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## A FOREWORD

In penning the last word of this, the twenty-first volume of the *Annual Lesson Commentary*, the author realizes that it, like all human productions, has its imperfections; but he has labored to make it as helpful to Bible students as is humanly possible to do so. Its comments are meant to be suggestive rather than exhaustive, for it is best for the student to do some investigation and thinking for himself.

At the close of each lesson will be found "Topics for Investigation and Discussion," which may be used with profit in midweek prayer meetings and in teachers' meetings. This will help to stir up interest in the lessons, and will give teachers a better background for their work; besides, 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.

**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), I Sam. 25:14. Wife of Nabal; became David's wife.

Abimelech (Meleeh is father), Gen. 26:1. King of Gerar in the time of Isaac.

Abishai (my father is Jesse), I Sam. 26:6-9. The eldest of the three sons of Zeruah, 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.

Abshalom (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 king 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.

Abimelech (brother of Melech), 1 Sam. 22:11. High priest of Nob; gave David the showbread to eat.

Ai (heap), Josh. 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), I 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), Phile. 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 Judea; reigned forty years.

Ashpenaz (horse-nose), Dan. 1:3. Master of eunuchs.

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 Phenician and Canaanitish nations.  
Babel (confusion), Gen. 10:10; 11:1-9. Tower built on the Plain of Shinar.  
Babylon (from Babel), Jar. 24:5. The land of the Chaldeans.  
Baiaam (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 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.  
Beelzebub (Lord of the House), Matt. 12:24. Title of heathen god.  
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, fiat), 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 (Kaisareia 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.  
Chemosh (subduer), Num. 21:29. A god of the Moabites.  
Chinnereth (flute, 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), i 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 A.D. 41 to 54.  
 Cleopas (from Cleopatra), John 19:25. One of the two disciples to whom Jesus talked on the way to Emmaus.  
 Corban, Matt. 15:5. An offering to God.  
 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.  
 Cyrcne, 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), I 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.  
 Demonic, Matt. 12:22. One possessing a demon.  
 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.  
 Diotrefes (nourished by Jove), 3 John 9. Nothing known of him.  
 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.  
 Ehai (stone), Deut. 11:26-29. Mountain.  
 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), I 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), I 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.  
Etam (lair of wild beasts), Judges 15:8. Place visited by Samson.  
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.  
Gergesenes (See Gadarenes).  
Gethsemane (an oil press), Matt. 26:36. Garden near Jerusalem.  
Gerizim (cutter), Deut. 11:26-29. Mountain in Ephraim.  
Gibeah (a hill), Josh. 15:57. Located in Benjamin.  
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.  
Gomorrah (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 the 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 Elikanah, 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 of 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 3:1. The religious and political capital of the Israelites.

Jesse (wealthy), Ruth 4:18-22. The father of David, and son of Obed, and 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 the members of the kingdom of Judah after the separation of the ten tribes; later applied to all Israelites.

Jeab (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 Zaeharias, 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 Mariam 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 (wearied), Gen. 29:16. Daughter of Laban, first wife of Jacob.

Lebanon (white), Deut. 1:7. Mountain range north of Palestine.

Lehi (jawbone), Judges 15:9. A place in Judah.

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 of Antioch.  
 Luke (light-giving), Acts 13:1; Col. 4:14. Traveled with Paul and wrote the book that bears his name.  
 Lyeaonia (landing of Lyeanon, or wolf land), Acts 14:11. A province in Asia Minor.  
 Lydia (strife), Acts 16:14. First European convert at Philippi.  
 Lysias (ft. 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.  
 Manoah (rest), Judges 13:2. Father of Samson.  
 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.  
 Meshach (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.  
 Mizpah (a watchtower), Josh. 18:26. A city in Benjamin.  
 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), I 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.  
Nazirite (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 "Nazarite."  
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 exposition from Babylon to Jerusalem.  
New Testament (new covenant). Name given to the Holy Scriptures after the advent of Christ.  
Niedemus (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 (tableland 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.

Peninnah (coral, or pearl), I Sam. 1:2. One of Elkanah's wives.  
 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.  
 Pergamm, 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.  
 Phinehas (mouth of brass), I Sam. 1:3. Son of Eli.  
 Phebe (radiant), Rom. 16:1. The name of a Christian woman.  
 Phoenicia (land of palm trees), 2 Sam. 5:11. Country on east coast of Mediterranean Sea.  
 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 newcomer), 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.  
Sceva (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.  
Shechem (back or shoulders), Jno. 4:5. A city of Samaria.  
Shem (name), Gen. 5:32. The eldest son of Noah.  
Shiloh (place of rest), Judges 21:19. A city of 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.  
Timnah (portion), Judges 14:1. Concubine of Samson.  
Timothy (worshiping 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

Zaechaeus (pure), Luke 19:5. A tax collector, publican who lived near Jericho.  
Zaehariah (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), I Chron. 24:3. Name of priest in time of David.  
Zebah and Zaimunna (deprived of protection), Judges 8:5-21. Two kings of Midian.  
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.

Zeruiah (Balsam), I Sam. 26:6. Mother of Joab, sister of David.

Zidon, or Sidon, Gen. 10:15; Luke 6:17. An ancient city of Phenicia on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean.

Zorah (hornet), Josh. 19:41. A town in tribe of Dan.

Zuph (honeycomb), I Sam. 9:5. A country in tribe of Benjamin.

**MAP LINK**

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**FIRST QUARTER****LIFE OF CHRIST: STUDIES IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS**  
**(Matthew, Mark, Luke)**  
**(First Half of a Six Months' Course)**

*AIM: Through a connected view of the life and work of Jesus in all parts of Palestine as set forth in the Synoptic Gospels, to give the student a sense of the devotion of our Lord to his task of saving men, with a view to winning the pupil's allegiance to Jesus as Savior and Lord.*

Lesson I—January 4, 1942

**THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS: MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE**

Matt. 1:1, 17; Mark 1:1, 14, 15; Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-5

1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

17 So all the generations from Abraham unto David are fourteen generations; and from David unto the carrying away to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the carrying away to Babylon unto the Christ fourteen generations.

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

14 Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God,

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel.

1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us,

2 Even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word,

3 It seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus;

4 That thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.

1 The former treatise I made. O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach,

2 Until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

3 To whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God:

4 And, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye heard from me:

5 For John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. 1:15.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 119:33-40.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—*

December 29. M	The Messiah Promised (Isa. 11:1-5)
December 30. T	The Messiah's Purpose (Matt. 1: I, 17, 21)
December 31. W	The Messiah Proclaimed (Luke 1:1-4)
January 1. T	The Messiah's Preaching (Mark 1: 1. 14. 15)
January 2. F	The Messiah's Power (Mark 2:1-12)
January 3. S	The Messiah's Promise (Acts 1:1-5)
January 4. S	The Messiah's Plan (Matt. 28:18-20)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—It is fortunate that dates are not so important as facts and truths. The genealogy given by Matthew covers all the years between the birth of Isaac and the birth of Jesus. The Bible deals little in exact dates. Chronologists differ as to the year in which Jesus was born, varying as much as ten years. However, both Usher and Hales date the birth of Jesus four years earlier than our present method of dating shows.

*Places.*—It is not known where Matthew, Mark, and Luke wrote. The events of our lesson occurred in Palestine, the land of the Hebrews. The country of Galilee, and Jerusalem are mentioned. *Persons.*—Jesus, his ancestors, and his disciples.

*Lesson Links*—God said to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 22:18.) This is the first promise that is definitely interpreted as referring to Christ. "Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." (Gal. 3:16.) And Stephen shows plainly that a prophecy made by Moses (Deut. 18:15-19) refers to Christ. (Acts 7:37.) So also did Peter. (Acts 3:22, 23.) And Peter shows that a promise God made to David, that of his seed one should sit upon his throne, was fulfilled in the ascension and exaltation of Christ. (2 Sam. 7:12; Psalm 89:3; Acts 2:29-36.) Many other prophecies, too numerous to mention here, can refer to none other than the Christ. We now enter on the study of the life, deeds, and teaching of the one who came in fulfillment of these promises and prophecies.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****The Genealogy of the Christ (Verses 1, 17)**

"The Book."—The expression with which this narrative opens "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ"—is not the title of the entire narrative, for as such it would be inadequate; but it is the title of the genealogical list which follows. (See a similar use of the word book, Gen. 5:1). The title shows both the nature of the list and its object. It is the genealogy of Jesus, and its object is to show that he is 'son of David, son of Abraham.' God had promised to each of these patriarchs that the Christ should be of his offspring, and Matthew shows by this list that Jesus is the offspring of both. The term book is without the article in the original, and should have the indefinite article in English. It is not called the book, as if there were no other, but a book. Another, differing materially from this, is preserved in the third chapter of Luke."—McGarvey.

Again from McGarvey: "Matthew's chief object, as we have stated in the Introduction, Section 5, is to prove the Messiahship and the divinity of Jesus, and every section of the narrative has some bearing on this question. His object in the genealogy, as the superscription sufficiently indicates (verse 1), is to show that Jesus is of the right lineage to be the Messiah. God had promised with an oath to David that he would raise up from his offspring the Messiah to sit on his throne. (Psalm 89:3, 4.) This was well understood by both the friends and the foes of Jesus. (See Matt. 22:42.) The section shows that Jesus possessed this characteristic of the promised Messiah. It does not prove him to be of the blood of David, for the bloodline, according to Matthew's own showing in the latter part of this chapter, did not pass from Joseph to Jesus; but Jesus was born to Mary after her marriage with Joseph, and consequently, he was Joseph's lawful heir, and inherited the throne through him. The argument does not prove that Jesus is the Messiah, but only that he is of the right lineage. It establishes one of the facts necessary to the proof of the Messiahship. Luke's genealogy supplements Matthew's by showing that Jesus, on his mother's side, inherited the blood of David; but does not follow the line of kings, and consequently he proves nothing as regards the inheritance of the throne. Thus we see that by a line of ancestry which brought Jesus no inheritance he received the blood of David, and by a line which established no blood connection, he inherited the throne of David. We can but admire the providence which first brought about this striking coincidence and then caused it to be recorded in so singular a manner by two independent historians."

"We do not find that there was any objection to these genealogies, either by Jew or Gentile, during the first century. Had any difficulty on this head existed, we may reasonably suppose that the Jews, of all others, would have been but too ready to detect and expose it. We may therefore fairly conclude that, whatever difficulty meets us now in harmonizing our Lord's pedigree as given by the two evangelists, it could have had no place in the first age of the Christian church."—Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia.

### **The Beginning of the Gospel (Mark 1:1)**

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Some learned commentators regard these words as the title to Mark's record. As it is not a sentence, and has no grammatical connection with what follows, it seems more than probable that Mark wrote the words as a title to his book, rather than a part of the body of his book. The nature of matters also indicate that it was a title to his work, for it is a fact that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wrote only the beginning of the gospel of Christ, for its full development came after the events with which their records close. Through promise and prophecy the gospel had been foretold, but its actual development began with the coming of Jesus into the world. This beginning of the development of the gospel — the birth, life, teaching, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus—are recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In giving us

these fundamental facts, they treat only of the beginning of the gospel. The essential facts of the gospel were not completed till, having ascended to heaven, Jesus was made high priest, offered his blood for us, was also crowned King of kings, and sent down the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles in their work of making known the gospel in its fullness.

### **Jesus Preaches in Galilee (Verses 14, 15)**

By reading the first three chapters of John the student will see that Mark passes over many things which Jesus did in Judea and Jerusalem before he made this journey into Galilee, for this journey was not taken till after John was cast into prison. It seems probable also that the events mentioned in the fourth chapter occurred before this journey into Galilee.

Mark gives the substance of the preaching of Jesus in this condensed form: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel." He preached the gospel of the kingdom—the good news that the kingdom of God was near. "The time is fulfilled"—the time for the work of establishing the kingdom had fully come. God had set his own time for the beginning of this kingdom, and God's time had come. Many accepted his preaching. If the kingdom did not come—if it is yet future, then Jesus made a promise to the people which many accepted in good faith, a promise which he did not fulfill. The future kingdom theory makes a serious charge against the veracity of Jesus!

The Jews believed in God, but had sinned against him. Now Jesus had come to be their king; they were therefore required to repent of these sins, and accept Jesus as their leader and king. They were now to believe in the gospel of the kingdom, and not in the law of Moses.

### **Luke's Preface (Luke 1:1-4)**

Who were the many whom Luke mentions? The gospel of John had not then been written; and if Mark had been written at that time, which is not certain, Matthew and Mark would not be referred to as many. It would be natural for every pious Christian to jot down what he heard the apostles preach. Such writings would be fragmentary, and perhaps not always accurate. Such writings have been lost.

There is no reason to doubt that Theophilus was an individual of that name, to whom Luke was much devoted. Of course Luke would desire that this beloved friend should have correct ideas concerning the life and teaching of the Lord. Luke had carefully investigated the life and teaching of the Lord, being also guided by inspiration in his investigation and in his writings. Theophilus could therefore depend on the accuracy of what Luke wrote; he could know the certainty of the things wherein he had been instructed. Hence, sufficient evidence leads to the certainty of things—to sure knowledge. And this does not mean that the faith of Theophilus would cease when he gained this assured knowledge. It frequently so happens that the more knowledge we have the greater is our faith.

### **The Extent of the Former Treatise (Acts 1:1, 2)**

"The former treatise" was the Gospel According to Luke. In the Acts, Luke shows how Jesus the Christ, through his chosen apostles, carried on to full development that which he, in his personal ministry, "began both to do and to teach." In writing this history Luke properly repeats some of the things mentioned in the former treatise, so as to show that the Acts records the development of what Jesus on earth began to do and to teach. Verse two evidently refers primarily to the Great Commission. This was given during the forty days he was with the disciples after his resurrection. It seems that he dwelt on the matters contained in this Great Commission "until the day in which he was received up." Hence, it seems that the Great Commission, as recorded, is only a condensation of the teaching of these forty days.

### **The Apostles Were to Be Baptized in the Holy Spirit (Verses 3-5)**

His passion was his death. To prove his resurrection he showed himself alive under a variety of circumstances—to different ones at different times, also to above five hundred brethren at once. These witnesses could not have been mistaken. The King James translation—"infallible proofs"—expresses the force of the Greek word from which we here have proofs. These proofs were such as to lead the apostles to devote their lives to preaching Jesus as the Messiah, and to give their lives as proof of their sincerity.

Though Jesus had diligently taught these disciples, and after his resurrection had repeatedly impressed upon them what they were to do, they were too fallible to trust with such a great work without supernatural aid. Hence he charged them: "But tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:49.) He now gives more fully what Jesus said. Here he refers to this clothing with power from on high as baptism in the Holy Spirit, which they were to receive "not many days hence." And the language clearly shows that those who were to be baptized in the Holy Spirit had been baptized in water by John. No argument for affusion can be made on the fact that we have with water in this verse; in other places it is in water. Even when we plunge our clothes into the water to wash them, we usually say that we wash them with water. What this baptism in the Holy Spirit would do for them may be seen by reading such passages as John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7-14; also Matt. 10:19, 20. No such powers were ever promised to all believers. Notice also that when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, they spoke "with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:1-4.) The apostles were not really doing the talking; the Holy Spirit was doing the talking by means of their vocal organs. And this was only a part of the results of this baptism in the Holy Spirit; other powers conferred upon them by this baptism are mentioned in Mark 16:17, 18.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

The contents of their books show that each of the writers—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—wrote to prove that Jesus was

the long-expected Messiah and to acquaint the people with his teaching and his manner of living.

Centuries before Jesus was born, the coming of the Messiah had been foretold in promises and prophecies. He would come in God's own appointed time. Man did not appoint the time of his coming; "but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:4, 5.) Hence, early in his ministry Jesus announced, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." Let us not dispute the words of the Lord by saying that the kingdom is yet future.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Christ in promise and prophecy.  
Results of Holy Spirit baptism.  
Discuss John 17:4.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
Repeat some of the promises and prophecies of Christ.

#### Verses 1, 17

What promise had God made to Abraham and David?  
What was Matthew's chief object in writing his book?

#### Mark 1:1

Discuss Mark's opening words—"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

#### Verses 14, 15

Discuss the preaching of John the Baptist.

Discuss verse 15.

#### Luke 1:1-4

Discuss Luke's preface.

#### Acts 1:1, 2

What was the former treatise?  
How long was it between the resurrection and ascension of Jesus?  
What did he do during those days?

#### Verses 3-5

What proofs are given of the resurrection of Christ?  
Why could not these witnesses have been mistaken?  
What did the baptism of the Holy Spirit do for the apostles?  
What proof that people are not now baptized in the Holy Spirit?  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson II—January 11, 1942

### THE INFANCY AND BOYHOOD OF JESUS

Luke 2:25-35, 39, 40

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

26 And it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, that they might do concerning him after the custom of the law.

28 Then he received him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Now lettest thou thy servant depart, Lord,

According to thy word, in peace;

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples;

32 A light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
And the glory of thy people Israel.

33 And his father and his mother were marvelling at the things which were spoken concerning him;

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against;

35 Yea and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul; that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.

39 And when they had accomplished all things that were according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." (Luke 2:52.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 119:9-16.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

January	5.	M	The Savior in Prophecy (Isa. 9:2-7)
January	6.	T	The Savior Born (Matt. 1:18-25)
January	7.	W	The Savior Identified (Luke 2:25-35)
January	8.	T	The Savior Acclaimed (Matt. 2:3.12)
January	9.	F	Jesus' Normal Boyhood (Luke 2:41-52)
January	10.	S	Jesus' Early Training (Isa. 7:10-16)
January	11.	S	Jesus to Be Worshiped (Heb. 1:1-9)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—The date of this lesson is 4 B.C. It was thirty-three days after the birth of Christ. Compare Lev. 12:1-7 with Luke 2:22-24.

*Places.*—At the temple in Jerusalem; also Nazareth of Galilee.

*Persons.*—Joseph, Mary, the child Jesus, and the aged and pious Simeon.

*Lesson Links*—Only Matthew and Luke tell anything of the childhood of Jesus, and each of them mentions only a few incidents. It therefore requires some study to place the incidents mentioned in their historic order.

This seems to be the order of the events mentioned: Jesus was born in Bethlehem, was circumcised the eighth day (Luke 2:21), was presented at the temple on the thirty-third day, then carried back to Bethlehem, was there visited by the wise men, and then came the flight into Egypt. The flight into Egypt certainly did not occur before his circumcision, nor during the twenty-five days between that event and his being presented at the temple. They would not go to Egypt and return to Jerusalem within twenty-five days, and yet they fled to Egypt immediately after the visit of the wise men. The visit of the wise men and the flight into Egypt therefore occurred after they returned to Bethlehem after Jesus was presented at the temple. Joseph and Mary did not go to Jerusalem, nor even live in Bethlehem, on their return from Egypt. Pictures representing the wise men as worshipping Jesus as he lay in the manger are incorrect. He was in a house at the time of their visit. (Matt. 2:11.)

Concerning the woman who gave birth to a son, the law of Moses said, "And she shall continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into

the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled .... And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb a year old for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtle-dove, for a sin-offering, unto the door of the tent of meeting, unto the priest .... And if her means suffice not for a lamb, then she shall take two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons; the one for a burnt-offering, and the other for a sin-offering." (Lev. 12:4-8.) At the end of Mary's thirty-three days of purification, she and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple "to present him to the Lord." That they brought no lamb for an offering, but only the required birds, shows their extreme poverty. He who was the heir of all things was born and brought up in poverty.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### **The Man Simeon (Verses 25, 26)**

As Simeon was a common name among the Jews, it is probable that there were many Simeons living in Jerusalem, but only one who filled the description of this Simeon. This Simeon was a righteous man; that is, he was just in his dealings with others. He was a pious, God-fearing man. Hence, he rendered goodwill and helpfulness to man, and reverence and obedience to God. In view of the prevailing corruption among the leaders in Jerusalem, as pictured by Jesus (Matt. 23:13-37; Luke 11:39-52), the character of Simeon is all the more remarkable.

Simeon was "looking for the consolation of Israel." He was looking for the long-expected Messiah who would bring consolation to Israel. The Messiah would be the source of this consolation, or salvation. "And the Holy Spirit was upon him." He therefore had some degree of inspiration. God had singled him out for a special favor—"it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ," the Anointed One, the Messiah. He knew therefore that the first advent of the Lord would occur during his life, and that he would see him with his own eyes. It was not a notion he arrived at by speculation. Being acquainted with the promises and prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah, it was natural for any pious Jew to long for him to come in his day, that he might be permitted to see him with his own eyes, and many had such desire all along. To his disciples Jesus once said, "But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not." (Matt. 13:16, 17.) It must have been therefore a great joy to Simeon when the Lord revealed to him that he would live to see the Lord's Anointed. Was he the only man in Jerusalem that the Lord could entrust with such a revelation? It seems so.

