spoke. It is for those who have finished their work. To illustrate this point the writer refers to the fact that, on the Sabbath day, God rested from all his works. The rest followed the completion of his works; and so be-



lievers shall rest when their lifework is finished. Some of the Hebrews entered into Canaan to rest from their wanderings; others failed to enter in because of disobedience. They did not believe they could take the land, and therefore rebelled against going up into the land. Their failure to enter was their own fault; they alone were to blame.

### Now Is the Preparation Time (Verse 7)

He defines the preparation period as today. "To-day if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts." The rest is in the future; the preparation time is now. There will not be another period in which people may prepare for the future rest. "At an acceptable time I hearkened unto thee, and in a day of salvation did I succor thee: behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6: 2.) "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment." Jesus offers salvation now, and the promise of rest to those who obey him now. When he comes again he will receive to himself his own, but will come "rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might." (2 Thess. 1: 8, 9.)

### The Future Rest Is for the People of God (Verses 8-10)

If Joshua had given the people the final rest of which Canaan was a type, if Canaan had been meant to be the final and eternal resting place for God's people, God would not afterward have spoken of another day of preparation. David had spoken of this other day when he said, "To-day if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts." In giving them Canaan, he was not giving them the eternal rest he had in mind for the people of God. They were in Canaan when David spoke of another day, another day of preparation. Canaan therefore was not the place of rest for the people of God. "There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God." A Sabbath rest is a rest in which work has ceased. It will not be a period of ceaseless activity in a world kingdom. In no sense could that be called a Sabbath rest. "For he that is entered into his rest hath himself also rested from his works, as God did from his."

### Exhortation to Diligence (Verse 11)

There is a rest yet awaiting the people of God, but diligence is required to enter into that rest. It is plain therefore that this rest will not be ours, if we fail to give diligence to enter into it. The words of this verse show that entering into this rest is conditional, and that diligence is required, "that no man fall after the same example of disobedience." The falling of the Hebrews in the wilderness and their failure to enter Canaan is the example referred to. The use the writer makes of that example proves conclusively that we might fail to enter into the rest that remains for the people of God. God will render to every man according to his works. He will render eternal life "to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption." (Rom. 2: 6, 7.)

## SOME REFLECTIONS

The very wording of the great invitation shows that Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, for no human being could have thought of such an invitation or such a promise; nor would he have had the audacity to make such statement had he thought of it. The invitation bears on its face the stamp of divinity.

Concerning the Israelites while they were journeying to Canaan, Paul says, "Howbeit with most of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. . . . Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10: 5-12.)

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The restfulness of being a Christian.

Jesus our great and only teacher.

This life our only time of preparation.

The lessons we gain from Old Testament examples.

## QUESTIONS

Give the subject, and tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

*The Lesson Settings*

Give the time, place, and persons.

*Verses 28-30*

Show that Jesus spoke with authority, with no note of humility.  
What does the command, "Come unto me," show?  
Show what separates man from God.  
What proof that a sinner can come to Jesus?  
Who are invited to come?  
Why are others not invited?  
Jesus promises rest from what?  
What are we to take upon us?  
What is this yoke?  
How does it make burdens lighter?  
What prophecy had Moses made of this teacher?  
What is meant by "meek and lowly"?  
How does Christ give rest, and yet we find it?  
What yoke was intolerable?  
What does Jesus say of his yoke and burden?  
In what sense is his yoke easy?  
To whom is the effort to live the Christian life a burden?

*Heb. 4: 1, 2*

What rest is here mentioned?  
What exhortation is given?  
Quote Heb. 3: 12.  
What good tidings had been preached to the Hebrews in the wilderness?  
Why did it not profit them?

*Verses 3-6*

Who shall and who shall not enter into rest?  
When does this rest come?  
Why did many Hebrews not enter Canaan?

*Verse 7*

Show that this life is our only period of preparation.  
What comes after death?

*Verses 8-10*

What shows that Joshua did not give the people the final rest?  
What is a Sabbath rest?  
What is said of him who has entered this rest?

*Verse 11*

Discuss verse 11.  
Discuss the reflections.