#### **Simeon Receives Jesus into His Arms (Verses 27, 28)**

The Spirit guided Simeon into the temple at the proper time, that he might see Jesus. It is impossible for us to imagine the emotions that surged in the bosom of this just and pious man when



Joseph and Mary came into the temple with the child, and he was permitted with his own eyes to look upon him who was to be the long-promised Messiah. He was seeing what prophets and righteous men had for centuries desired to see. He must hold that babe close to his own heart, and so "he received him into his arms, and blessed God"; that is, he praised and thanked God for giving him this glorious opportunity. Was he blessed above what we may be today? Most assuredly not; for though we cannot receive his body into our arms, we can receive him into our hearts in a spiritual way, but none the less real. And we can also enjoy here and now the salvation which he came to bring to the sons and daughters of men. We therefore have even more cause for blessing God than did Simeon. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3.) "In whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses." And through the knowledge revealed concerning him we have all things that pertain to life and godliness. (2 Pet. 1:3.) We are therefore more highly favored than was Simeon. But many of us are like so many of the Jews: we have eyes, but see not; and we have ears, but hear not. And this, because our hearts have waxed gross.

### **Simeon's Song of Praise (Verses 29-32)**

God's promise to Simeon that he would see the Lord's Anointed before he died had now been fulfilled, and he was ready to go hence. The cup of joy was full; so he prayed, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart, Lord, according to thy word, in peace." The whole circumstance shows that Simeon was an aged man at this time; and it seems from the words just quoted, that the Lord had indicated to him that, having seen the Messiah, he would not live much longer. So he prayed that now he be allowed to depart in peace. And who can doubt that the Lord granted his request? "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." The Anointed is here called "salvation," because he is the source and the author of salvation. Compare this with the following: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. 1:30, 31.) Verse 31 evidently means that this salvation through the Christ was to be for all nations; notice the plural, peoples. This salvation was not to be solely for the Jewish people, but for all peoples. The next verse shows this more plainly: "A light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Hence Christ Jesus would be a light, and would be revealed to the Gentiles. Here is early evidence that Jesus would not be a tribal, or national, Savior. The Gentiles would be as much the object of his mission as would the Jews. This statement of Simeon proves that he spoke as the Spirit moved him, for no Jew, of his own accord, would have made such a statement. The Jews thought, and so do some professed Christians today, that the Messiah was for the Jews—a tribal Messiah. "The glory of thy people Israel." The Jews were still God's people; not till the cross were all things Jewish abolished. It was a glorious thing for the people of Israel, that

the Savior came of that nation. Jesus used the term "salvation," in the same sense Simeon used it, when he said to the woman of Samaria, "Salvation is from the Jews." (John 4:22.) That is, the Savior, the source of salvation, is from the Jews. And what a glorious thing it would have been had the Jews believed on him! But the nation, through its legal authorities, murdered him, and national destruction was the penalty they paid for their crime.

### **Simeon Blesses Joseph and Mary (Verses 33-35)**

In the light of later developments and revelations we can see something of the significance of the things said about the child Jesus, but Joseph and Mary had not this advantage. They could not follow out matters and see the fulfillment of what was said of the child Jesus. It was all therefore bewildering to them. What Simeon said was not the first astonishing thing that had been said about the child. Notice what the angel said to Mary before the birth of Jesus (Luke 1:26-35) and what an angel said to Joseph (Matt. 1:20, 21), also the report of the shepherds (Luke 2:8-18), and the visit of the wise men (Matt. 2:7-12). It seems that all these things would have so prepared Joseph and Mary, that they would not have been surprised at anything that might have been said about Jesus. Perhaps they wondered most on this occasion at this additional information: "A light for revelation to the Gentiles," for they would hold to the usual Jewish ideas about the Gentiles.

"Simeon blessed them." To bless one was to pronounce such a one blessed, or to call for God's blessings on him. And Simeon made another statement concerning the child that must have sounded strange to Joseph and Mary: "This child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against." Many would accept him, and become sons and daughters of God; others would reject him, and fall. To many he was a stumbling block, for he did not come as they had thought he would—he did not meet their expectations.

There has been some difference of opinion as to the meaning of what Simeon said to Mary: "A sword shall pierce through thine own soul." It seems certain that it is a figurative expression, for it is hard to see how a material sword could pierce the soul of a person. It seems reasonable that it refers to the sorrows she would endure, which would reach their climax in the crucifixion of her son.

This lesson will not be complete, unless the student reads verses 36-38.

### **Again Joseph and Mary Make Their Home in Nazareth (Verses 39, 40)**

They had fulfilled the requirements of the law—that part of the law which some call the ceremonial law, or the law of Moses, in contrast with the ten commandments, which they call the law of God, or the Lord. Yet this "ceremonial law" is here called the law of the Lord. Having fully complied with the demands of the law of the Lord, they went to their old home town, Nazareth. Here Jesus spent his boyhood days.

It seems that Jesus grew up as a normal child grows, his deity not being manifested till time for its use. "The child grew, and waxed strong." He was not a physical weakling. He was not giddy and prankish, but was "filled with wisdom." "And the grace of God was upon him." The notion, so often expressed, that grace is unmerited favor, will not apply here. But why say that grace is unmerited favor? Grace is favor whether merited or unmerited. The unmerited idea is not in the word grace. Whether the favor is merited or unmerited is determined by the nature of the case, and not by the meaning of the word grace; so why define grace as unmerited favor?

### SOME REFLECTIONS

To deny the virgin birth of Jesus is to regard him as only a human being. The leaders in Jerusalem regarded him as a mere man; for that reason he was a constant puzzle to them. The people of Galilee, who knew his family, asked, "Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?" They could not answer their own question, because they regarded him as a mere man. (Matt. 13:54-56.) And no man today who so regards him can account for his powers.

Joseph and Mary were law-abiding people. They obeyed both the Roman law and the law of God. They went to Bethlehem to enroll in obedience to the Roman law, when it certainly was not convenient for Mary to make the journey. With reference to the child Jesus they kept the law of God to the minutest detail—they "accomplished all things that were according to the law of the Lord." Had they not been faithful in all their relationships, they would not have been so honored of the Lord as they were.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Was Mary the mother of other children?  
The character of Simeon.  
The duty of parents to their children.  
The duty of children to their parents.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

What greater things may we enjoy than he did in holding Jesus in his arms?

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
Discuss the order of events in the early life of Jesus.  
What shows the poverty of Joseph and Mary?

#### Verses 29-32

What prayer did Simeon utter, and why?  
In what sense had he seen God's salvation?

#### Verses 33-35

What did Simeon say about the child Jesus?  
Give some astonishing things that had formerly been said about the child.  
Discuss the meaning of Simeon's words in verses 34, 35.

#### Verses 25, 26

What is said of the character of Simeon?  
What was the general condition of the Jews morally and spiritually?  
What shows that Simeon had a measure of inspiration?  
What special favor had God shown him?

#### Verses 39, 40

What law had they fulfilled?  
Where now did they make their home?  
Discuss verse 40.  
Discuss the reflections.

#### Verses 27, 28

How came Simeon to be in the temple at this time?

Lesson III—January 18, 1942  
**JOHN THE BAPTIST AND JESUS**  
 Luke 3:1-6, 15-17, 21, 22

1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene,

2 In the highpriesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

3 And he came into all the region round about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins;

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,  
 The voice of one crying in the wilderness,  
 Make ye ready the way of the Lord.  
 Make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled,  
 And every mountain and hill shall be brought low;  
 And the crooked shall become straight,  
 And the rough ways smooth;

6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the Christ;

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire:

17 Whose fan is in his hand, thoroughly to cleanse his threshing-floor, and to gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.

21 Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that, Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

22 And the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him, and a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." (Luke 3:22.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 40:1-8.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

January 12.	M	John Prepares the Way for Jesus (Luke 3:1-6)
January 13.	T	John Exalts Jesus (Luke 3:15-18)
January 14.	W	John Baptizes Jesus (Matt. 3:13-17)
January 15.	T	The Baptism of Repentance (Mark 1:1-8)
January 16.	F	The Baptist of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-8)
January 17.	S	Christian Baptism (Acts 2:37-41)
January 18.	S	The Promise of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-32)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—A.D. 26-27. According to Luke 3:23, it was actually about A.D. 30. See time, in the first lesson.

*Places.*—The river Jordan, and "all the regions round about the Jordan." It does not seem that John confined his preaching and baptizing to any one point along the Jordan.

*Persons.*—Jesus, John the Baptist, certain rulers, and the people.

*Lesson Links.*—All we know of John from the day he was circumcised till he began preaching is summed up in this one verse: "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel." (Luke 1:80.) This does not mean that John lived in barren wastes. In New

Testament usage a desert was an uninhabited, or sparsely settled, country. John was not trained in the niceties of polite society. He lived a sober life, free from the blighting influence of the corrupt and hypocritical Pharisees of Jerusalem. He was about six months older than Jesus.

From the time Joseph and Mary took up again their abode in Nazareth to the time Jesus appeared at the Jordan to be baptized, only one incident is mentioned in the life of Jesus; and the record of that incident is followed by these words: "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." (See Luke 2:41-52.)

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### The Time John Began to Preach (Verses 1, 2)

These verses compared with verse 23 help us determine with some degree of accuracy the date of the birth of Jesus, for it would seem that he was born about thirty years before the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius. "No such elaborate chronological precision is to be found elsewhere in the New Testament, and it comes fitly from him who claims it as the peculiar recommendation of his gospel, that he had accurately traced down all things from the first? (Luke 1:3.) Here, evidently, commences his proper narrative, the fifteenth year of Tiberius — reckoning from the period when he was admitted, three years before Augustus' death, to a share of the empire (Webster and Wilkenson), about the end of the year of Rome 779, or about four years before the usual reckoning. Pilate . . . governor of Judea—his proper title was procurator, but with more than the usual powers of that office. After holding it about ten years he was ordered to Rome, to answer to charges brought against him, but ere he arrived Tiberius died (A.D. 35), and soon after Pilate committed suicide." Herod—"Herod Antipas, one of the three sons of Herod the Great, and own brother of Archelaus." These quotations are from Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown. The region over which Philip, another son of Herod, ruled lay to the northeast of Palestine. Nothing definite is known of Lysanias, save that which is here told of him.

At this period in Jewish history it seems that the Romans used rather a free hand in appointing and deposing high priests. Annas was made high priest in A.D. 6 and deposed in A.D. 15. He is said to have been "an astute and powerful ecclesiastical statesman." Caiaphas, son-in-law to Annas, was high priest from A.D. 18 to 36. But our lesson presents this difficulty: Both Annas and Caiaphas are spoken of as high priests. Various conjectures are presented as explanations. The natural explanation seems to suggest this idea: While the Jews had to accept Caiaphas as high priest, they chose rather to continue to regard Annas as their high priest rather than the hotheaded and self-willed Caiaphas. Even when Jesus was arrested he was taken first before Annas. All the facts given help us to have a fairly clear idea as to when John began his ministry. It was in the period just described that "the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness." This means that at this time God revealed to him what he was to preach. John was an inspired man, a prophet of God.

### **The Central Theme of John's Preaching (Verse 3)**

We, of course, have only a brief outline of John's preaching, and yet enough to give us a fair idea of the burden of all his preaching. The outstanding theme—the central theme of his preaching—that which would create the greatest interest amongst the Jews—was, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." What he said about other matters was said in an effort to prepare the people for the king and his kingdom. There was much formality and corruption amongst the Jews; they were utterly unfitted for citizenship in the kingdom; hence, his constant call to repentance. "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 3:2.) He must have made some demands concerning the confession of sins, for Matthew says, "Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about the Jordan; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins." (Matt. 3:5, 6.) To all he "preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins." (Mark 1:4.) Without repentance their baptism would be worthless. Baptism preceded by repentance was unto the remission of sins. John also demanded that they believe on him that was to come. (Acts 19:4.) And he gave the people evidence so that they might believe. (John 1:19-36.) Hence, John baptized only those who had reached an age of accountability—those who could do the things demanded.

John was a powerful preacher, a prophet of God, and his preaching therefore would have attracted attention; but his announcement that the kingdom of heaven was at hand would stir the Jews as nothing else would. Hence, great multitudes flocked to him, and were baptized of him in the river Jordan. Such interest was stirred up that the people began to wonder if he were not the long-expected Christ. So great was the interest that the authorities in Jerusalem sent men to John to inquire of him if he were the Christ. (John 1:19-22.)

### **John the Way-Preparer (Verses 4-6)**

Luke quotes a prophecy from Isaiah as applicable to John's work. The imagery of that prophecy is taken from building highways. The language is figurative, for John was not building literal roads; he was preparing people for the coming king; or, rather, he was getting people ready for the king. Think of what is done in building a highway, or a railroad, and see how John's work with the people had some resemblance to such construction. Many curves and angles in the old are now being eliminated. Roads across valleys are elevated. Some people are low in spirit, discouraged, and have a down-and-out feeling. Such are inclined to give up, and say, What is the use? People like that need to be lifted up; they need new motives and new hopes. That is as true today as it was then. Our king and his kingdom give new motives for living and inspire new hopes. Nothing else so exalts life as the religion of Christ. And yet there are mountains and hills that must be brought low—the haughty and proud must be brought to humbleness and meekness. "Let the brother of low degree glory in his high estate: and the rich, in that he is made low." (James 1:9, 10.) The preparation for good citizenship in the kingdom of heaven is a leveling process; it exalts the man of low degree,

and it brings low the proud and haughty spirit. "The crooked shall become straight." Some men and their ways are called crooked in both the Old Testament and the New. For examples, see Deut. 32:5; Psalm 125:5; Prov. 2:15; Acts 2:40; Phil. 2:15. The man who is crooked in his dealings must be made straight—must become honest. His crooked ways must be eliminated. A man cannot detour over crooked ways and reach the kingdom. "And the rough ways smooth." Some otherwise good people are rough and crude. Some are worse; it gives them some feeling of superiority to disregard the feelings and rights of other people. They are noisy, blustering, overbearing pests. They must become meek, considerate, and forbearing. These things are just as necessary now for citizenship in the kingdom of heaven as they were for the preparatory state of the kingdom. And those, who, under the influence of the gospel of Christ, make such preparation as here set forth, shall see the salvation of God.

### **Is John the Messiah? (Verse 15)**

"And as the people were in expectation"—they were looking for the Messiah to appear; but it seems that the Jews had been in expectation ever since the prophets foretold his coming, as appears from what Jesus said: "For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not." (Matt. 13:17.) When John's preaching that the kingdom of heaven was at hand became known throughout Jewry, it was natural for the people to question among themselves, "Is John the Messiah?" Even the authorities in Jerusalem became interested, and sent men to inquire of John if he were the Christ. Their parting questions: "Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? .... Why then baptizest thou, if thou art not the Christ, neither Elijah, neither the prophet?" (See John 1:19-25.)

### **John's Answer to All (Verses 16, 17)**

"I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness." As John was a prophet, God spoke through him. He was, therefore, the voice of God. The element in which John baptized was water; there was another baptism which man could not perform. One greater than man must do that baptizing, and John informed them that even then such a one was in their midst, the one who would baptize some in the Holy Spirit, and some he would baptize in fire. What that baptism in fire would be is shown in the explanation Jesus gave: "Every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." And the chaff of the threshing floor would be burned with unquenchable fire.

At this point the student should read Matt. 3:7-12. It will be noticed that fire is mentioned in three connected verses. It is not at all reasonable to say that the word fire in verse 1! has entirely a different meaning from what it has in verses 10 and 12. The baptism in fire is for the wicked. Acts 1:1-5 shows that the baptism in the Holy Spirit was soon to be fulfilled upon the apostles. If one will notice the powers this baptism in the Holy Spirit conferred upon the apostles, he will see clearly that no one is now baptized in the Holy Spirit, no matter what their claims may be.

**The Baptism of Jesus (Verses 21, 22)**

A fuller account of the baptism of Jesus will be found in Matt. 3:13-17. The long distance Jesus traveled to be baptized shows that he did not consider baptism of no importance. He would cross the Jordan east of Nazareth, and go down on the east side of the Jordan, the road usually traveled by Jews in going from Galilee to Jerusalem. He must have traveled seventy-five or eighty miles, and most likely on foot.

John knew that Jesus, his cousin, was a good man, but did not know that he was the Christ. He felt that it would be more appropriate for Jesus to baptize him than for him to baptize Jesus; but Jesus overruled his protest, saying, "Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Baptism itself did not fulfill all righteousness, but he would not fulfill all righteousness if he neglected baptism. As he came up out of the water "the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him; and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Later John himself said, "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 1:33, 34.) So far as the record shows never was there another scene on earth comparable to this. John the greatest living man was the administrator, Jesus the Son of God was the subject, the Holy Spirit honored the act by descending upon Jesus, and the Father spoke his pleasure from heaven. The greatest man and all three persons of the Godhead took part in that event. How unbecoming therefore for puny man in these days to make slight remarks about an ordinance that was so honored!

**SOME REFLECTIONS**

John's mission was twofold. He came to make ready a people for the king and his kingdom, and to introduce the king to those he made ready.

To know a person means more than to be able to recognize his physical appearance when one sees him. John's language to Jesus, when Jesus came to him to be baptized, shows that he was acquainted with Jesus and knew him to be a good man; and yet he did not really know Jesus—he did not know that he was the Son of God till after the baptism.

Did John baptize all his converts with his own hands? Why should he? Jesus did all his baptizing through the agency of his disciples. (John 4:1, 2.) He baptized people, but not with his own hands. In the same way John could have baptized many of his converts.

Genuine repentance bears fruit in righteous living; that is, the fruit John demanded of those whom he baptized. He did not demand that people tell an experience before he would baptize them.



**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

The parents of John.  
 John's straightforward preaching.  
 What John required of the people.  
 The baptism of Jesus.

**QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give the time, places, and persons.  
 What do we know of the early life of John?

**Verses 1, 2**

Tell how Luke identifies the time John began to preach.

Give what information you can about Annas and Caiaphas.

**Verse 3**

Give the central theme of John's preaching.  
 Why should this have created so much interest among the Jews?

What did he demand of the people in preparing for the kingdom?

Show that John baptized no infants.

What question did John's preaching raise in the minds of the people?

**Verses 4-8**

What prophecy is quoted?

With what is John's work compared?

Show, item by item, how his work resembled road construction.

**Verse 15**

What question was asked of John?

**Verses 16, 17**

In what sense was John a voice?

How did he compare himself with the one who was to come after him?

Discuss the baptism in fire.

Who received the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

**Verses 21, 22**

A test question: Why did the Jews of Galilee, in going to Jerusalem, go down the east side of the Jordan?

How far did Jesus travel to be baptized?

What did John say to Jesus, and why?

Tell what took place in connection with the baptism of Jesus.

In the light of the baptism of Jesus and what occurred at his baptism, what about those who belittle baptism?

Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson IV—January 25, 1942

**THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS**

Matt. 4:1-11

1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered.

3 And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.

4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

5 Then the devil taketh him into the holy city; and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple,

6 And saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written.

He shall give his angels charge concerning thee:

and,

On their hands they shall bear thee up,

Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God.

8 Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

9 And he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

11 Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"For we have . . . one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. 4:15.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—James 1:12-18.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

January 19.	M	The Temptation of Jesus (Matt. 4:1-11)
January 20.	T	Jesus Vanquishes the Tempter (Luke 4:1-13)
January 21.	W	The Temptation in Eden (Gen. 3:1-8)
January 22.	T	Why Resist Temptation? (1 Pet. 5:6-11)
January 23.	F	Possibilities in Perils of Temptation (James 1:12-15)
January 24.	S	Flirting with Temptation (1 Cor. 10:6-13)
January 25.	S	Help in Temptation (Heb. 2:9-18)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—A.D. 27.

*Places.*—Some undesignated place in the wilderness, the temple in Jerusalem, and an exceeding high mountain.

*Persons.*—The Spirit, Jesus, the devil, and angels.

*Lesson Links*—It seems that the events of this lesson followed immediately after the baptism of Jesus. And it is likely that the devil loses no time in trying every newly baptized person.

Temptation is the act of tempting or of being tempted. It is well therefore, in studying this lesson, to consider some of the meanings and uses of the word tempt. To tempt does not always mean to stir up in a person an inclination or a desire to do a thing, nor even that an effort is made to do so. Some of the older meanings of tempt were, to prove, test, try. Webster also gives these definitions: To endeavor to persuade, incite; to lead, or endeavor to lead, into evil; to provoke, as anger, or a person to anger; to act presumptuously toward; as, to tempt God. In various ways God tested or proved his people to see whether they were really obedient to him; but the devil always tempts people in the sense that he seeks to induce them to do evil. In that sense God tempts no one. When the devil presents inducements to get a person to do wrong, the person is said to be tempted even though the devil's offer may not have affected the person at all. No one ever tempts Jehovah in the sense that he seeks to induce him to do wrong; but the Israelites often tempted him in the sense that they were presumptuous toward him, and also in that they demanded unreasonable signs of his presence with them. They thus tempted him to anger. We frequently speak of being tempted to do a thing, whether good or bad, when we are inclined to do it; and so we get the idea that a person is tempted only when he feels an inclination to do a thing. In the temptations of Jesus, was he inclined to do evil? His temptation is sometimes compared with the temptation of Eve in the Garden of Eden. In her temptation there was an appeal to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. In this respect the temptation of Jesus was much like hers; but here the likeness stops. She lent a willing ear to what the devil said to her; Jesus met every temptation of the devil with an indignant rebuff. The devil tempted Jesus in the sense that he endeavored to induce him to do wrong, but there is no proof that Jesus at any time had the least inclination to do the thing the devil suggested.

Can anyone believe that the devil stirred up any evil desires in the Savior's heart? Is not a desire to do an evil thing wrong in itself? (See Matt. 5:27.) Can anyone believe that Jesus was contaminated by any evil thoughts or base desires? It is true that he was tempted in all points like as we are, but that does not necessarily mean that he felt as we do when tempted, that he had the same impulse to do wrong that we sometimes feel. Offer a bottle of whisky to a toper and to one who never drinks; the same temptation is presented to both, but it certainly does not affect both in the same way. Here is a comforting promise: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it." (1 Cor. 10:13.) Finding this way of escape is our responsibility.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### **Jesus Fasts Forty Days and Forty Nights (Verses 1, 2)**

It is not necessary, not even reasonable, to suppose that Jesus was never tempted before his baptism. He had lived a normal life, and of course had much the same trials as others had. No normal person is free from temptation. Neither should we conclude that Jesus was not tempted after the experiences of this lesson. None of the disciples were with him during the temptations of this lesson; yet Jesus said to them on the night of his betrayal, "But ye are they that have continued with me in my temptations." (Luke 22:28.) The temptations of our lesson are frequently referred to as the temptation of Jesus, and are so denominated in the heading of our lesson, but they were really three distinct temptations. It appears that they came immediately after his baptism. With characteristic force of expression Mark says, "And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness." Jesus did not voluntarily go into these temptations—he was led, or driven, into the wilderness to be tempted. Before entering on his ministry he must be put to the severest test. He had come into Satan's territory to bind him and to spoil his goods—to wrest from him his control of men. At the very beginning of his ministry there must be a test of strength, the enemy of man against the friend of man, with our destiny in the balance. The devil's aim was to lead Jesus into sin, and so make it impossible for him to be the Savior. On the part of God these temptations were to prove by the severest test that Jesus was a worthy Savior, a worthy antagonist of the devil. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights. Moses and Elijah had done the same thing. (Ex. 34:28; 1 Kings 19:8.) Others have fasted even longer. "He afterward hungered." It has been said that the fact that he did not hunger during the forty days shows that his appetite was miraculously suspended; but that conclusion is hardly necessary. One fact seems generally to have been overlooked: Luke says he was tempted during the forty days; but he gives no idea as to the nature of the temptations of the forty days. It is a well-known fact that people can be under such great emotional strain that no sense of hunger is felt. It seems that the devil then departed from Jesus for a time, that he might try him from

other angles. When the strain of the temptations of the forty days were over, the pangs of hunger would be all but overwhelming, and yet Jesus had with him nothing to eat. It is said that hunger and thirst are the strongest passions that take possession of human beings. How intense must have been his hunger!

### **The First Temptation (Verses 3, 4)**

While Jesus is so intensely hungry, the devil strikes. "And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." This language shows that, after the forty days in which Jesus was being tempted, the devil had, for a short space, been away from Jesus. There is an insinuating "if" in his suggestion, an "if" that implies doubt. It was a challenge for Jesus to prove that he was the Son of God. Jesus did not propose to do one thing the devil suggested, even though he was greatly in need of food. Neither did he propose to prove anything to the devil. What would he have gained by proving anything to the devil? There was no one else there to witness the proof, and the proof would not have benefitted the devil. Besides, the devil knew without proof that he was the Son of God. Even the evil spirits in men knew who Jesus was. "It is written" meant more to Jesus than supplying himself with needed food at the suggestion of the devil. A wicked man may, on occasion, give good advice so as to get us in the habit of doing what he suggests. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked." (Psalm 1:1.) "The counsel of the wicked is far from me." (Job 21:16.) Instead of following the counsel of the devil, Jesus relied on the counsel inspired men had written. There is more to life than eating food; food for the body, though essential, is not enough; we must live by every word of God. The spiritual man needs food no less than does the physical man. Too many professed Christians live very much as the animals do; their whole efforts are directed toward supplying their physical needs and desires. As a result, we have many weak and sickly church members. The devil did not fool Jesus, but he has fooled many Christians at this point.

### **The Second Temptation (Verses 5-7)**

The devil took Jesus to Jerusalem. Jesus allowed him to arrange these temptations in his own way and where he pleased. This would make the victory of Jesus all the more striking. Again the devil uses that insinuating "if," and a challenge for Jesus to prove himself to be the Son of God; but if a person is not going to make proper use of a truth or a fact, no good can come of proving it to him. Jesus intended to prove only one thing to the devil, and that was, that the devil could not lead him astray. The devil also quotes scripture; but he had no good design in doing so—he was perverting it from its intended use to his own purposes. God never Promised to protect anyone in a vain effort to show off. If God had commanded Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the temple, promising that angels would bear him up, he could have well done so, confidently relying on the promise of God; but no one can follow the suggestions of the devil, and have any right to claim

any of God's promises. If you would rely on God's promises, obey him instead of the devil. To follow the devil, and claim God's promises is to tempt God. "Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God." We must not put God to the test in any matters where he has not spoken. To seek to put God to the test under conditions concerning which he has given no commandment, nor made any promise, is decidedly wrong. This should be plain to anyone; and yet even today many religious people leave undone things that God has commanded and do things that he has not commanded, and then expect him to fulfill to them the promises he has made to those who do his will. If Jesus had done what the devil suggested, he would have done what these people are constantly doing.

### **The Third Temptation (Verses 8-11)**

We are not informed as to the location of this mountain. On this exceeding high mountain the devil presented to the Savior's view all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. That was a glittering scene to behold. For what the devil here offered Jesus men in all ages past the Nebuchadnezzars, the Cyruses, the Alexanders, the Caesars, the Napoleons—have waded through floods of human blood; but to gain his purpose with reference to these kingdoms and their glory, he must wade, so to speak, through his own blood. Was there an easier way, a shorter route, to gain these kingdoms and their glory? Yes, said the devil; just fall down and worship me, and all shall be thine. Luke's report is a little fuller: "To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them: for it hath been delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine." There must have been some truth in what the devil said, for Jesus did not dispute his claim. These things were not the devil's by right, but by deception and conquest. It seems that the devil overstated his power when he said, "To whomsoever I will I give it." God's power is greater than the devil's; and his providence still controls the destiny of nations when it suits his purpose to do so. (See such passages as Dan. 4:17, 25, 32; Jer. 27:4-8.)

Jesus met all the temptations with an appeal to the word of God—"It is written." If Christians would follow his example, temptations would not work such ruin; but, alas! so many Christians are not sufficiently acquainted with the scriptures to be able to say on all occasions, "It is written." Now, the devil realizing the superiority of Jesus, acknowledges his defeat by leaving him. "Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him." Heaven was interested in that conflict. God is interested in every conflict we have with the devil. If we realized this, it would give us strength and determination to fight to the finish in every conflict we have with the devil and his emissaries. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man: but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed." (James 1:12-14.)

**SOME REFLECTIONS**

To give proof to a person who will make bad use of it is like casting pearls before swine—it is likely only to enrage him.

Do not become intimate with those who have no interest in your welfare, for you will be tempted to follow their evil ways. Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals.

Before following any advice it is better to find out the character of the one who gives the advice and what possible interest he may have in giving the advice. Many people give advice for selfish reasons.

It has been said that it is useless to quote the Bible to one who does not believe it, but those who make such statements fail to take into account the example of Jesus; he quoted scripture to the devil. There is power in an appropriate passage of scripture that even a disbeliever cannot evade. He may fight back at it, but he cannot get away from it. Besides, in quoting scripture when tempted you show your confidence in the wisdom and care of the author of it.

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

Our spiritual and physical needs.

The power of the word.

How the world and its glories tempt us.

A study of I Cor. 10:13.

**QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.

Give a discussion of temptation.

**On the Comments**

Instead of answering questions, the class should discuss as fully as possible each temptation.

Discuss the reflections.

Lesson V—February 1, 1942  
**JESUS CALLS FOUR DISCIPLES**  
 Luke 5:1-11

1 Now it came to pass, while the multitude pressed upon him and heard the word of God, that he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret;

2 And he saw two boats standing by the lake: but the fishermen had gone out of them, and were washing their nets.

3 And he entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the multitudes out of the boat.

4 And when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answered and said, Master, we toiled all night, and took nothing: but at thy word I will let down the nets.

6 And when they had done this, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their nets were breaking;

7 And they beckoned unto their partners in the other boat, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

8 But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9 For he was amazed, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken;

10 And so were also James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all, and followed him.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." (Mark 1:17.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

January 26.	M	Jesus Calls Disciples (Matt. 4:18-22)
January 27.	T	Called to Follow (Mark 1:16-20)
January 28.	W	Called to Serve (Luke 5:1-11)
January 29.	T	The Cost of Discipleship (Luke 14:25-33)
January 30.	F	Jesus Teaches His Disciples (Matt. 5:1-12)
January 31.	S	Jesus Commands His Disciples (Mark 6:7-13)
February 1.	S	The Need for Workers (John 4:31-39)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—A.D. 28. According to some authorities it was A.D. 27, the same year in which Jesus was baptized. They reckon that he was baptized in January or February of 27; but would John be preaching in the open country in the winter? or that in the providence of God Jesus would be led in the dead of winter to spend his forty days of temptation without food or shelter? Perhaps this is not conclusive, but it is worth considering.

*Place.*—The lake of Gennesaret, more familiarly known as the Sea of Galilee. It was also called the Sea of Tiberias; in the Old Testament, Chinnereth. (Num. 34:11; Josh. 12:3.) But this sea, dear to the heart of every Christian, "is only an expansion of the river Jordan, which enters it from the northeast, and makes its exit from the southwest. It is 680 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea." Its water is sweet. It is said to abound now in fish as in ancient times.

*Persons.*—Jesus, Peter, Andrew, James, John, Zebedee, and the multitude of the people. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, is not mentioned by name in this narrative; but we learn from Matt. 4:18-22, that Andrew was a part of this fishing company. Besides, we learn from verses 6 and 7 of our lesson that someone was in the boat with Peter, and it is reasonable to suppose that it was his brother Andrew.

*Lesson Links*—We should not conclude that our lesson text for today gives an account of the first acquaintance these fishermen had with Jesus. Though John does not mention the temptations of Jesus, it must have been immediately after these temptations that Jesus returned to the place where John was baptizing. When John saw him coming, he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" On the next day, in the presence of two of his disciples, John said, "Behold, the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." One of the two was Andrew; he hunted up his brother Simon and brought him to Jesus. Then two others, Philip and Nathanael, joined the company of the disciples of Jesus. (John 1:29-51.) On returning to Galilee Jesus and his disciples were invited to a marriage feast; here his first miracle was performed. (John 2:1-11.) After

a short visit to Capernaum he went to Jerusalem because of the Feast of the Passover. While there he cleansed the temple. "Many believed on his name, beholding his signs which he did." (John 2:12-25.) At this time also the celebrated conversation with Nicodemus was held, after which he went out into the country of Judaea, taught the people, and baptized many through the agency of his disciples. In the same way Jesus baptizes everyone today who is baptized in obedience to him. The events of the fourth chapter occurred on his return journey to Galilee. The fourth chapter of Luke records his rejection by the people of his home city.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Jesus Teaches from a Boat (Verses 1-3)

Jesus had made a tour through the cities of Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and performing miracles. He had created such interest that great multitudes followed him down to the shores of the Sea of Galilee; so great was the multitude that it is said that they pressed upon him. All wanted to be as near him as possible. It seems that at first the crowd was not so large but that he could preach to them the word of God from some point on the shore of the sea; but the crowd grew till the pressure became too great for him to do effective teaching. It is singular that these fishermen, who were already his disciples, and who had been with him in some of his journeys, were busy about their own affairs. Their boats were unoccupied—the fishermen were washing their nets. Having already been with Jesus, and having accepted him as their Master, they were ready to drop their work any minute and, do his bidding. Jesus entered into Simon's boat, "and asked him to put out a little from the land." As the fishermen had chosen this place to wash their nets, it was likely a narrow inlet, where the waters would be more quiet than where not so protected. This would enable the people to line up on both sides of the inlet, making it an ideal place for Jesus to speak to them from the boat. If the people were thus lined up along a sloping shore, each one could see and hear without difficulty. On a later occasion Jesus adopted the same means of escape from the pressure of the crowd, and to give the people a better opportunity to hear. (Matt. 13:2; Mark 4:1.)

#### A Great Multitude of Fishes (Verses 4-7)

When Jesus had finished speaking, he ordered Peter to row out into deep water, and let down his nets. That seemed to Peter to be a waste of time and effort. He and his partners had toiled all night and had caught nothing. Said Simon Peter, "Master, we toiled all night, and took nothing: but at thy word I will let down the nets." He would not let his judgment interfere with obedience to the Master. He had the spirit of the true disciple. Faith takes Jesus at his word, and does what he says. The Master commands—that is sufficient. Someone else, most likely Andrew, was with Peter in the boat. Their prompt obedience was rewarded by the enclosing in their nets of a great multitude of fishes. So heavy was the draft that their nets were about to pull apart; so they beckoned to their partners to come to their assistance. They



filled both boats to their full capacity. This incident would strengthen the faith of these disciples, and also show them the wisdom of doing what the Master said.

### **Peter Confesses His Sinfulness (Verses 8-10)**

The incident showed Peter that he was in the presence of one that was more than man. Either Jesus caused the fishes to gather in one place, or his penetrating eye saw where they were; to be in the presence of such a being made Peter feel his own littleness and unworthiness. He felt that he was not a fit man to be in the presence of such an exalted person. To express his feeling of unworthiness he made a plea that he would not have had fulfilled for all the world; "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." It is well for people to feel their own littleness and sinfulness—that they are not really worthy of the companionship of the holy one of God. There will be no effort to amend our ways unless we realize our imperfections—no effort to obtain forgiveness unless we realize our guilt. And yet we must not center our minds on our sinfulness to the extent that we give up in despair, and say, What is the use of trying to do better? Rather let us, relying on God, say with Paul, "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13.)

Peter, Andrew, James, and John were partners in a fishing business. It seems that Zebedee, the father of James and John, was also a partner in that company. (Matt. 4:21, 22.) They owned their own boats and fishing nets. This required a considerable outlay of money; they were therefore not paupers by any means. They were not fishing for sport; fishing was their business—their means of livelihood. With them it was not a pastime; it was toil. They were exposed to all sorts of weather, and the sudden storms that so frequently swept down on that lake made the business hazardous. Hence, their business required determination, patience, and endurance—qualities that would be needed in their work as apostles. It may have been that they toiled all night on many occasions without success; they were acquainted with disappointments. There is perseverance and determination in men that can toil all night, and catch nothing, and then go on trying. They would meet similar conditions and have similar experiences in their efforts to lead men to Christ. A man who was easily discouraged would not hold out in preaching the gospel to a hostile world. This may give us some idea as to why Jesus selected so many fishermen to be apostles; they had staying qualities.

### **They Left All and Followed Him (Verses 10, 11)**

Jesus reassured Peter by saying to him, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." Jesus would make him a fisher of men. What was true with respect to Peter would also be true with respect to the other apostles. Mark reports Jesus as saying to these fishermen, "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." (Mark 1:17.) But before they could become fishers of men, they must follow Jesus, see his miracles,

hear his teaching, and come to love him with an undying love. Even then they would need additional help, so that their teaching would bear the stamp of infallibility. Hence Jesus later promised them the Holy Spirit, and charged them not to begin this fishing for men till they were endued with power from on high. (See John 14:16, 17, 26; 16:7-13; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:4, 5, 8.) "And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all, and followed him." It is not to be supposed that they abandoned their property with no thought as to what would become of it; they were too thrifty for anything like that. When they were called away from their fishing on what appears to have been a former occasion, certainly James and John, and perhaps also Peter and Andrew left their property with Zebedee. (Mark 1:20.) Their later and frequent use of boats shows that they continued to own their equipment. And their use of fishing equipment after the resurrection of Jesus while they were waiting for the time of the appointed meeting in Galilee shows that their equipment was still intact. (John 21:1-14.) It would seem therefore that the business continued to be operated by Zebedee with the assistance of the hired help.

It does not seem that the disciples were with Jesus constantly during the early part of his ministry, but followed him on certain journeys when he called them away from their work. It seems that the call, recorded in Matt. 4:18-22, is the same as that mentioned in Mark 1:16-20, but not the same as that recorded in Luke 5:1-11. And certainly neither of these was the one recorded in John 1:35-51. Even a casual reading will show this. In their comments on Matt. 4:18-21 Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown show that the call in John 1:35-51 cannot be the one mentioned by Matthew, and then add: "Thus far nearly all are agreed. But on the next question opinion is divided: Was this the same calling as recorded in Luke 5:1-11? Many able critics think so. But the following considerations are to us decisive against it. First, here, the four are called separately, in pairs; in Luke, all together. Next, in Luke, after a glorious miracle; here, the one pair are casting their net, the other are mending theirs. Further, here, our Lord had made no public appearance in Galilee, and so had gathered none around him; he was walking solitary by the shores of the lake when he accosts the two pairs of fishermen; in Luke, 'the multitude are lying upon him, and hearing the word of God, as he stands by the lake of Gennesaret'—a state of things implying a somewhat advanced stage of his early ministry, and some popular enthusiasm."

If the student will work this out, it will help him to meet some critic who thinks Matthew, Mark, and Luke record the same incident, and on that basis thinks he finds a lack of harmony in the records. For that reason some space has been given to a discussion of the matter.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

So far as we know, these fishermen may have put in some time fishing on occasions when Jesus returned with them to Capernaum after his journeys through the cities. Why should that be thought incredible, or even improbable? They were practical men; Jesus was practical. These men had responsibilities. Peter had a wife;

perhaps some, or all, of them had families. Their expenses had to be taken care of. It seems that some help was received in their travels, but their people at home had to have something on which to live. And these men did not think hard work beneath their dignity.

These men had not been spoiled by the formalities, vanities, and deceits of polite society—they had not been trained up in the vain notion that one must sacrifice his convictions in order to be agreeable nor had they been trained to sacrifice right principles for political advantage. They were unspoiled. It is hard to make a worth-while character out of one who has been trained from childhood to let the prevailing notions and practices be his guide. Such training robs a person of all initiative and any feeling of responsibility in matters of justice and honesty.

People are brought to Christ through human agency. John the Baptist directed Andrew and John to Christ. Andrew then brought his brother Simon to Christ. Philip brought Nathanael to Christ. (John 1:35-51.) In giving the Great Commission Jesus laid upon man the burden of carrying the gospel of salvation to a lost world. The Acts show how this was done—how the servants of Christ converted many thousands. Prayer has its place, but the gospel is the power of God for saving men. In preaching the gospel and backing up our preaching by godly living we can be instruments of God in saving men. "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.)

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The apostles of Christ—their work.  
The character of Peter.  
How we may bring others to Christ.  
Following Christ.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Discuss time, place, and persons.  
Tell about the association these disciples had with Jesus before the incidents of this lesson.

#### Verses 1-3

How do you account for the multitude that had gathered around Jesus?  
Tell about the fishermen.  
How did Jesus arrange to speak to so large a crowd?

#### Verses 4-7

What order did Jesus give, and what reply did Simon make?  
What is the true spirit of obedience?

#### Verses 8-10

What did Simon say to Jesus, and why?

Why should people feel their sinfulness?  
Is there danger of overemphasis at this point?  
If so, why?  
What was the relation of Simon, Andrew, James, and John?  
What showed that they had determination and perseverance?  
Why would they need these qualities as apostles?

#### Verses 10, 11

With what words did Jesus reassure Simon?  
What is meant by "fishers of men"?  
How did Jesus make them to "become fishers of men"?  
What additional help did Jesus promise them?  
What disposition did they make of their fishing equipment?  
Was this meeting the same as that recorded in Matt. 4:18-21; Mark 1:16-20?  
Give reasons for your answer.  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson VI—February 8, 1942

**A BUSY SABBATH IN CAPERNAUM**

Mark 1:21-34

21 And they go into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught.

22 And they were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And straightway there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 Saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And the unclean spirit, tearing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this? a new teaching! with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.

28 And the report of him went out straightway everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about.

29 And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and straightway they tell him of her:

31 And he came and took her by the hand, and raised her up; and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases and cast out many demons; and he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day." (Rev. 1:10.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Isa. 58:13, 14.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

February 2. M

Tile Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2; 23-28)

February 3. T

Jesus Rehabilitates Men (Mark 1:21-28)

February 4. W

Jesus Has Compassion for the Sick (Matt. 8:14-13)

February 5. T

Sabbath Sanctities (Matt. 12:9-14)

February 6. F

A Memorable Sabbath (Acts 16:13-18)

February 7. S

A Sabbath Scripture Reading (Luke 4:16-22)

February 8. S

A Holy Sabbath (Ex. 31:12-18)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—A.D. 28. The incidents of this lesson must have occurred soon after the people in Nazareth sought to kill Jesus; it seems that he had not yet done much preaching and working of miracles in Galilee.

*Place.*—Capernaum, in Galilee. Galilee was the northern province of Palestine. Samaria separated it from Judaea. Being thus cut off from close contact with Judaea, it was not so much under the influence of Jerusalem, the center of Jewish culture and piety, as was Judaea. It seems that the masses in Galilee were not so strict in observing the tradition of the elders as were the Jews in Judaea. Capernaum was one of the many cities of Galilee; it was situated on the west side of the Sea of Galilee near its northern end. Persons.—Jesus, Peter, Andrew, James, John, a demon-possessed

man, the worshipers in the synagogue, people with various ailments, and Peter's wife's mother.

*Lesson Links*—It would be well for the student to reread Lesson Links in lesson five.

When his old neighbors at Nazareth sought to kill Jesus, he abandoned Nazareth and made his headquarters in Capernaum. From that place he made tours through the cities of Galilee. Our present lesson mentions events that occurred near the beginning of his Galilean ministry.

Because, during his ministry, Jesus wrought so many miracles, it is well that we have some idea as to the purpose of such miracles; and in studying the purpose of his miracles, we shall learn also why many of God's special servants, or messengers were enabled to work miracles. Though we may know in a general way what a miracle is, and would be able to recognize a genuine miracle if we saw one, we would find it difficult to define the term miracle.

The creation of the world and all the things in it was a series of stupendous miracles, but these miracles differed in purpose from those wrought by Jesus and some of God's special messengers. A miracle wrought in connection with the ministry of someone on earth was a sign of God's presence with such a person—a sign that God had sent him. John had borne witness that Jesus was the Lamb of God that taketh away sin, the Son of God, the expected Messiah; but Jesus said, "But the witness which I have is greater than that of John; for 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.) Nicodemus had the correct idea concerning the miracles wrought through the agency of teachers: "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." (John 3:1, 2.) The works of creation were miracles, but not signs.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### **Jesus Teaches in Synagogue at Capernaum (Verses 21, 22)**

It is not definitely known when or where the synagogue had its origin, but is supposed to have originated during the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. The Jews could not go to Jerusalem to worship. The most of the ten tribes who were in Assyria had been weaned away from the worship at Jerusalem, but many Jews still longed for the worship at Jerusalem. It was natural for these pious Jews to gather in convenient places for mutual consolation and instruction. At first the term synagogue applied to such groups, but later the term applied to the worshipers and to the house in which they worshiped. It seems that Jesus was a regular attendant at these synagogue services. From Luke 7:1-5 we learn that the Roman Centurion at Capernaum built the synagogue in that city.

The law of Moses, of course, did not require the Jews to have synagogues, and it is likely that Jesus attended these synagogue services mainly for the purpose of teaching the people. On the occasion of our lesson he taught the people. They were not used to the kind of teaching he did. No teacher was supposed to teach anything on his own authority. He might teach the law of Moses and the tradition of the elders, but no more; he must not assume

authority to say anything of his own. Jesus spoke with authority; "and they were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes." Jesus honored the law of Moses, but he ignored the tradition of the elders in his teaching and practice, excepting that he did condemn their adherence to these traditions. (Matt. 15:1-9.) People become wedded to custom and tradition to such an extent that they will sometimes disobey a plain command of God if they cannot obey it in their accustomed way. There have been instances of men's quitting the worship because they could not follow their custom of putting their contribution in a hat on the table—thus making void a command of God in their devotion to a custom.

### **An Unclean Spirit Cast Out (Verses 23-26)**

"And straightway there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit." Demons were sometimes called "evil spirits"; sometimes, as in this verse, they were called "unclean spirits." We must accept it as true, that some people were possessed of demons, though we know not why it was so; nor can we be certain as to what these evil spirits were. It is said that the Greeks thought the spirits of their dead heroes acted as messengers between their gods and men, and worshiped them. The Jews had a different idea, or theory. With them demons were evil spirits in people—the spirits of wicked dead people, which had taken up their abode in people. It does not seem that the person himself was responsible for being thus possessed of demons. The Greeks worshiped the demons. What Mark here calls "an unclean spirit," Luke calls "a spirit of an unclean demon." (Luke 4:33.)

This unclean spirit disturbed the peace of the worship. It would seem that he had just come into the synagogue; and on discovering Jesus "cried out [according to Luke, cried out with a loud voice], saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nazarene? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One on God." To have the worship so rudely disturbed must have been an unusual thing in that synagogue. It is remarkable that these demons knew who Jesus was without being taught; they possessed supernatural powers, or knowledge, else they would not have been able to recognize Jesus as "the Holy One of God." They also knew that there was nothing in common between them and Jesus.

Jesus rebuked the demon, and commanded him, as he did others, to hold his peace. It was not yet time for Jesus to be publicly announced as the "Holy One of God," the expected Messiah. Neither did Jesus want evidence from such a source; he did not want the impression to be made on the people that there was anything in common between him and evil spirits. It may have been that Satan, who dominated the evil spirits, caused these evil spirits on more occasions than one, to confess Jesus before the people as a means of discrediting him. Because he wanted to save the people, he did not want them turned against him; but in spite of the precautions of Jesus in guarding against such things, the Pharisees charged that he cast out demons by Beelzebub, or Satan, the prince of the demons. (Matt. 12:24-29.) In a very few words Jesus showed the absurdity of their charge.

Paul met a similar situation at Philippi. "And it came to pass, as we were going to the place of prayer, that a certain maid having a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. The same following after Paul and us cried out, saying, These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim unto you the way of salvation. And this she did for many days. But Paul, being sore troubled, turned and said to the spirit, I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour." (Acts 16:16-18.) Paul and his company were introducing the gospel in Philippi. If this demon-possessed maid could have created the impression in that city that there was a sort of understanding or partnership between her and Paul, it would have degraded Christianity in the minds of the people, and made the gospel of no effect. He would have none of that.

### **The People Amazed—His Fame Spreads (Verses 27, 28)**

If the people had really known who Jesus was, they would not have been amazed at any powers he possessed. His mighty powers would have filled them with awe, but not with amazement. Had they known him, they would have known that he had power over all spirits, good or bad, and over all forces of nature. But they did have a reasonably correct understanding of the purpose of miracles. Among themselves the people said, "What is this?" and then they answered their own question: "A new teaching! with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." It appears that they recognized that a new teaching should be accompanied by miracles. His teachings and his miracles were so much beyond anything with which these people were acquainted, it is not astonishing that his fame was spread through all the regions of Galilee. Miracles serve at least a double purpose besides the relief of suffering. They gained attention—gained an audience, and they proved that God was with the one who performed the miracles.

### **Peter's Wife's Mother Healed (Verses 29-31)**

In addition to the fishing equipment which Simon and Andrew owned, they owned a house. After the close of the services at the synagogue, Jesus, with James and John, went to the house of Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was sick of a fever; Luke describes it more exactly as a great fever. In healing her Jesus really performed a double miracle. He caused the fever to depart, and gave her her strength. She arose immediately, and ministered to them—prepared them something to eat. Had Jesus done no more than to cause the fever to depart, she would have been left in a very weakened condition; he therefore gave her her accustomed strength. It was instantaneous—not a gradual cure and a slow regaining of strength. It will be noticed that both Mark and Luke mention certain men who saw the cure effected, and who if necessary could give their testimony to the cure.

### **Jesus Casts Out Demons and Heals the Sick (Verses 32-34)**

"And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons." With the Jews the Sabbath ended at sunset. The law of Moses did not

forbid the relief of human suffering on the Sabbath, but the tradition of the elders made it a crime to engage in treating sickness on the Sabbath. The Jew might relieve the pangs of hunger and thirst in animals on the Sabbath, but no effort must be made to relieve the sufferings of the sick among people. Even the people of Galilee were so tradition bound that they would not bring their sick to Jesus to be healed till the Sabbath was past; yet they had known that he healed on the Sabbath, and should have known that God's power was with him in such work. That one thing should have shown them that he was violating no law of God. Jesus observed the Sabbath, but paid no heed to their tradition. When the Sabbath was past, they brought to Jesus their afflicted loved ones that he might heal them. Great crowds gathered about the house. No doubt many came because they were interested in some of those who were afflicted, and many others came just to see what would be done. They gave Jesus no time for rest and the enjoyment of the hospitality of that home. On this occasion, as on others, he suffered not the demons to speak "because they knew him." This should warn us not to seek the recognition nor the endorsement of the wrong people. We should not expect an enemy of the truth to be an enthusiastic friend of one who faithfully preaches the truth.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

Jesus did not deny the reality of human ailments; to him sickness, deafness, and blindness were real. To him such ailments were not "delusions of the mortal mind." He was not moved with indignation at the sufferers for thinking they had such ailments, but was moved with compassion at the sight of their sufferings. He did not deny, as some do, the reality of evil spirits. He did not cast out things that had no existence, nor command nonexistent things to hold their peace! And to the inspired penman these things were real, for he wrote that Jesus healed the sick and cast out demons.

But Jesus did not heal the sick, the lame, and the blind primarily for the benefit of the sufferers. Do we not all agree that he now sympathizes with sufferers as much as he did while he was on earth? Why then does he not remove all human sufferings? No one will say that he cannot do so; no one will deny that he could even cause that no one would ever be sick or injured. Why then does he not exercise such powers now? They passed away when the reason for them no longer existed. When the truth was established that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, and that the apostles were sent of God to preach the gospel, the purpose of the miracles they wrought had been served, the miracle signs ceased.

### **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

The country of Galilee.

The Sea of Galilee.

Capernaum.

Miracles that are signs, and miracles that are not signs.



## QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, place, and persons.  
Give some description of Galilee and Capernaum.  
Give the purpose of miracles wrought in connection with preaching.  
Show that some miracles are not signs.  
Discuss the difference between miracles in general and miracles as signs.

**Verses 21, 22**

Discuss the origin and uses of synagogues.  
What main use did Jesus make of the synagogues?  
Why were the people astonished at the teaching of Jesus?  
Discuss the tradition of the elders.

**Verses 23-26**

Discuss demons, or evil spirits.  
What showed that they had supernatural powers?  
Why did not Jesus want the demons to tell who he was?  
Tell about Paul's experience with the maid who had a spirit of divination.

**Verses 27, 28**

What effect did the casting out the evil spirit have on the people?  
What is said of his fame?  
What double purpose did miracles serve?

**Verses 29-31**

Discuss what took place in the home of Simon and Andrew.

**Verses 32-34**

Discuss these verses.  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson VII—February 15; 1942  
**THE HEALING MINISTRY OF JESUS**  
Mark 2:1-12

1 And when he entered again into Capernaum after some days, it was noised that he was in the house.  
2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, no, not even about the door: and he spake the word unto them.  
3 And they come, bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy, borne of four.  
4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the crowd, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay.  
5 And Jesus seeing their faith saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins are forgiven.  
6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts.  
7 Why doth this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but one, even God?  
8 And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, saith unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?  
9 Which is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?  
10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy),  
11 I say unto thee. Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house,  
12 And he arose, and straightway took up the bed. and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"He had compassion on them, and healed their sick." (Matt. 14:14.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 103:1-13.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

February 9. M  
February 10. T  
February 11. W  
February 12. T  
February 13. F  
February 14. S  
February 15. S

A Preaching and Healing Mission (Mark 2:1-12)  
Healing and Forgiving (Luke 5:17-26)  
The Breadth of Jesus' Sympathy (Luke 9:49-56)  
A Cure for Doubt (Luke 7:19-23)  
The Power to Heal (Matt. 17:14-21)  
Gentleness and Grace (Isa. 42:1-7)  
An Adequate Salvation (Psalm 103:1-14)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—A.D. 28.

*Place.*—Capernaum, the city where Jesus made his home after the people of Nazareth tried to kill him. (Matt. 4:12, 13; 9:1; Luke 4:27-31.) In this city Jesus did much teaching, and performed many cures. To us it seems that the whole city would have been devoted believers in him; they seemed to be enthusiastic followers for a while. They were delighted to have him heal their physical ailments; but they must have been displeased with his teaching, for Jesus later said, "And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades: for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would have remained until this day." (Matt. 11:23.) But all that now remains of the once proud Capernaum is a heap of stones, and of two such heaps it is not definitely known which is that of Capernaum.

*Persons.*—Jesus, a palsied man, certain scribes, and the multitudes. The scribes were sometimes spoken of as lawyers. "They had the care of the law; it was their duty to make transcripts of it; they also expounded its difficulties, and taught its doctrines, and so performed several functions which are now distributed among different professions, being keepers of the records, consulting lawyers, authorized expounders of Holy Writ, and finally, schoolmasters —thus blending together in one character the several elements of intellectual, moral, social, and religious influence. It scarcely needs to be added that their powers were very great."—The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia and Scriptural Dictionary.

*Lesson Links*—In our last lesson we had a report in a condensed form of the activities of Jesus in Capernaum on a Sabbath day: the activities continued into the night. "And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him; and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking thee. And he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth. And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out demons." In his personal, or secret, prayers Jesus sought privacy. He did not wait till crowds thronged the streets, and then stand in a public place while he prayed, so as to be seen of men. When these disciples came and told him that all were seeking him, they evidently expected him to return to the city. But he would give Capernaum time to get over their excitement and to do some sober thinking as to who he was. Besides, preaching was his main work just then—"to this end came I forth." He cured human ailments as a means of confirming his preaching. When he healed a leper on this journey, he charged him to say nothing about it to anyone; but the leper did all he could to blaze the matter abroad, "insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city."

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Jesus Again in Capernaum (Verses 1, 2)**

Because Jesus could no longer openly enter into a city, he must have returned to Capernaum in the night; but he was not given much time for rest, for someone reported that he was at home. "And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, no, not even about the door: and he spake the word unto them." In those days physicians were scarce and their methods of treating the sick were crude; but now there was one in their midst who, with a word, healed their sick, cast out demons, made the blind to see, the lame to walk, and had no failures marked up against him. It is no wonder therefore that the people were carried away with tremendous enthusiasm for one who was doing such great things for them. Jesus took advantage of their interest in what he was doing and preached to them what they should do. The people had become so interested in what he was doing for them that they had lost sight of their own obligations. It is easy now for people to become so interested in what the Lord has done, is doing, and will do for them, that they lose sight of the fact that the Lord demands that they obey him. We should know that the Lord does his part promptly and thoroughly, if we will do our part faithfully. We should praise God that he does for us more abundantly than we can ask or think, and show our appreciation by faithful service. The Bible, as does all nature, proclaims that there are things that we must do.

**A Palsied Man Brought to Jesus (Verses 3, 4)**

"And they come, bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy, borne of four." It seems that the term "palsy" was applied to the loss of motion or feeling of any part of the body, no matter what might have been the cause. This man was so paralyzed as to be helpless. Nothing is said as to what caused his helplessness. Matthew and Luke tell us that they brought him on a bed. Such helplessness, with the inconvenience and the suffering of body and mind, is pitiful. No one likes to be so helpless as to be a constant burden to his family and friends. This man had friends that sympathized with him, and did what they could for him. They could minister to him in his helplessness, but could not heal him. Now they learn of one who they believe can cure him of his palsy. This faith moved them to act.

But there were difficulties. They could not bring the palsied man to Jesus through the door, for the crowd was so dense as to block the door. To us it seems that the people would have been sufficiently considerate of the suffering man to make it possible for his friends to carry him through the door. Frequently people are not as considerate as they should be. Less resolute souls than These four friends might have given up in despair, but not these men. The failure of the crowd to show any interest in their helpless friend did not discourage them. There must have been a stairway on the outside of the house leading up to the roof. It is no easy task to carry a helpless man up a flight of stairs, but these men had their hearts set on getting their friend into the presence

of Jesus. When they found it impossible to enter the house by the door, they carried the palsied man up the stairs to the roof of the house, removed some of the roof, and let him clown through the hole into the presence of Jesus. These were men of great determination, and their persistence in the face of difficulties showed how much regard they had for their helpless friend, and also how much faith they had in the power and willingness of Jesus to heal all manner of diseases. They showed their faith by their works.

### **Jesus Forgives Sins (Verses 5-9)**

"And Jesus seeing their faith." They made their faith visible by action. action is the only way in which people can show their faith. The faith of these men was strong enough to overcome difficulties, but there is no indication that they believed Jesus to be the Christ. They believed he had power to cure disease, but they likely thought of him only as a great prophet of God. It is likely that the palsied man showed his faith by his confident, hopeful look. The first thing Jesus said to the man must have been a surprise to the men who brought him to Jesus, as well as to all others who heard him: "Son, thy sins are forgiven." Matthew records Jesus as saying, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven." The admonition, "Be of good cheer," carried with it the promise of better things for the sick man. But the man had not been brought to Jesus that his sins might be forgiven, but that he might be healed of the palsy. Here then it appears that a man received forgiveness who was not so much as expecting forgiveness. But can sins be forgiven where there is no repentance? Jesus could look into the heart of that man, and tell what was there, as well as he could see what was in the hearts of the scribes. He must have seen that the man was penitent, else he would not have said, "Thy sins are forgiven." He therefore received a greater blessing—received much more—than he and his friends hoped he would receive, for they had evidently expected no more than that he would be relieved of his physical ailment. They could not have expected that Jesus would forgive his sins; for, so far as the record goes, Jesus had not hitherto claimed the authority to forgive sins. He was not seeking forgiveness, but healing. But let this thought sink into your hearts: Faith only would have left this man at home in his palsied condition and in his sins, and faith only today will leave the sinner where he and in his sins. "Faith apart from works is dead."

"There were certain of the scribes sitting there." Luke says, "There were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by." The Pharisees were a sect of the Jews. They were very strict in adhering to the forms of the law and to the tradition of the elders. The scribes, because of their skill in expounding the law, were also called lawyers, sometimes, doctors of the law. It seems that they belonged to the sect of the Pharisees. Naturally the scribes and the Pharisees, with their strict adherence to forms, would feel hostile toward any teacher who had not been trained in their schools, and who had not been sanctioned by the authorities in Jerusalem. Jesus was so active as a teacher, and his fame had become so widely spread, that these men felt that they must look into matters. So, on this occasion, "there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by,

who were come out of every village of Galilee and Judaea and Jerusalem." Likely those from Judea and Jerusalem had been sent down by the authorities to inquire into this new teaching. It appears that the events of this day developed the first real antagonism of these leaders toward Jesus. If they had not been friendly, they at least had not been active in their opposition to him. On this occasion, although they were keeping quiet, they were "reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but one, even God?" If he could not forgive sins, he was guilty of blasphemy; and if he were not God manifest in the flesh, he could not forgive sins. If he were a blasphemer, of course God would not be with him; but he would show them that he was not a blasphemer, and that God's power was with him. Jesus had accurately read the unspoken thoughts of his critics, and they, not knowing the powers of Jesus, must have been astonished when his words showed that he knew their thoughts. "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?" So far as the mere pronouncing of the words is concerned, it was as easy to say the one as the other. Evidently Jesus meant, which is easier, to forgive sins or to cure the palsy? It would be as impossible for a mere man, with no help from God, to cure the palsy as to forgive sins. A miracle wrought through a man was a sign, a proof, that God was with him. Even the bigoted scribes and Pharisees should have known this, and also that God would not be with a blasphemer. And if the person before them could now heal the man sick of the palsy, while claiming power to forgive sins, they should then know that he was more than man, that he was indeed God manifest in the flesh. But these men were determined not to believe—even a demonstration would not convince them, but Jesus would demonstrate his power; some would believe.

#### **The Palsied Man Healed (Verses 10-12)**

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins"—that they might know, at least have the proof, that he was no blasphemer, he turned his attention to the sick man, and said, "I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house." It was a tense moment. A great crowd of people, some critical, some interested, and some merely curious, were present. Jesus, calm and assured, stood in their midst. The antagonism of the scribes and the Pharisees and his ready reply to their thoughts would further put the people "on edge." And the four friends, most likely lying prone on the roof with their faces over the hole in the roof, anxiously watching and listening to see the outcome, were perhaps the most tense of all. Will the sick man be cured? Will he be able to do as bidden? "And he arose, and straightway took up the bed, and went forth before them all." and thus Jesus demonstrated before them that God was with him, and that he was therefore not a blasphemous impostor; and the feeling of suspense gave way to amazement, "insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion." The critics were silenced.

**SOME REFLECTIONS**

Sin is an awful reality. Its devastating effects are seen everywhere. Its awfulness is seen even in what it does for the sinner himself; and its awfulness is also seen in what it cost to redeem man from sin—the blood of Christ.

Jesus healed all manner of diseases, but he did not come to earth merely to cure the sick. He came to save sinners; the miracles he performed proved him to be from God. The pretended miracle workers and faith healers of today utterly fail to comprehend the purpose of miracles.

We cannot perform miracles; but by good deeds we can demonstrate to a critical and unbelieving world that our religion is helpful and uplifting, and therefore divine. Think of the cruelty of nations who have never known, or who have repudiated, Christianity.

Even a small percentage of Christians in a country has a modifying effect on the whole citizenship.

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

The awfulness of sin is seen in—  
 What it does to the sinner himself.  
 What it does to the innocent.  
 What it cost to redeem sinners.  
 The final, doom of the sinner.

**QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, place, and persons.  
 Give information about Capernaum.  
 What did Jesus later say of Capernaum?  
 Tell about the scribes and Pharisees.  
 What was the main purpose of Christ's coming?

**Verses 1, 2**

Why could not Jesus enter a city openly?  
 What is said of the crowds at Capernaum?  
 In what were they mainly interested?  
 What use did Jesus make of their interest?

**Verses 3, 4**

What was the palsy?  
 How was the palsied man brought to Jesus?

**Verses 5-9**

What did Jesus first say to the palsied man?  
 Can a man be forgiven when he is not seeking forgiveness?  
 In this case, what would have been the results of faith only?  
 Discuss the worthlessness of faith only.  
 Why were the scribes there?  
 Whence had they come?  
 What were they reasoning in their hearts?  
 How did Jesus show that he knew their thoughts?  
 What did miracles prove?

**Verses 10-12**

How did Jesus prove that he was no impostor?  
 What effect did the miracle have on the people?  
 Discuss the reflections.

Lesson VIII—February 22, 1942

**JESUS APPOINTS AND TEACHES THE TWELVE**

Luke 6:12-26

12 And it came to pass in these days, that he went out into the mountain to pray; and he continued all night in prayer to God.

13 And when it was day, he called his disciples; and he chose from them twelve, whom also he named apostles:

14 Simon, whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip and Bartholomew,

15 And Matthew and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot,

16 And Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor;

17 And he came down with them, and stood on a level place, and a great multitude of his disciples, and a great number of the people from all Judaea and Jerusalem, and the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;

18 And they that were troubled with unclean spirits were healed.

19 And all the multitude sought to touch him; for power came forth from him, and healed them all.

20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

23 Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy: for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the same manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

24 But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

25 Woe unto you, ye that are full now! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you, ye that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

26 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—2 Tim. 1:3-14.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

February 16.	M	The Twelve Chosen (Luke 6:12-19)
February 17.	T	The Twelve Taught (Luke 6:20-26)
February 18.	W	A Master Teacher (Matt. 7:21-29)
February 19.	T	The Apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 22:14-21)
February 20.	F	The Daring of the Early Apostles (Acts 5:17-29)
February 21.	S	A Model Church (Acts 2:42-47}
February 22.	S	Ancient Heroes of Faith (Heb. 11:32-40)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 29.

*Places.*—A mountain in Galilee, and a near-by level place.

*Persons.*—Jesus, his disciples—especially the twelve, "and a great number of the people from all Judaea and Jerusalem, and the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases." For once it seems that no carping scribes and Pharisees were present.

*Lesson Links*—Jesus made a number of journeys, performed many miracles, and did much teaching before he appointed the twelve apostles. At the time of our lesson he had gathered about him a great number of disciples. In addition to the twelve whom he made apostles he was continuously accompanied by others in his travels. In the gathering at Jerusalem, when Matthias was constituted an apostle, Peter said, "Of the men therefore that have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that he was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us of his resurrection." (Acts 1:21, 22.) Jesus did not appoint the twelve apostles at the time he called them to be his followers, but about a year or more later. They first passed through a period of training and testing.

The purpose Jesus had in view in selecting and training his apostles should be of more interest to us than any facts about their early history or their personal traits. He selected them that they might first be with him in a period of training for the work he had in view for them; at the proper time he would send them forth to announce his gospel. Through them the whole plan of human redemption was to be made known, and the cause of the Lord firmly established in the earth.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### **Jesus Appoints Twelve Apostles (Verses 12, 13)**

The appointing of twelve men for the greatest work that had ever been committed to a group of men was a momentous and solemn occasion. It must be done in such a way as to impress these men with a deep sense of the responsibility he was placing upon them, and that could not be done in the midst of a clamorous throng who were pressing upon him for the cure of their bodily ailments. It was necessary to get away from such confusion; so he went up into a mountain, perhaps taking a group of his disciples with him; but before he engaged in the important business of appointing the apostles he spent the night in prayer. It is useless for us to speculate as to why the God-man Christ Jesus felt the need of prayer to the extent that he spent a night in prayer. While others slept he prayed, undisturbed by the multitudes. He was about to make a move that would profoundly influence the world for all time; from this one fact, we may gather a small part of his reasons for spending an entire night in prayer. However it was not a matter that at the moment concerned the multitudes. Their presence would cause confusion, and disturb the solemnity of the occasion.

"And when it was day, he called his disciples." We have no idea how many disciples gathered about him; more than the twelve were with him, for he chose the twelve from those who were with him. These he called apostles, for he meant to send them forth into all the world to preach his gospel. An apostle is one who is sent. These men had been with Jesus long enough to prove their character; but they needed now to begin to realize that Jesus had some special work for them to do, and that they needed special training for that work. No set of men had ever had such a teacher as these men now had. Little did they then know what was before them in the work for which Jesus selected them. They were to have power to work miracles. Matthew reports that he "gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease and all manner of sickness." By these miracles they would be able to prove that God was with them and that their preaching was therefore true. The miracles would also show that the religion of Christ was intended to do men good and not harm—the miracles mentioned were of a benevolent nature. While men do not now work miracles, the religion of Christ has so influenced the world that even those who are not Christians do much toward relieving human suffering. Hospitals, asylums, and other benevolent institutions, as well as much individual ministrations, follow the spread of Christianity. Such has never been the case where Christianity was unknown.



### Who the Twelve Apostles Were (Verses 14-16)

In the list of the names of the twelve apostles the different writers do not follow the same order. If the student will take the list as given by Matthew, letting the names fall into groups of four, it is easy to memorize the names.

**Simon.**—When Andrew brought Simon to Jesus, Jesus said to Simon, "Thou art Simon the son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas." (John 1:42.) Cephas was the Hebrew word for stone; the Greek equivalent is Peter. On account of Simon's boldness and activity he is often mentioned. His activities were so varied and numerous to be mentioned in the short space allotted to this lesson.

**Andrew.**—Andrew was Simon Peter's brother. Perhaps the greatest thing he ever did was the bringing of his brother Simon to Jesus. It seems that he was free from selfish ambitions, yet he was practical. As soon as he became acquainted with Jesus, he went in search of Simon. It was he who found the lad with the loaves and fishes when the five thousand were fed. Various temperaments are needed in a group of men to give the group effectiveness and a proper balance.

**James and John.**—James and John were brothers, sons of Zebedee. Jesus surnamed them "Sons of thunder." They must have been of a fiery and tempestuous temperament to merit such a name. And such they were; for when a village of Samaria would not receive Jesus, they said, "Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" (Luke 9:54.) But the mellowing influence of Christ and his gospel made different men of them.

**Philip and Bartholomew.**—We have no direct information as to the activities of these two men; tradition is of little value.

**Matthew and Thomas.**—In Matthew's list of the names of the apostles he still refers to himself as the publican long after he had ceased to be a publican. Thomas was also called "Didymus," the twin.

**James and Simon.**—By way of distinction this James is also called "James the less." This Simon was not Simon Peter, but Simon the Zealot, sometimes called Simon the Cananaean. We should not confuse Cananaean with Canaanite. Cananaeans were a group, or party, of Zealots—an intensely patriotic party, fiercely opposed to Roman rule.

**Judas.**—This Judas is evidently the Thaddaeus of Matthew and Mark. Two names were not uncommon.

**Judas Iscariot.**—"Who became a traitor." And then took his own life.

### A Great Multitude Comes Together (Verses 17-19)

After Jesus appointed the twelve "he came down with them, and stood on a level place." Here was a suitable place for the great multitudes to assemble. It must have been an immense crowd, for there was "a great multitude of his disciples, and a great number of the people from all Judaea and Jerusalem, and the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon." By consulting the map it will be seen that many of these people had come a considerable distance. Tyre and Sidon were not Jewish cities; but it is to be supposed that those who came from those cities were Jews who were then living in those

cities. All had come "to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases." Even those "that were troubled with unclean spirits were healed." So numerous were the healings that no mention is made of individual cases; even to touch him brought healing to the afflicted—"power came forth from him, and healed them all."

### **Beatitudes (Verses 20-23)**

Some have thought that the sermon from which this part of our lesson is taken is the same sermon that is recorded in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew. Whether or not they are the same is a matter of no great importance to us. There is a similarity, and yet there is a difference, in the two records. The circumstances of the two sermons are different. Jesus went up into a mountain, and there preached the sermon recorded by Matthew; he came down out of a mountain and "stood on a level place" to preach the sermon recorded by Luke. There is nothing strange in concluding that he preached two sermons somewhat alike. Many fundamental truths needed repeating again and again—so do they now.

The teaching set forth in these beatitudes is unlike anything originated by man. It is in many ways a reversal of worldly philosophy. It seems that Jesus was talking directly to his disciples, but of course many in that vast throng heard what he said. Perhaps some of them profited by it.

"Blessed are ye poor." Poor in respect to what? There are many things in which a person can be poor—poor in health, poor in friends, poor in right traits, poor in spiritual attainments and blessings, as well as poor in this world's goods. In reporting the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew gives a fuller statement Jesus made on that occasion: "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Spirit-poverty is destitution in spiritual things. It is to recognize ourselves as destitute of those qualities and blessings that the spirit needs, and that in and of ourselves we cannot supply those needs. This is a real "first principle"—an essential quality before one will even try to enter the kingdom.

And there are many things for which we may hunger. Realizing our spiritual destitution we may hunger for spiritual blessings—hunger for spiritual attainments. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." And this is evidently the hunger to which Jesus referred in our lesson. The weeping referred to grows out of a sense of being lost and of the terribleness of being lost. In and of themselves the qualities just mentioned are not a cause for rejoicing, but they put a person in a condition of heart and mind that will lead him to the Lord where joys abound forevermore. And it is not pleasant to be persecuted; but the faithful Christian will be persecuted, and such can rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ. But to be a blessing, that persecution must come on account of our relation to Christ, and not because of some evil practice, or some foolish theory. Real good men, men who have been useful servants of God, have always been persecuted.

### **Four Causes for Woe (Verses 24-26)**

It is said that a man is as rich as he thinks he is. It is true also that Jesus sometimes for purposes of rebuke took men at their

own valuation of themselves. In high attainments in righteousness the Pharisee of Luke 18:10-12 considered himself much richer than the rest of men. And the church at Laodicea felt themselves rich in all spiritual attainments, but they were really poor, and blind, and naked. (Rev. 3:14-22.) They had nothing they really needed. Woe to such. Woe unto those who are full now—woe to those who are satisfied, that feel full of righteousness and spiritual blessings. Some people laugh at Christians—laugh at those who try to do right. Woe is pronounced on such, and their day of mourning will come. Then there is the fellow who has so conducted himself as to be popular with both the righteous and the wicked. Everybody speaks well of him. A man who really loves righteousness and hates sin cannot gain such popularity with all classes.

Notice the striking contrast in the beatitudes and the woes. For the poor, blessedness; for the rich, woe; blessed are they that hunger, woe to those that are full; blessedness for those who weep now; for those who laugh now, woe; blessed are those who are persecuted; woe, if all men speak well of you.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

In religion people are too easy to satisfy; they do not hunger and thirst for the right way.

Reasonable people are influenced by the religion of people who show that they mean to do all the good they can. Your good deeds commend your religion, just as the miracles of inspired men commended the religion they preached.

If we make popularity our aim, we are not serving the Lord at all. "For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ." (Gal. 1:10.) Such an attitude of heart utterly unfits one for being a true believer. "How can ye believe, who receive glory one of another." (John 5:44.)

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

On being poor in spirit.  
Hungering and thirsting after righteousness.  
The evils of seeking popularity.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
Show that Jesus did not appoint the apostles at the time he first called them to be his followers.  
Show that others besides the apostles continued with Jesus in his journeys.  
For what purpose did Jesus appoint the twelve apostles?

#### Verses 12, 13

Why would Jesus get away from the multitudes to appoint the twelve?  
How did he spend the night?  
Why were the twelve called apostles?  
What authority did he give them?  
What purpose would miracles serve?

How may we demonstrate the value of Christianity?

#### Verses 14-16

Repeat the names of the apostles.

#### Verses 17-19

Give the substance of these verses.  
Locate Tyre and Sidon.

#### Verses 20-23

Was this the same sermon as reported by Matthew in chapters 5, 6, and 7?  
Discuss each beatitude.

#### Verses 24-28

Discuss each woe.  
Show how the beatitudes contrast.  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson IX—March 1, 1942  
**THE PARABLES BY THE SEA**  
 Mark 4:26-32; Matt. 13:44-50

26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth;  
 27 And should sleep and rise night and day. and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how.

28 The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.

29 But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come.

30 And he said, How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable shall we set it forth?

31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth,

32 Yet when it is sown, groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and putteth out great branches; so that the birds of the heaven can lodge under the shadow thereof.

44 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls:

46 And having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

48 Which, when it was filled, they drew up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad they cast away.

49 So shall it be in the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous,

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Never man so spake." (John 7:46.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—John 21:15-23.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

February 23.	M	How the Kingdom Grows (Mark 4:26-32)
February 24.	T	Finding Hidden Treasure (Matt. 13:44-46)
February 25.	W	The Separation of Men (Matt. 13:47-50)
February 26.	T	A Pointed Parable (2 Sam. 12:1-7)
February 27.	F	The Method of the Parable (Mark 4:9-13)
February 28.	S	One Parable Explained (Mark 4:14-20)
March 1.	S	Parables and Commandments (Psalm 78:1-8)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 29.

*Place.*—The Sea of Galilee; Jesus sat in a boat, "and all the multitude stood on the beach."

*Persons.*—Jesus, his disciples, and the multitudes.

*Lesson Links*—From the twelfth chapter of Matthew and the latter part of the third chapter of Mark we learn that the Jewish leaders were growing more hostile to Jesus. The multitudes pressed upon him to such an extent that he could not eat bread; "and when his friends heard it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself." They thought he was crazy, and needed to be taken in charge. His mother and his brethren must have shared that opinion, for they came to call him out of the throng

The speech from which our lesson is taken is recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, the fourth of Mark, and the eighth of Luke. While making that speech, Jesus sat in a boat, and the multitude stood on the shore. It was a speech of parables, differing from his usual talks so much that the disciples asked him, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" He had not spoken in parables before this.

A parable is a species of allegory, a sort of extended simile. In the Savior's parables there is a recital of known material facts or truths for the purpose of illustrating spiritual things. It is the method of approach to the unknown through the known. The disciples already acquainted with the facts of his parables, but did not know the the nature of the coming kingdom. His parables were illustrations of various phases of his kingdom; in them he placed the unknown things of his kingdom by the side of well-known material things, and showed the likeness between the two. Care should be exercised in the study of parables, lest we carry the like-

ness further than Jesus intended. Things so different as the material and the spiritual cannot be alike in every particular. Only in a few instances did Jesus explain a parable; when he did so, his explanation should be the end of the matter. We certainly should not try to read into the parable a meaning that would not agree with his explanation; neither should we force a meaning into a figure of speech that will destroy the force of another figure relating to the same thing. Common sense and a general knowledge of the Bible will usually save a person from making any serious blunders in the interpretation of parables and other figures of speech. Nothing will safeguard a person who is lacking in these qualifications. Sometimes a person full of the sectarian spirit will seek to so twist a parable or a figure of speech as to make it appear to support his theory, and thereby mislead the thoughtless.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### **Seedtime, Growth, and Harvest (Verses 26-29)**

Only Mark records this parable. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth." The way the kingdom was produced and the way a harvest is made are alike in that both are the result of seed sowing. It is sometimes said that the kingdom of Christ, or the church, began by miracle, as did the human race; but is not that a mistaken idea? Does this parable sustain that idea? It is true that miracles accompanied the establishment of the kingdom, but its citizens were not created by miracle. Followers were made then as now, and the kingdom grew then as now, from seed. Was not Jesus sowing seed during his entire personal ministry? "And should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how." This, of course, refers to the farmer, and not to God. The farmer goes on about other matters while the seed grows, but "he knoweth not how." The farmer knows some of the things that are necessary to its growth, but there are mysteries about how it grows. And here the profoundest scientist is as much at a loss as is the farmer. No man has discovered life in a seed, or been able to understand its sprouting and growing life. Life, both animal and vegetable, is still a profound mystery.

Were life not so evident, the scientist would dispute its existence, for he cannot discover it. "The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear." Here are the stages of growth, but not the how. No one knows the process of growth, nor can the farmer cause the sown seed to sprout and grow. He may keep back things that hinder its growth, but he cannot cause the seed to sprout and grow. "The earth beareth fruit of herself." When the harvest is ready, the grain is gathered in; but it is not harvested till it is ripe. The farmer cannot force the harvest; to attempt to do so is ruinous. So with the kingdom. The seed, the word of God, must be sown; but having sown the seed, can we patiently await the harvest? Do we sometimes "force" the harvest? Perhaps that is the reason so many who are gathered into the church are so soon lost sight of.

### **The Mustard Seed Parable (Verses 30-32)**

By comparing Matthew's and Mark's and Luke's report of the sermon of parables, it will be seen that three of the parables had to do with seed, each parable emphasizing a different truth. In the parable of the mustard seed the kingdom is represented as growing to large proportions from a very small beginning. The mustard seed was the least of the seeds planted by the farmers of that country, and yet it produced a great plant. Some of the field crops now grown were unknown in that country at that time. Two points are especially emphasized in this parable; namely, the small beginning of the kingdom of God, and its great growth.

### **The Hidden Treasure (Matt. 13:44)**

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." Some former owner of that field must have hidden that treasure in the field, and died without leaving any information as to the hidden treasure. If he still lived, he would know of the treasure; and the man who at that time owned the field did not know of the hidden treasure. The man who discovered it hid it, lest the owner of the field or some passer-by found it before he could close the deal for the field; then he sold all that he had, and bought the field. The point of this parable is that the kingdom of heaven is such a valuable treasure that a person should sacrifice everything else for it, if he has to choose between the kingdom of heaven and his possessions. But the trouble is, so few ever discover that the kingdom of heaven is a great treasure. If the man had not known the value of what he found, he would have cared nothing for it. Money, pleasure, and other worldly things seem of more value to some people than the kingdom of God. In most cases people have a poor sense of values—in that respect, too much like children. Take a deed to the richest gold mine in the world in one hand and a pretty red apple in the other, offer both to a child, and see which he will take. You know the answer without making the test. The average person is like that with reference to the kingdom of God and the things of the world. Or put the

matter in the language of Isaiah: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people cloth not consider." (Isa. 1:3.)

### **The Pearl of Great Price (Verses 45, 46)**

This merchant was a dealer in high-class goods, the best pearls he could find. He did not go to market to find inferior goods, but "goodly pearls." He had goods on hand; but either they were not satisfactory, or else he wanted to replenish his stock. In either case he was not satisfied; that dissatisfied condition of mind moved him to go seeking for "goodly pearls." And that is the human nature of it. No man seeks for something else so long as he is satisfied with what he has. When a man is dissatisfied with what he knows, he seeks more information; and when he is dissatisfied with his moral and spiritual attainments, he seeks to improve his character. As long as a man is satisfied in sin, he seeks no escape from it. When this merchant found one pearl of great price, he was so pleased with it that he sold all the goods he had, and bought it. The lesson is, that when a person really finds the kingdom of God, he will realize that it is so valuable as to justify his giving up all else for it. To see Paul's estimate of these matters read Phil. 3:1-11. He stood high in the Jewish nation, with great prospects before him. "Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ, and be found in him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith." Until a person reaches the point where the kingdom of God and Christ mean more to him than all things else, he is not fit for the kingdom. One significant fact also about this parable is, that the merchant seeking goodly pearls made a complete change of goods; all of his old stock was disposed of. In becoming a Christian there must also be a radical change.

### **The Parable of the Fish Net (Verses 47-50)**

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind." From the way this net was handled, as indicated further on in the parable, it must have been, as the marginal reading has it, a dragnet. The net referred to in John 21:6 appears to have been a cast net, a net frequently used along the seacoast. But we cannot make the kingdom correspond to every use made of a fish net. The net drags the fish without their consent, even while they are using all their powers to escape. A fish net gathers all sorts of fish, good and bad. Bad people can be in the kingdom only by pretense and by losing their first love. The fishermen of the parable gathered the good into vessels, and threw away the bad. And here is the real point of the parable: "So shall it be in the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous, and shall east them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth." Here Jesus explains the applica-

tion of the facts of the parable. We must therefore accept his explanation, no matter if his explanation upsets some cherished opinion. "The angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous," instead of gathering the righteous from among the wicked. It seems therefore that the wicked are to be disposed of first! The word of Jesus in his own explanation of the parable plainly say so.

If we believe in Jesus at all, we must believe what he says about the destiny of the wicked. Too many people, disbelieving what Jesus says about the destiny of the wicked, try to figure out a destiny according to their own liking. And this statement made by our Lord is neither an obscure nor an isolated statement, but there are many other passages to the same import. "Marvel not at this: for 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." (John 5:28, 29.) At the final judgment this will take place: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels: . . . And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life." (Matt. 25:41-46.)

### SOME REFLECTIONS

In reporting these parables Matthew uses the term "the kingdom of heaven," but Mark uses the term "the kingdom of God." To set forth the idea, as has been done, that the two terms do not mean the same thing, is virtually to argue that one of these writers did not report the Lord's speech correctly.

The first two parables of our lesson have to do with the beginning and growth of the kingdom of God. On this point the disciples were greatly in need of instruction and encouragement. The kingdom was then in preparation, and the Lord did not have many followers, and they were poor and obscure. Against him were arrayed powerful and determined enemies. From a human standpoint the prospects were anything but flattering—especially so to the disciples with their expecting an earthly kingdom. They needed both instruction and encouragement. In the first of these two parables, there is the seed sowing, followed by days of waiting, in which time the seed grows, producing first the blade, then the stalk, then the ear, then the ripened grain. In that way the kingdom of God would begin and grow. In the parable of the mustard seed, the beginning and growth are similar; but the smallness of the beginning is even more emphasized by the Savior's calling attention to the smallness of the mustard seed. So he would teach his disciples not to be discouraged at the prospects; for though the beginning of the kingdom would be small, yet it would grow to large proportions. If the student and teacher will keep these parables in mind, they will not be carried away by the idea that the kingdom is to be ushered into this world with a great demonstration, immediately taking possession of the whole world. These parables do not fit that notion at all.



**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

The seed of the kingdom.  
 How the kingdom of God began.  
 How the kingdom of God grows.  
 The value of the kingdom.

**QUESTIONS**

Where is our lesson found?  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, place, and persons.  
 Why did the friends of Jesus think he was  
 beside himself?  
 What of his mother and brothers?  
 What is a parable, and what use did Jesus  
 make of them?

**Verses 25-29**

Give the substance of this parable.  
 What do we know, and what do we not know,  
 as to how things grow?  
 Discuss the danger of bringing people into  
 the church before they are ready—before the  
 harvest is ripe.

**Verses 30-32**

Discuss the parable of the mustard seed.

**Matt. 23:44**

Discuss the parable of the hidden treasure.  
 Why do people not seek the kingdom of God?

**Verses 45, 46**

Give the substance of the parable of the pearl  
 of great price.  
 How does this parable emphasize the value of  
 the kingdom of God?  
 Discuss the quotation from Philippians 3.

**Verses 47-50**

Give the substance of the parable of the fish  
 net.  
 In what sense can had people be in the  
 kingdom of God?  
 What application does Jesus give of this  
 parable?  
 Why do people not accept what he says?  
 Give other scriptures bearing on the destiny  
 of the wicked.  
 Discuss the reflections.

Lesson X—March 8, 1942

**DISCOVERING WHY PEOPLE DRINK BEVERAGE ALCOHOL**

Gen. 43:34; Psalm 104:14, 15; Prov. 31:4-7; Eccles. 2:1-3, 10, 11; Isa. 56:12; 1 Cor. 10:6, 7

34 And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times  
 so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.

14 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle,  
 And herb for the service of man:

That he may bring forth food out of the earth,

15 And wine that maketh glad the heart of man,  
 And oil to make his face to shine,  
 And bread that strengtheneth man's heart.

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.

6 Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish,  
 And wine unto the bitter in soul:

7 Let him drink, and forget his poverty,  
 And remember his misery no more.

1 I said in my heart, Come now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure: and,  
 behold this also was vanity.

2 I said of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth What doeth it?

3 I searched in my heart how to cheer my flesh with wine, my heart yet guiding me with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what it was good for the sons of men that they should do under heaven all the days of their life.

10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them; I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced because of all my labor; and this was my portion from all my labor.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do; and, behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was no profit under the sun.

12 Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, a day great beyond measure.

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Wine is a mocker, . . . and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise." (Prov. 20:1.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 16:1-6.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

March 2.	M	Drink and Heredity (Judges 13:2-7)
March 3.	T	The Appetite for Strong Drink (Isa. 24:5-12)
March 4.	W	Drink and Disaster (Joel 3:2-3)
March 5.	T	When Leaders Drink (Isa. 28:1-7)
March 6.	F	A Total Abstainer (Luke 1:13-17)
March 7.	S	God Will Not Acquit the Wicked (Neh. 1:1-10)
March 8 S		Drunkards and the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-12)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—For Gen. 43:34, according to Usher, 1706 B.C.; according to Hales, 1873 B.C. It is not possible to determine at what period in David's life he wrote Psalm 104. It is not known when Prov. 31 was written. It is evident that Ecclesiastes was written toward the close of Solomon's life. Isaiah began to prophesy about the year 735 B.C. and continued till about the year 700 B.C. Chapter fifty-six was probably written near the end of his life. The first Corinthian letter was written about the year A.D. 56 or 58.

*Places.*—The incident of Gen. 43:34 occurred in Egypt. Psalm 104 was most likely written in Jerusalem, as was also Proverbs and Ecclesiastes and the prophecy of Isaiah. The first Corinthian letter was written at Ephesus.

*Persons.*—Joseph and his brothers, David, Solomon, Isaiah, and Paul.

*Lesson Links*—The outstanding faults of the people today are, a lack of regard for the dignity and importance of their own personality, a lack of respect for the person and the rights of others, and a lack of reverence for God and his Christ. If people would realize that God created them, and that they are therefore the offspring of God, they would not deliberately do things that injure or degrade themselves in body or spirit. If they had proper respect for others, they would not do anything that would injure others, nor would they needlessly do anything that would disturb the peace and quiet of others. Neither would they set a bad example before others. If they had a wholesome reverence for God and Christ Jesus our Lord, they would endeavor to live in harmony with the word of

God. "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." (Tit. 2:11, 12.) To live soberly is to live a self-controlled life, to control one's own appetites and passions. To live righteously is to conduct one's self properly and righteously toward others. To live godly is to live piously, to have reverence for God. Hence, in the language just quoted, Paul sums up our whole duty to self, to our fellow men, and to God. It is a pity that so many people make gods of their appetites, passions, and pride, and devote their whole energies to gratify these never-satisfied gods. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 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." (Gal. 6:7, 8.)

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### **Joseph's Feast for His Brothers (Verse 34)**

This section of our lesson has to do with an episode in the varied career of Joseph, the favorite son of Jacob. Because of Jacob's favoritism and also some dreams Joseph told, his brothers hated him. When Jacob sent Joseph to see how the other sons were getting along tending Jacob's flocks, they, excepting Reuben, decided to kill him. Reuben persuaded them to cast him into a pit, intending to secretly rescue him, and send him home. However in Reuben's absence the other brothers sold him to some traders, who carried him to Egypt, where, after successes and reverses, he was appointed by Pharaoh to store up food during the coming seven years of plenty so that life might be preserved during seven years of famine that were to follow. The Lord had enabled Joseph to foretell these things; but let us not suppose that Joseph in all things was endowed with the wisdom and goodness of deity. He was still human and had the emotions common to man. He could not know that Reuben was not a party to his sale into Egypt; neither could he know but that his brothers had told Jacob the truth about his disappearance. The circumstances were such as to cause him to think that Jacob was not much concerned about him, else he would have followed up, and rescued him. Neither could he know that the years had mellowed the feelings of his brothers toward him. So when they came down to buy food, though he knew them, he made himself strange to them, and talked to them through an interpreter. He began to plan to have Benjamin brought down to him, and through some pretext, hold him as a prisoner till the others returned home. When Benjamin was brought down he, without making himself known to any of them, made a feast for them. At the feast Joseph arranged them according to their years. They were puzzled at his knowing the order of their ages. But if each had a full meal set before him, as we must suppose, why did he set five times as much before Benjamin? To them the whole procedure was mystifying, but it did not hinder their enjoyment of the food and drink. "And they drank, and were merry with him." Then, as in some quarters now, a feast would not be complete without some kind of

liquor. Wine was the common drink then. It was considered to be an essential mark of hospitality and good will. But social drinking is doing much harm.

### **Psalm 104:14, 15**

The one hundred fourth Psalm is a psalm of thanksgiving and praise for Jehovah's rich provisions for all his creatures. From this psalm we learn that God's hand is in all the working of nature; this is a truth too often lost sight of. We forget that no law is self-operative. "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle." But does not the grass for the cattle and the herb for man grow according to the laws of nature? Certainly; but who operates those laws? Let us be careful not to espouse a theory that contradicts what this psalm says. He makes the things to grow out of which wine, oil, and bread is made—"wine that maketh glad the heart of man." Hence, some people drink wine or other intoxicants to drown their disappointments, troubles, or sorrows. David's language shows that it does so, for the moment, but the permanent results are otherwise; for "wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise." (Prov. 20:1.) "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath complaining? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek out mixed wine." (Prov. 23:29, 30.) Hence the admonition of the next verse: "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. Thine eyes shall behold strange things, and thy heart shall utter perverse things." So the after results of drinking are not what the beginning promised. So "wine is a mocker."

### **Proverbs 31:4-7**

A man under the influence of strong drink is likely to forget his responsibilities. His mind becomes muddled, and his purposes are easily changed. He becomes negligent, if nothing worse. It is especially therefore important that kings and princes—presidents and governors—be on guard, "lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the justice due to any that is afflicted." Wine may revive one who is about to perish, and it may modify a bitter soul, but no remedy is infallible in its operations. But even the advice given in this section of our lesson text does not warrant the universal use of strong drink among the people. What is good to keep a clear head in kings and princes would also be good for every normal person. If a thing is recommended for abnormal people, certainly normal people should not be foolish enough to apply it to themselves.

### **Solomon's Experience (Eccles. 2:1-3)**

The book of Ecclesiastes is a wonderful book, if you go about the study of it from the right standpoint. Solomon started out to find by his own personal experience, aside from revelation, what "was good for the sons of men that they should do under heaven all the days of their life." Solomon was endowed with great wisdom and wealth, so that he could try out anything that promised pleasure

and satisfaction, and make a success of it, if success were possible. From Eccles. 1:17, 18 we learn from him that the possession of wisdom and knowledge just for their own sake or to be used for selfish ends is a source of grief. He tried mirth to see what pleasure he got out of that sort of life; "and, behold, this also was vanity." And yet there are people whose whole ambition and effort is to have fun, what is so often called "a good time." And yet yesterday's day of great fun and frolic leaves no satisfaction for today, but more likely depression and restlessness. Solomon found it so, and "said of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth, What doeth it?" And this does not mean that it is wrong to engage occasionally in innocent pleasure and fun for relaxation from tiresome work and toil, but to give one's self over to such a life is ruinous and sinful. Solomon found it so. But in his experiment in drinking wine, it does not seem that he "went the limit," for his heart yet guided him in wisdom. He did not become a sot, for in that state his heart could not have guided him in wisdom.

### **Solomon Appraises His Varied Experiments (Verses 10, 11)**

Solomon had built great works, built great houses, planted vineyards, made parks and gardens, bought many servants, had possessions of flocks and herds, secured an immense group of singers and musical instruments of all sorts. He had silver and gold in abundance. He was therefore able to buy everything his eyes desired. "I withheld not my heart from any joy." Then Solomon "looked on all the works" of his hands. He gave it all an impartial appraisal; "and, behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was no profit under the sun." He lived a selfish life, and it soured on him. "So I hated life, . . . and I hated all my labor wherein I labored under the sun." (Verses 17, 18.)

### **Isaiah Tells of Judah's Depravity (Isa. 56:12)**

Corruption prevailed in Judah in Isaiah's day. When people lose all feeling of responsibility to Jehovah, all other sins are easy of acceptance. The majority in Judah had reached that point. Drunkenness was a natural part of such degradation. Their watch-men—their leaders—held their drunken carousals—"we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to-morrow shall be as this day, a day great beyond measure." That sounds like some promises of today. Drunkenness does not bring great days. People cannot drink themselves and their country into greatness. Such a course brought the downfall of the kingdom of Judah; and it will bring the downfall of any country that tries it.

### **"These Things Were Our Examples" (1 Cor. 10:6, 7)**

In verses one and two Paul tells the Corinthian brethren that the people of Israel were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. It is true that Moses had led them out of Egypt, but they were not free from their Egyptian masters till they were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and their masters were drowned in the sea. After this deliverance, they all drank of the same spiritual drink and all ate the same spiritual food, and all had the same leader; but the most of them were rebellious, and died as a

consequence of their rebellion. "Now these things were our examples." Now if Christians are not in danger of sin and death by sin, how could the fate of these Israelites be an example to them? They were God's people; and they sinned, and were destroyed. And they are our examples, "to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." For an account of the specific case of idolatry here referred to read Ex. 32:1-6. When Aaron had made the golden calf which the people had requested him to make, they held a feast in honor of their new god. Of course the drinking of wine was a part of all such idolatrous worship. They ate, drank wine, and rose up to play—to indulge in immoral practices. "And there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." (Ex. 32:28.) When a person depends on strong drink to bring relief from disappointment and sorrow, he is making strong drink his god; and that sort of idolatry brings ruin. After telling of some more sins and death among the people of Israel, Paul again makes them an example to us: "Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition." (Verse 11.)

### SOME REFLECTIONS

To show partiality in a family is certain to lead to unpleasant results. The evils resulting from Jacob's partiality to Joseph should be a solemn warning to all parents.

The emotions of love and hate are God-given, and are useful when held within proper bounds; but when emotions overrun reason and justice, as in the case of Joseph's brethren, great evils result.

Our appetites and passions are God-given, and are essential parts of our being. If we make them serve our needs, they are useful; but when allowed to become our masters, they destroy us. Thirst is an essential part of our make-up; but when thirst for strong drink becomes master of anyone, then good-by to everything that is worth while.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The evils of partiality in the family.

The evils of social drinking.

In what way is wine a mocker?

Solomon's experiments, and his conclusion. (Eccl. 12:13, 14.)

### QUESTIONS

Where is our lesson found?  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

Tell about the feast he made for them.  
Discuss the evils of social drinking.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
Discuss the outstanding faults of the people of today.  
Discuss Tit. 2:11, 12.

#### Verse 34

Tell why and how Joseph came to be in Egypt.  
To what position was he finally elevated, and why?  
Why did his brothers come down to Egypt?

#### Psalm 104:14, 15

What of the contents of Psalm 104?  
What does God do in nature?  
What is here said of wine?  
Is that a permanent result of drinking wine?  
Give some references on the point.

#### Prov. 31:4-7

Give the substance of these verses.  
Discuss what is here said about the use of wine.

**Eccles. 2:1-3**

Why did Solomon indulge in so many things?  
Discuss what he said about mirth and  
drinking wine.

**Verses 10, 11**

What great works had Solomon made?  
To what extent did he go in seeking pleasure?  
What judgment did he pronounce on all that  
he had done?  
Why do people become soured on life?

**Isa. 56:12**

In what condition was Judah at the time  
Isaiah prophesied?  
Discuss verse 12.

**I Cor. 10:6, 7**

Give the points in verses 1-5.  
What point does Paul make with reference to  
what happened to Israel?  
What lesson do you get out of it?  
Tell about the idolatry Paul mentions.  
Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson XI—March 15, 1942

**THE MIGHTY WORKS OF JESUS**

Matt. 8:23-34

23 And when he was entered into a boat, his disciples followed him.

24 And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the boat was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

25 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Save, Lord; we perish.

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

27 And the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?

28 And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, there met him two possessed with demons, coming forth out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man could pass by that way.

29 And behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

30 Now there was afar off from them a herd of many swine feeding.

31 And the demons besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, send us away into the herd of swine.

32 And he said unto them, Go. And they came out, and went into the swine: and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep into the sea, and perished in the waters.

33 And they that fed them fled, and went away into the city, and told everything, and what was befallen to them that were possessed with demons.

34 And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart from their borders.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" (Matt. 8:27.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 19:1-6.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

March 9. M

March 10. T

March 11. W

March 12. T

March 13. F

March 14. S

March 15. S

The Winds and the Waves Obey (Matt. 8:23-27)

Power to Cast Out Demons (Matt. 8:28-34)

Healing the Blind (John 9:1-11)

Miracles Not for Show (Luke 23:6-12)

Miracles and Moral Improvement (Acts 19:11-20)

The Significance of Miracles (John 6:26-35)

God's Great Works (Psalm 111:1-10)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 29.

*Places.*—The Sea of Galilee and the country of the Gadarenes. Mark calls it the country of the Gerasenes. Luke speaks of it as "the country of the Gerasenes, which is over against Galilee." It seems that one district included the other. It lay on the east side of the Sea of Galilee.

*Persons.*—Jesus, his disciples, the two demoniacs, and the Gadarenes. It seems that there were few, if any, Jews in the country of the Gadarenes; the people were heathens, worshipers of idols.

*Lesson Links*—It is a fact, generally accepted among writers, that Matthew made no special attempt to arrange his matter in chronological order, but designed rather to group events and sayings according to subject matter. His design was to give proofs that Jesus was the long-expected Messiah. His proofs were therefore arranged in a logical order rather than in chronological order. Perhaps this systematic arrangement of matters was due to his training in business matters. And this does not mean that he did not write by inspiration; but it does help us to see why Matthew's arrangement of matters is different from that of the other writers.

In the first part of the chapter from which our lesson is taken some notable miracles of healing are recorded. Jesus healed a leper, also the servant of a centurion, and Peter's wife's mother, also many others were healed. Matthew reminds us that this was all according to the prophecy of Isaiah: "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases." But evidently he had become weary, and desired to get away for a time from such vast throngs of people. "Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side," the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Perhaps his disciples thought he was missing a great opportunity in getting away from a great multitude of people who were so interested; but when rest is needed, resting is not a waste of time and opportunity. Besides, the people may have been growing too excited; they might presently want him to lead them in revolt against the hated Romans.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### **Jesus Entered into a Boat with His Disciples (Verse 23)**

The freedom with which Jesus and his disciples frequently used boats indicates that the fishermen of his company still owned their boats. Mark's report on this incident also indicates the same thing: "And leaving the multitude, they take him with them, even as he was, in the boat." This statement shows that they were in command of the boat. It also shows that they went direct from the multitude without any preparation for the trip. Mark also says, "And other boats were with him." Other disciples besides the apostles journeyed with Jesus. (Acts 1:21, 22.)

#### **A Great Storm Frightens the Disciples (Verses 24, 25)**

It is said that the Sea of Galilee is noted for its squalls; they swoop clown from the surrounding mountains in great force and without warning, making it extremely dangerous for small craft to be out at sea. On this occasion, when Jesus and his disciples had been on the sea long enough for Jesus to fall into a deep sleep, "there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the boat was covered with the waves." It must have been an unusually severe storm, for the disciples were greatly frightened, though many of them were fishermen, and used to the storms of that sea. But Jesus, being thoroughly exhausted from his strenuous labors, and



being able to dismiss from his mind his activities and the excited throng from which he had escaped, had soon fallen into deep slumber. Not even the raging storm and the lashing waves, which tossed the boat about, awoke him. It is possible that some of the disciples had also fallen asleep. If so, they were now fully awake, and thoroughly frightened. They awoke Jesus and said: "Save, Lord; we perish." Mark reports a little more of what they said: "Teacher, carest thou not that we perish?" That seems to have been meant for a reproach to Jesus for sleeping in such peril; or they may have said it more in fright than in a spirit of reproach. They had given up hope of being able to man the boat in such a terrific storm. Unless more than human strength came to their aid, they knew they were lost to a watery grave. When people realize they are at the end of their strength and ability, they are ready to call for help.

### **Jesus Calms the Storm and the Waters (Verses 26, 27)**

Mark reports: "And he awoke, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still." Luke reports: "And he awoke, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm." That was a double miracle. The winds did not gradually calm down, nor did the waves gradually cease their violence, as waves always do after a disturbance. That the winds should suddenly cease was not so amazing—that might happen; but that the raging waters should suddenly become calm and as smooth as a mirror was amazing indeed. The disciples were astonished beyond measure. Jesus also rebuked the disciples: "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Wherein was their faith weak? Wherein did they show that they had little faith? They believed that the Lord could save them, for they awoke him for that purpose, and then prayed, "Save, Lord." But what could have been a greater defect in their faith than for them to believe that he could save them, and yet doubted that he cared enough for them to do so? Mark reports: "Carest thou not that we perish?" That implies, "You could save us, if you cared enough to do so." In thus reproaching him they showed a deep, ugly lack of trust and confidence in him, the very worst sort of a defect in their faith. And had they recognized his deity, they would have known that where he was all things were well; but they still thought of him as a man—a most wonderful man. "And the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" Jesus had proved himself to be master of all manner of sickness and disease; now he had proved himself to be the master of the forces of nature—the wind and the sea.

### **Two Demoniacs Meet Jesus (Verses 28, 29)**

It seems that the first persons Jesus and his company saw after they landed on the east shore of the Sea of Galilee were two demoniacs, who came out of the tombs to meet him. They were "exceeding fierce, so that no man could pass by that way." One of the strangest of all maladies was this demon possession. No effort to explain away these demons can be made to harmonize with the plain statements of the New Testament. At least some of those possessed with demons had superhuman knowledge; and those of

our lesson possessed superhuman strength—at least, it is true of one of them, for "no man could any more bind him, no, not with a chain." He readily broke anything with which people sought to bind him. (Mark 5:3, 4.) Mark adds: "And always, night and day, in the tombs and in the mountains, he was crying out, and cutting himself with stones." Luke (8:27) tells us that "for a long time he had worn no clothes." It seems that he was the most pitiable and desperate of all the demon possessed. Though he was wild and raving, a terror to all, yet at sight he knew Jesus to be the Son of God, and besought Jesus to torment him not. Or as our lesson text puts it: "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" These evil spirits recognized that torment was in the future for them, and they feared that they might be sent immediately to their doom.

### **The Demons Cast Out (Verses 30-32)**

How or why evil spirits entered people is not known, or why some people had more than one evil spirit. It seems to have been no fault of the individual thus possessed, for we read of a little girl who was demon possessed. (Mark 7:25, 26.) No word of reproach was lodged against the demon possessed; but the demons themselves were doomed spirits—this they recognized. Luke reports the demons of our lesson as begging Jesus not to command them to enter the abyss. They therefore recognized the right and the power of Jesus to send them where he pleased. Near by was a great herd of swine—"in number about two thousand." The demons preferred to inhabit the swine rather than to be sent into the abyss, or to be without habitation. Hence, their strange request to be sent into the swine. When Jesus gave them leave to do so, they came out and entered the swine. The swine forthwith became as crazy as the fiercest of the two men, and they rushed down the mountain into the sea, and were drowned. The whole thing goes beyond our understanding. Why should two thousand hogs be destroyed? It may have been that these hogs were owned by a renegade Jew contrary to the law—a sort of bootlegger in swine flesh. Such property is usually destroyed by the proper authorities. Trench has suggested that "if this granting of the evil spirits' request helped in any way the cure of the man, this would have been motive enough. Or, still more probable, it may have been necessary for the permanent healing of the man that he should have an outward evidence and testimony that the hellish powers which held him in bondage had quitted their hold." Besides, the benefit to the whole country, to say nothing of the man's benefit, much more outweighed the loss of the swine, for these demon possessed had become dangerous to the country. There are things more valuable than hogs. Think what it meant to these men and their families, and to the whole country, and the loss of the swine will seem insignificant. The money value of these hogs did not compare with the money value of the books destroyed at Ephesus to rid the people's minds of the superstition the books taught. (Acts 19:19.) When the demons entered the swine and they rushed into the sea, it was clearly demonstrated to these two men and to all that their recovery was complete.

**The People Ask Jesus to Leave (Verses 33, 34)**

When those who tended the hogs saw what was done, they fled to the city and reported what had been done. Perhaps they were afraid of being in the presence of a person with such power. Their report brought the people out to see what had been done. Luke says: "And they went out to see what had come to pass; and they came to Jesus, and found the man, from whom the demons were gone out, sitting, clothed and in his right mind, at the feet of Jesus." While the man was so possessed with demons that he was crazy, he was a nudist; now that he was in his right mind he appropriately put on clothing. No civilized man in his right mind wants to be naked in the presence of others. Sanity and civilization demand clothing. But strange as it seems, when these people saw the man restored to his normal self, they were afraid. No such powers had ever before been manifested in their country. No one else had ever brought, or could bring, such a blessing to them, and yet they were afraid. People generally, especially superstitious people, are afraid of powers and forces which they do not understand. "And when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart from their borders." And why? To us it seems that they would have been begging him to remain in their midst. He had turned dangerous men into useful citizens—an untold blessing to the demoniacs and to the people. But were they worse and more stupid than others? The people of Nazareth sought to kill him. The Pharisees and Herodians plotted to kill him, and the authorities in Jerusalem murdered him. Many people today will not have him as their Savior and king. He knocks at the door of their hearts, and they will not allow him to enter and be their guest. They do not want him in their midst. Were the Gadarenes more stupid than such as these? Luke adds: "But the man from whom the demons were gone out prayed him that he might be with him: but he sent him away, saying, Return to thy house, and declare how great things God hath done for thee. And he went his way, publishing throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done for him." If only Christians, redeemed from their sins, would do likewise! But here is where we fail.

**SOME REFLECTIONS**

There are many points at which a person's faith may be weak. He might believe in the power of God, and not in his goodness and mercy. This seems to have been the reason for the fear on the part of the Gadarenes. A person may believe that God is, and yet not believe that he is a rewarder of them that seek him. Some Christians believe in God as a creator, but seem to have very little faith in him as a Father. In these matters, let us examine ourselves.

In calming the winds and the waves, Jesus showed his power over the mighty forces of air and water; in his healing the various diseases, he had showed his power over all human ailments. Now, in casting a legion of demons out of these unfortunate demoniacs, he shows his power over the forces of evil. Such miracles also showed his benevolence, his good purposes, toward man. They showed that he was also able to fulfill any of his announced purposes, even to the redemption of man from the power of the devil. And they are written that we may believe in him and be saved.

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

The Sea of Galilee.  
 Degrees of faith.  
 The power of Jesus.  
 Sending Christ away.

**QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

What did he say to the disciples?  
 Wherein was their faith little?

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.  
 Discuss matters in Lesson Links.

**Verses 28, 29**

Who met Jesus when he landed?  
 What do all the writers together say of one of these demoniacs?  
 What shows his supernatural strength and knowledge?

**Verse 23**

From what point did Jesus enter a boat?  
 What indicates that the fishermen of his company still owned boats?

**Verses 30-32**

What did the evil spirits say to Jesus?  
 What happened?  
 How justify the loss of the swine?

**Verses 24, 25**

Give some facts about the Sea of Galilee.  
 Tell about the storm of this trip.

**Verses 33, 34**

Discuss verses 33, 34.  
 Discuss the reflections.

**Verses 26, 27**

How did Jesus quiet the winds and the waves?  
 To which did he say, "Peace, be still"?

Lesson XII—March 22, 1942

**JESUS THE MESSIAH FORETELLS HIS DEATH**

Mark 8:27-37

27 And Jesus went forth, and his disciples, into the villages of Caesarea Philippi: and on the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Who do men say that I am?

28 And they told him, saying, John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but others, one of the prophets.

29 And he asked them, But who say ye that I am? Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.

30 And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.

31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again,

32 And he spake the saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

33 But he turning about, and seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter, and saith, Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men.

34 And he called unto him the multitude with his disciples, and said unto them, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35 For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it.

36 For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?

37 For what should a man give in exchange for his life?

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it." (Mark 8:35.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Heb. 12:1-8.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—*

March 16. M	Jesus Anticipates Calvary (Mark 8:27-33)
March 17. T	A Paradox of Self-Sacrifice (Mark 8:34-38)
March 18. W	Christ's Death in Prophecy (Acts 3:12-21)
March 19. T	The Scriptures Concerning Himself (Luke 24:25-32)
March 20. F	The Only Savior (Isa. 43:10-15)
March 21. S	A Perfect Savior (Heb. 5:5-10)
March 22. S	Jesus, the Master of Death (John 2:18-25)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 30.

*Place.*—Near Philippi, a city of some importance, about one hundred and twenty miles north of Jerusalem. It was originally called Baniyas, or Paneas; but when Philip improved it, he changed its name to Caesarea Philippi. This is not, as some commentaries have it, the farthest point north visited by Jesus during his personal ministry, for the previous chapter tells us that he had gone as far north as Sidon.

*Persons.*—Jesus and his disciples; it is almost certain that other disciples besides the apostles were with Jesus. (See Acts 1:21, 22.)

*Lesson Links*—The scribes and the Pharisees were growing more and more bitter toward Jesus, and were doing all they could to turn people against him. Jesus made no appeal to prejudice; he made no effort to stir up party strife. He did, however, with courage meet their arguments and their objections; but he could not teach and train his disciples as he wanted to do in such surroundings. Hence, occasionally he took them away from the crowds, that he might teach them the fundamentals of his gospel, and that they might have quietness in which to think. In the face of such bitterness and misrepresentations, they also might be stirred to bitterness. Besides, as they had the idea that Jesus would head a material kingdom, like the Jewish kingdom of old, they might cherish the notion that one day they would have a part with Jesus in crushing such enemies. They needed to have drilled into them another sort of spirit. It was necessary therefore to take them occasionally away from surroundings where they were tempted to fight these bitter enemies of the Lord. Being human, and not knowing the spirit of the religion of Christ, they were bound to have a feeling of resentment toward such unrighteous enemies.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Who Is Jesus? (Verses 27-30)**

It seems that Jesus started on this journey from Bethsaida, or near there. It is very probable that he made this journey to get away from the strife and confusion constantly raised by the scribes and Pharisees. The time of his death was drawing nigh; his disciples needed to be more firmly established in their loyalty to him, for in the days to come they would be sorely tried.

Jesus came into the world to save sinners, but he could not save anyone who did not have the right attitude toward him. In the very nature of the case he could not be indifferent concerning the attitude people had toward him. He would also have his disciples to do some serious thinking as to who he was. So he asked them, "Who do men say that I am?" One of two things was sure: Every one who had seen Christ and his mighty works, or had even heard

of him and his works, had formed some sort of opinion of him, or else had come to believe firmly in him as the Son of God and the Savior of men—the mighty Messiah who was to come. His life, teachings, and miracles challenged the attention of men; and so it is even today. People who think at all cannot be indifferent as to who he is, or as to what he did and taught. It is not surprising that people then formed various opinions of him. Some thought he was John the Baptist risen from the dead, some were of the opinion that he was Elijah, and others that he was Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. In saying these things about Jesus the people were merely expressing opinions concerning him; such statements were not confessions of faith. There is considerable difference between opinions and faith. Jesus had been teaching his disciples and working many miracles in their presence, that he might lead them beyond mere opinion to a point where they could take their stand on the firm ground of abiding faith in him as the Christ, the Son of the living God. Without such faith they would not be saved, nor would they be of any value to him as apostles. If they had not reached that point, then his labors with them had been fruitless, and they had failed him in his plans. Mere opinion, no matter how favorable to him it might be, was not, and is not, sufficient. So he puts the question direct to them: "But who say ye that I am?" So far as carrying out his plans was concerned, it mattered little what Herod thought about him, or what opinions the people had formed concerning him, or what the Pharisees and the doctors of the law said about him; but everything he had mapped out for the apostles to do depended on what they thought and said concerning him. "But who say ye that I am?" was therefore a basic question.

As Jesus asked a basic question, it demanded a basic answer, an answer of faith. "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus had put the question to all of his disciples, and Peter, always prompt to speak, answered for all of them. The truth that Peter confessed—that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God—is the central truth of the entire Bible, the foundation upon which the whole structure of Christianity rests. Eliminate that truth, and the Bible is an empty shell and Christianity a huge and baseless fabrication. But to believe that Jesus is the Christ involves more now than it did then, for we must now believe that he died and rose again the third day. It is not enough to believe that he was a good man, or a great teacher, or a prophet; he was all of these things and more. He is the crucified redeemer, the Messiah that was to come. We must believe all of this. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; not that Jesus and the church is the Christ, but that Jesus in his own person is the Christ.

The prophets had foretold the coming of one who would be the Messiah, or the Christ, the Son of God, the redeemer of men. All Jews knew these prophecies, and were looking forward to his coming. At the baptism of Jesus a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son." Some of these disciples may have heard that voice. We know that some of them heard the testimony of John the Baptist. (John 1:29-37.) The disciples knew the prophecies; all of them had seen the mighty works of Jesus, and had heard his matchless teaching, and had read his character as revealed in his daily life. They had honestly weighed all this evidence, and were fully convinced that he was the Messiah foretold by the prophets. Their faith, being

produced by testimony, was an intelligent faith. But Jesus was not yet ready to be announced as the Christ. "And he charged them that they should tell no man of him"; or as Matthew puts it, "Then charged he the disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ."

### **Jesus Foretells His Suffering and Death (Verse 31)**

"And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things"—suffer many things besides his death. He must suffer the lies and slanders of his enemies, betrayed by Judas, the agonies of Gethsemane, the cowardice of his disciples, and the taunts and jeers and cruelties connected with his trial and unjust condemnation. "And be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes." These were the classes of whom the Jewish Sanhedrin was composed. They held a pretended trial, but they had already condemned him even before he was seized and brought before them. It was they who delivered him up to Pilate. "And be killed." Previous to this speech to his disciples Jesus had given obscure intimations of his approaching death, but none of them understood what he meant. Now he tells them plainly that he must be killed. According to Matthew he told them that he must go to Jerusalem to suffer and be killed. "And after three days rise again." Matthew reports him as saying, "And the third day be raised up." It is certain that Jesus did not use both expressions, and it is equally certain that both expressions mean the same thing. With the Jews "after three days" means after three days had come, rather than after three days had passed. (See I Kings 12:5, 12.) Take this into account when you begin to figure the length of time Jesus was in the tomb; it will save a lot of useless worry.

### **Peter's Rashness Rebuked (Verses 32, 33)**

"Peter took him," perhaps aside from the other disciples, "and began to rebuke him." According to Matthew these are the words Peter used: "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall never be unto thee." This was a rash statement, but Peter could not see why Jesus should allow himself to be put to death. He had just confessed that Jesus was the Messiah; but how could he bring redemption to Israel if he were killed? Ignorance was at the bottom of his rashness, and his ignorance and rashness show that the apostles were not yet prepared to preach Christ to others. Jesus rebuked Peter, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan." The Greek word here translated "Satan" is "diabolos," which means a slanderer, or accuser, or adversary. The word came to be applied to the devil, because he is the great slanderer, and the persistent accuser and adversary of man. It is here applied to Peter, not because he was the embodiment of Satan, or stood for him, but because he had made himself an adversary to Christ's announced plans. Hence, "get thee behind me, adversary," says all that the word implies. "For thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men." Peter still had the idea that God's plans would be worked out according to man's way of doing things. He did not realize that man's way is not God's way. He had in mind a triumphant Christ, but one who would triumph over his enemies without the suffering of death. He still held to the Jewish conception of the Messiah and his kingdom. The rebuke Jesus delivered to Peter for having that notion is a rebuke to all who

today think of Christ's kingdom as a material kingdom which is yet to be. Let us patiently await the working out of God's own plans, and not map, out a program for him.

### **Following Jesus (Verse 34)**

Although Jesus was in a region of country he had not before visited, a crowd soon gathered about him. It appears that they stood some distance from him, not pressing upon him, as did the crowds about Capernaum; for it is said that he called them to him. "And said unto them, If any man would come after me." "Any man"—the way is open to all. It is, "Whosoever will." "Would come"—literally, wills to come. Only those who have the desire and the will to do so, will come to Christ. And if anyone wills to come, "let him deny himself." This, of course, means that he must give up his life of ease and self-indulgence, but it means more than that. He must give up his own ways, his own notions, his own philosophy of life and bring his own will, his own thinking, into subjection to the Lord's will; and this is usually the most difficult part of self-denial, for we like to have our own way and to do as we please. "And take up his cross." The cross is a symbol of shame and death. It is said that the condemned criminals had to carry their own cross to the place\*of execution, suffering the heartless taunts and jeers of people along the way. The "cross" is not the giving up of things we like; that comes in self-denial. It is the symbol of shame and death, In becoming a Christian we are crucified with Christ—we die to sin. The world scoffs at the Christian and persecutes him, and this cross he must bear, not grudgingly and rebelliously as did the condemned criminal, but voluntarily and willingly, even though it lead to death. "And follow me." In the life he lived and the suffering he endured, Jesus left us an example to follow. (1 Pet. 2:21.) "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked." (1 John 2:6.)

### **Saving and Losing Life (Verses 35-37)**

Whoever looks solely to this life and its pleasures shall lose the life that is life indeed. To sacrifice the right in order to save this life is to lose the better life. To sacrifice this life for the Lord is to gain life eternal. What if the way of the cross does lead to death? It also leads to eternal life. If a man should gain the whole world, and lose his life, even his temporal life, what would it profit him? If he spends his energies in gaining this world, he is sure to lose his eternal life. There is nothing which a person can give in exchange for even this life; if it is lost, it is gone. And certainly there is nothing with which a person can purchase eternal life. There is no exchange price on a lost soul. If there were, a person would have nothing after death with which to pay.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

It is a contradiction to argue that Jesus was not the Christ, the Son of God, and yet that he was a good man. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God; he could not be a good man, and make false claims. Do the conditions of discipleship laid down by the Savior seem to make Christianity a hard life? Almost any task is hard or light in proportion to the estimate we place on the reward to be obtained.



If we think of the reward to be obtained, the life of the Christian is not a heavy burden, though it requires determination to succeed.

And does the way of the cross lead to death? What if it does? No matter into what channel in life you cast your lot, the end of that channel is death. You cannot escape death by refusing to take up your cross. To be a Christian is to have hope in death. At best, life has its burdens; the cross is lighter than the burden of sin.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Faith and opinion.

The additional items mentioned by Matthew (16:17-19).

"If any man would come after me"—what is necessary?

Losing life and gaining life.

### QUESTIONS

Where is the lesson found?  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

When would he rise again?

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, place, and persons.  
Discuss items in Lesson Links.

#### Verses 32, 33

What is said of Peter's reaction to what Jesus said?

Why would the language of Jesus astonish Peter?

What did Jesus say to him?

In what sense was Peter an adversary of Christ?

What idea of the kingdom prevailed among the Jews?

#### Verses 27-30

Why did Jesus come into the world?

Why does he not save all sinners?

What question did Jesus ask, and why?

What opinions were expressed?

Why will not opinions about Christ save?

What faith did the disciples express?

What must we now believe?

What had caused the disciples to believe?

What charge did he give his disciples?

#### Verse 34

Repeat what Jesus said to the multitude.

Discuss each item of his statement.

#### Verse 31

Repeat verse 31.

Name some of the things he had to suffer.

What else?

#### Verses 35-37

Discuss these verses.

Discuss the reflections.

Lesson XIII—March 29, 1942

### THE TRANSFIGURED CHRIST MEETS HUMAN NEED

Luke 9:28-34

28 And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, that he took with him Peter and John and James, and went up into the mountain to pray.

29 And as he was praying, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became white and dazzling.

30 And behold, there talked with him two men; who were Moses and Elijah;

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 Now Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: but when they were fully awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33 And it came to pass, as they were parting from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah: not knowing what he said.

34 And while he said these things, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my Son, my chosen: hear ye him.

36 And when the voice came, Jesus was found alone. And they held their peace, and told no man in those days any of the things which they had seen.

37 And it came to pass, on the next day, when they were come down from the mountain, a great multitude met him.

38 And behold, a man from the multitude cried, saying, Teacher, I beseech thee to look upon my son; for he is mine only child:

39 And behold, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth, and it hardly departeth from him, bruising him sorely.

40 And I besought thy disciples to cast it out; and they could not.

41 And Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and bear with you? bring hither thy son.

42 And as he was yet a coming, the demon dashed him down, and tare him grievously. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.

43 And they were all astonished at the majesty of God.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"And they were all astonished at the majesty of God." (Luke 9:43.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—John 12:20-28.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

March 23. M	The Transfigured Christ (Luke 9; 28-36)
March 24. T	Christ Meets Human Need (Luke 9:37-43)
March 25. W	Hungry Men Fed (Matt. 14:14-21)
March 26. T	Compassion for the Helpless (Luke 10:30-37)
March 27. F	The Need for Salvation (John 3:7-17)
March 28. S	God Cares for My Soul (Psalm 142:1-7)
March 29. S	"I Will Help Thee" (Isa. 41:10-18)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 30.

*Places.*—A high mountain, probably Mount Hermon; also near the mountain.

*Persons.*—Jesus, the disciples, Moses, Elijah, the multitudes, and a father and his demon-possessed son.

*Lesson Links*—There is no indication that Jesus in his personal ministry met human needs any more promptly and effectively after his transfiguration than he did before. The transfiguration did not give to him any additional powers for doing good to the needy; and it certainly was not a transformation of his character, so as to make him more interested in meeting human needs. He was as much interested in human welfare, as prompt in relieving human suffering, and as powerful in working miracles, before his transfiguration as he was after that experience. Besides, his transfiguration was but for the moment; that transfigured appearance did not continue with him. When he came down from the mountain the next day, his appearance was normal. Jesus was not transfigured to prepare him for service; he did no greater service after his transfiguration than before. From the beginning of his ministry he went about doing good. We shall see something of the significance of this transfiguration as we study the lesson.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Jesus Transfigured (Verses 28, 29)

"And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings"—the sayings of the conversation of our last lesson. Matthew and Mark put it six days. Evidently Luke counts the days on which the con-

versation and the transfiguration took place, and Matthew and Mark count only the intervening days. Jesus took with him Peter, John, and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. These are the three whom he took into the room when he raised from the dead the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5:35-43), and whom he later took aside with him in the garden of Gethsemane to pray (Matt. 26:36, 37). We are not told why Jesus took these three with him on these important occasions; he had his reasons for so doing. On some bench, or tableland, of Mount Hermon they would find a suitable place where they could pray without being disturbed. The three accompanying Jesus, of course, had no idea as to the experience that was before them. The indications are that the transfiguration took place during the night, for Luke speaks of their coming down the next day. For some reason Jesus wanted to spend a season in prayer with none present but Peter, James, and John; and he wanted these three to see his transfiguration. Luke does not say, as do Matthew and Mark, that he was transfigured; he describes the change in his appearance. "And as he was praying, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became white and dazzling." Matthew says, "And he was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light." Mark says, "And he was transfigured before them; and his garments became glistening, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them." The Greek word translated transfigured did not fully express the change in his appearance; neither does the English word fully express the change. Hence, the writers give us further descriptive words to give us an idea of his appearance. It gave the disciples a foreview of what he would be in his glorified state.

### **Moses and Elijah Appear (Verses 30-32)**

It seems that while Jesus prayed, the disciples fell asleep. Either the brilliance of the scene or the conversation Jesus was holding with Moses and Elijah awakened them. It will be noticed that Moses and Elijah appeared in glory—in their glorified form. "And spake of his decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." His human nature naturally dreaded the crucifixion which he knew was not far in the future. We can feel sure that his coming death was a part of the burden of that prayer; for it must have been that Moses and Elijah talked with him about his coming death to encourage him. Moses stands with Jesus, as the lawgiver to the Jews; Elijah, as their great prophet-reformer. And these apostles who thought Jesus must not die heard these glorified men talking to Jesus about his coming death. Though they had been asleep, they were now fully awake; and "they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him." Hence, it was not a vision that appeared to them in a dream. On that point Luke is emphatic.

### **Peter's Proposal (Verses 33, 34)**

Peter, always ready to speak out, said, "It is good for us to be here." That was true. It would strengthen the faith of the apostles, and give comfort to Jesus. It was such a glorious experience that Peter wanted to prolong it; so he proposed to Jesus: "Let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He would pay equal honor to Moses and Elijah and the

Lord, and evidently thought he would be honoring the Lord in so doing. He did not know that he would really be dishonoring the Lord. In his confusion he did not know what to say, and so should have said nothing. He spoke as Moses and Elijah was about to depart from them, and while he spoke a cloud overshadowed them. Matthew says it was a bright cloud; it increased the fear of the three disciples.

### **"Hear Ye Him" (Verses 35, 36)**

It seems that Moses and Elijah disappeared in the bright cloud; and as they disappeared a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, my chosen: hear ye him." The appearance of Moses and Elijah on that mountain was impressive and very significant; but their disappearing as the voice said, "This is my Son, my chosen; hear ye him," was even more impressive and significant. All that went before in Moses and the prophets found their fulfillment in Jesus; and he was to supersede both Moses and the prophets as lawgiver and prophet. Moses himself 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.) And so, while Jesus was standing before them in his glorified appearance, and Moses and Elijah were fading from their view, a voice from the Majestic Glory said, "Hear ye him." And that was the climax of the transfiguration scene, to which all the other incidents of the occasion led; and this is the main lesson for us to learn from the transfiguration. Only Jesus is left for us to hear—"hear ye him." He is our King. "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." (Col. 1:18.) He "is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." (1 Tim. 6:15.) He has made his laws and regulations known through his chosen representatives. The fact, that when the disciples looked around, after hearing the voice saying, "Hear ye him," "they saw no one, save Jesus only" with themselves, would remind them in an impressive way that Jesus alone remained to them as lawgiver and prophet, and that to him alone they must hearken.

They "told no man in those days any of the things which they had seen." Jesus had charged them to tell no man what they had seen till after his resurrection. (Matt. 17:9; Mark 9:9.) Had they immediately told what they had seen, some would not have believed them, for some people will not believe anything that is out of line with their own experience. Or, the disciples who did believe them would have thought that they had not been treated fairly in being left out of such a glorious experience. Mark tells us that they questioned among themselves "what the rising again from the dead should mean." They would not be questioning among themselves as to what it meant for a person to rise from the dead, for they had seen that done; they were questioning among themselves as to what he meant by his own resurrection, so slow were they to comprehend his oft-repeated statement about his resurrection.

### **A Cry for Help (Verses 37-39)**

Jesus had left nine of his apostles behind when he went up into the mountain; likely there were also other disciples present. When he came down the next day, he found that a great multitude had

gathered. Mark informs us that there were scribes present in the multitude; of course these scribes were there for no good purpose. Apparently the scribes and Pharisees had made up their mind to harass Jesus at every step. In the absence of Jesus these scribes were engaged in controversy with the disciples. One man from the multitude, who was not interested in that controversy, "cried, saying, Teacher, I beseech thee to look upon my son." This son was possessed of an evil spirit, and had been so possessed from childhood. The child was in a desperate condition. For teareth the marginal reading has convulseth, which, from the description, seems to be the correct idea. Anyone who has seen a person have a severe epileptic fit can have a fair idea as to what happened to this man's son when the evil spirit seized him. It was heart-rending to the father.

### **The Disciples Fail to Cast Out the Evil Spirit (Verses 40, 41)**

This man had heard that Jesus was in the community, and had brought his afflicted son that Jesus might heal him. He evidently arrived while Jesus was up in the mountain. In the absence of Jesus the man had asked the disciples to cast out the spirit, but they were not able to do so. Power had previously been given them to cast out evil spirits, and they had done so. (Mark 6:7, 13.) But in this case they had failed, and did not know why; but their failure gave the scribes an opportunity to embarrass them before that great multitude. So the scribes, though in the wrong, had gained a temporary advantage—as seeming victory. But when Jesus appeared on the scene the apparent victory of the scribes was turned into defeat. "O faithless and perverse generation." This seems to have been addressed to all present, including the disciples. "How long shall I be with you?" He would soon be taken from the earth, and leave his work to be carried on by his disciples. Would they have sufficient faith to enable them to succeed; or would they fail, as on this occasion? He would bear with them so long as he was with them. Even now, if Jesus did not bear with our weak faith, we would all perish. "Bring hither thy son." Jesus was the only hope; and this father was a little doubtful as to the ability of Jesus to do anything for the son. So, according to Mark, he said to Jesus, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." There is a rebuke in the reply Jesus made: "If thou canst! All things are possible to him that believeth."

### **Jesus Casts Out the Evil Spirit (Verses 42, 43)**

Jesus had told the father to bring the son to him. "And as he was yet a coming, the demon dashed him down, and tare him grievously." The marginal reading has "convulsed" for "tare." The child fell to the ground in a terrible convulsion. In this case it seems that the evil spirit was seeking to destroy the one in whom he dwelt. "But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father."

**SOME REFLECTIONS**

Materialists claim that a person does not have a spirit that survives the death of the body, and that there is therefore no personal existence between death and the resurrection. Now, the Bible clearly states that Moses died and was buried, and also that he appeared with Elijah on the mountain and talked with Jesus. To offset this plain evidence that a man does exist between death and the resurrection, materialists put a wrong construction on the word "vision" in Matthew's report. It is true that the word from which we have vision in Matthew's report sometimes means "a sight divinely granted in an ecstasy or in sleep," but its first meaning is, "that which is seen, a sight, spectacle." That the word in Matt. 17:9 applies to things actually seen and not to things appearing in a dream, seems, from the following considerations, not to admit of a doubt:

1. Matthew, Mark, and Luke tell emphatically the changes that occurred in the appearance of Jesus.

2. They say that Moses and Elijah were present and talked with Jesus about his coming death. These things are stated as facts, not dreams. Materialists deny the reality of these things, and would therefore have us believe that Jesus carried on a conversation with men that existed only in his imagination, as if he were mentally unbalanced.

3. The apostles were not asleep—they were not dreaming. Luke says plainly, "When they were fully awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him." To doubt that statement as a statement of fact is to doubt the inspired record.

4. While Matthew reports Jesus as saying, "Tell the vision to no man," Mark says, "He charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen." And Luke adds, "And they held their peace, and told no man in those days any of the things which they had seen."

5. Peter speaks very definitely about the reality of that mountain experience: "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the Majestic Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount." (2 Pet. 1:16-18.)

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

Moses.  
Elijah.  
The transfiguration.

**QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.  
Discuss Lesson Links.

**Verses 28, 29**

Name some other occasions when Jesus took  
with him Peter, James, and John.  
Why did Jesus go into the mountain? Describe  
his appearance when he was  
transfigured.

**Verses 30-32**

Who appeared, and what did they talk about?  
Show that Peter, James, and John did not  
sleep through what was occurring.

**Verses 33, 34**

Discuss Peter's proposal.

**Verses 35, 36**

Discuss the significance of the voice from  
heaven.  
Why did the three not tell anything they had  
seen?

**Verses 37-39**

What conditions did Jesus meet when he  
returned from the mountain?  
What enemies were there, and what were they  
doing?  
What cry came from one of the multitude?

**Verses 40, 41**

Who had tried to heal the boy?  
What did Jesus say?  
What shows that the man doubted the ability  
of Jesus?

**Verses 42, 43**

Discuss these verses.  
Discuss the reflections.

**MAP LINK**  
**CLICK ICON FOR MAP**



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**SECOND QUARTER****LIFE OF CHRIST: STUDIES IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS  
(Matthew, Mark, Luke)  
(Second Half of a Six Months' Course)**

*AIM: Through a connected view of the life and work of Jesus in all parts of Palestine as set forth in the Synoptic Gospels, to give the student a sense of the devotion of our Lord to his task of saving men, with a view to winning the pupil's allegiance to Jesus as Savior and Lord.*

Lesson I—April 5, 1942

**CHRIST AND LIFE AFTER DEATH**

Mark 12:24-27; 1 Cor. 15:50-58

24 Jesus said unto them, Is it not for this cause that ye err, that ye know not the scriptures, nor the power of God?

25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as angels in heaven.

26 But as touching the dead, that they are raised; have ye not read in the book of Moses, in the place concerning the Bush, how God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but of the living: ye do greatly err.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law:

57 But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 15:57.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—1 Cor. 15:42-49.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

March	30.	M	The Resurrection and Life (John 5:19-29)
March	31.	T	The Raising of Lazarus (John 11:38-44)
April	1.	W	Our Eternal Home (John 14:1-15)
April	2.	T	Our Resurrection Assurance (1 Cor. 15:19-26)
April	3.	F	Triumphant Over Death (1 Cor. 15:50-58)
April	4.	S	The Risen One (Mark 16:1-11)
April	5.	S	The Living and Reigning Christ (Matt. 28:1-10)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—For Mark 12:24-27, according to Usher, A.D. 30; according to Hales, A.D. 31.. For I Cor. 15:50-56, according to some authorities, A.D. 56; according to others, A.D. 57. To be more exact as to the time of Mark 12:24-27, Tuesday of the week of the crucifixion.

*Places.*—Jerusalem and Ephesus.

*Persons.*—Jesus, the Sadducees, Paul, and the saints at Corinth.

*Lesson Links*—The majority of the Sadducees were priests, and the most of the priests were Sadducees. The Sadducees, the priestly part of that party, were not so bitter in their opposition to Jesus as were the Pharisees, till Jesus drove the traders and money-changers from the temple just prior to this lesson. They felt that he was infringing on their rights and prerogatives. From this time on they apparently took the lead; they also exceeded in their opposition to the preaching of the apostles, because the apostles preached the resurrection.

On the day of the conversation of the first section of our lesson, Jesus spoke a parable, which the leaders, both Pharisees and Sadducees, understood was meant for them. (Mark 12:1-12.) They then left Jesus; they must have gone away to do some plotting. They sent to him certain of the Pharisees and Herodians to question him as to whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Caesar. It was a shrewd scheme. If he said they should pay tribute, he would turn most of the Jews against him; if he said it was unlawful for a Jew to pay the tribute, he would be guilty of treason against Caesar. They did not see how he could escape, but he answered in such a way as to leave them nothing to say. Then the Sadducees felt sure they could present a problem that he could not answer. These Sadducees did not believe in a resurrection. Doubtless they had routed the Pharisees in many arguments with this same problem. Said they, "There were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed; and the second took her, and died, leaving no seed behind him; and the third likewise: and the seven left no seed. Last of all the woman also died. In the resurrection whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife." It is not at all likely that any Pharisee could answer that problem, and that made the Sadducees all the more confident and bold in presenting it to Jesus. It seems that they took it for granted that Jesus held to the doctrine of the resurrection.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****The Sadducees' Argument Based on Ignorance (Verses 24, 25)**

The fact that the Pharisees could not answer the argument of the Sadducees was not proof that the Sadducees were right. Truth suffers many times because an ill-informed man cannot meet the arguments of a skilled disputant. If a man is unable to defend the truth, he should be careful about joining battle with a skilled opponent.

The main body of the Sadducees were priests of the family of Zadok, who was famous in the days of David and Solomon; they constituted a sort of priestly aristocracy. They were not therefore expecting Jesus to tell them that their doctrine of no resurrection

was based on ignorance, and yet that is exactly What Jesus did in the form of a question. "Is it not for this cause that ye err, that ye know not the scriptures, nor the power of God?" While the Old Testament is not so plain on the resurrection as is the New, yet it does teach a resurrection. They were also ignorant of the power of God. It seems that it had not occurred to them that God had power to arrange matters in the resurrection different from what they are in this life, but that things must go on in the future state in the same manner as here. To them the future life, if there should be any, would have all the connections, passions, and appetites which are common to this life. In this they were wrong, not knowing the power of God. "For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as angels in heaven." In this, Jesus shows them that they were also ignorant of the conditions that would prevail in the resurrection. In this conversation the word resurrection is applied to the resurrection state, not merely to the act of rising from the dead.

### **Proof of Life After Death (Verses 26, 27)**

To fully appreciate the Savior's reply to the Sadducees we must take into consideration their doctrine respecting the nature of men. They were materialists they did not believe that a person possessed a spirit that survived the death of the body; they believed that when a man died he ceased to be. The Pharisees believed that a man possessed a spirit that survived the death of the body. In the sense in which the Pharisees understood death, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob died were dead; but in the sense in which the Sadducees understood death, these heroes were not only dead, but in death had ceased to be. They had become as though they never had been, according to the Sadducees. Yet hundreds of years after these heroes had passed from earth, Jehovah said to Moses so as to make his identity known, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." He did not say, I was the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, but I am. He was the God of these heroes at the time he spoke to Moses; these heroes must have then been in existence, for it could not be said that God is the God of nothing. In some sense these men still lived. Jesus said, "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living: ye do greatly err." Jesus left the argument at this point. He had shown them that they were wrong in their main contention. And as a man had a spirit that survived the death of the body, it was a foregone conclusion that there would be a resurrection.

That man has within him a spirit that survives the death of the body was believed as far back, at least, as the days of Abraham. "He looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." He desired "a better country, that is, a heavenly." (Heb. 11:10, 16.) Job was sure that he would continue to live apart from his body. Read Job 19:25-27 in the American Standard Version; then consider Isaac Leeser's Translation: "And well I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he will remain as the last after the creatures of the dust (are passed away); and after my skin is cut to pieces will this be: and then freed from my body shall I behold God; whom I shall myself behold to my happiness, and whom my eyes will see, and not as a stranger (when even),

my reins are consumed within my bosom." (Isaac Leeser was a learned Jew.) Paul speaks of "our outward man" and "our inward man" (2 Cor. 4:16); also, of being at home in the body and absent from the Lord, and of being absent from the body and at home with the Lord. (2 Cor. 5:6-8.) Jesus said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John 11:26.)

### **"We Shall All Be Changed" (1 Cor. 15:50-52)**

In the old Jewish economy citizenship was a matter of fleshly relationship—a child inherited citizenship from his parents in the flesh. But now, no matter what may be his fleshly relationships, a man must be born again to enter the kingdom of God; and we shall see that another change must take place before we enter the kingdom above. In verse forty-nine Paul said, "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Even so, but what will that image be like? Can we comprehend what we shall then be? John says, "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." (1 John 3:2.) What Paul is about to say concerning these matters he calls a mystery. A matter is a mystery till it is revealed, and it is still a mystery to the person who does not understand what is revealed. "We all shall not sleep"; that is, some will still be living when the dead are raised. What will happen to the living when the dead are raised? Both those raised and those still living will be changed, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." The dead will be raised incorruptible, and the living shall also be changed.

### **Victory Over Death and the Grave (Verses 53-55)**

The body is corruptible—it is subject to death and decay. The body is mortal now. In a manner that we cannot now comprehend, this corruptible body must put on incorruption—this mortal body must put on immortality. The resurrection body and the changed body of those then living will not be subject to death and decay. These terms—corruptible and incorruption, mortal and immortality—are affirmed of the body, and not of the spirit. However the spirit of man continues to exist through all these changes—a living personality. When this change takes place in the bodies of the saints, the bodies of both those who are raised and those who are at that time living, "then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." The dead will be raised out of the power of death and the living will have a body that death cannot touch. Apparently death and the grave had been victorious, but their victory will be turned into defeat. Then we can shout, "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" for death itself will then be conquered. In this life many enemies confront us, some of which we ourselves by the help of God can conquer; but death, that awful enemy, will be conquered by the Lord when we are raised from the dead.

### **Our Labor Is Not in Vain in the Lord (Verses 56-58)**

Death entered the world through sin. "The sting of death is sin." This sting is universal; it does not mean that the consciousness of sin stings in death. Sin is the sting that caused death. "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin." (Rom. 5:12.) The sin in the garden of Eden is the sting that brought death to all. The resurrection will overcome the results of that sting, so that we may say, "O death, where is thy sting?" "The power of sin is the law." The law holds the guilty under its penalty—the law does not forgive the sinner, but condemns him. Hence, the death penalty would have been permanent, had it not been for the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, "but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." It is through him that victory over death came; his resurrection assures our resurrection. Conquering death and the grave, which holds so many millions in captivity, and liberating their victims, will be a victory so great that we cannot now comprehend it. "The last enemy that shall be abolished is death .... And when all things have been subjected unto him .... that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all." Christ will then have delivered up the kingdom to God the Father.

If Jesus had not been raised from the dead, our faith—our labor—would have been in vain; but he was proved to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead. We can therefore put our trust in him, that everything he has promised will be fulfilled. "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.) "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord." But there must be no wavering, no giving up, no slacking up on our work. "And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." "Glory and honor and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek: for there is no respect of persons with God."

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

Materialists are sometimes called soul sleepers, but they are not. They contend that when a man dies, he becomes then as though he had never been—*non est*. And yet, strange to say, they believe there is to be a resurrection; but how can that which does not exist be raised from the dead? If a person at death becomes as though he had never been—if he ceases to be—then death blots out his character. Why then toil faithfully to develop a character for the next world. If God simply creates people to take the places of those that ceased to be, he can make them just like he wants them to be.

Long after Saul of Tarsus became Paul the apostle, he still stood with the Pharisees on the points that divided the Pharisees from the Sadducees; he still believed the contention of the Pharisees, that

a man had a spirit that survived the death of the body. When he was being persecuted on one occasion, he created a disturbance between the Pharisees and Sadducees by exclaiming, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees." This declaration of Paul's should have much weight in the discussion of materialism.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

What the Old Testament heroes taught and believed about future life.  
 What Jesus personally taught about the future life.  
 Man has a never-dying spirit.  
 The resurrection of Jesus and what it means to us.

### QUESTIONS

Where is the lesson found?  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

Give what Old Testament heroes taught and believed on this point.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
 Discuss the Sadducees.  
 What caused the priests to become so furious against Jesus?  
 State the problem the Sadducees presented to Jesus.

#### I Cor. 15:50-52

Discuss verse 50.  
 Discuss I John 3:2.  
 What is a mystery?  
 What will happen to both the dead and the living at the resurrection?

#### Verses 24, 25

How is it possible for truth to suffer in an argument?  
 What did Jesus say to the Sadducees about their error?  
 In what sense did they not know the power of God?  
 What did Jesus say concerning the resurrection state?

#### Verses 53-55

What does Paul say of the body now and after the change?  
 When this change is made, what saying will come to pass?  
 What then can we say to death?  
 When will death be fully conquered?

#### Verses 26, 27

What was the Sadducees' doctrine concerning the nature of man?  
 How did Jesus show them their error.

#### Verses 56-58

How did death enter the world?  
 What is meant by "the sting of death"?  
 How does victory come?  
 Discuss Phil. 3:20, 21.  
 Discuss verse 58 of our lesson.  
 Discuss the reflections.

### Lesson II—April 12, 1942 THE MISSION OF THE SEVENTY Luke 10:1-7, 17, 21-24

1 Now after these things the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself was about to come.

2 And he said unto them, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.

3 Go your ways; behold, I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no wallet, no shoes; and salute no man on the way. And into whatsoever house ye shall enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

6 And if a son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon him: but if not, it shall turn to you again.

7 And in that same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

17 And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject unto us in thy name.

21 In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father; for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight.

22 All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: aia no one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever .the Son willeth to reveal him.

23 And turning to the disciples, he said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see:

24 For I say unto you, that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 67.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

April 6.	M	Jesus Chooses His Helpers (Mark 3:13-19)
April 7.	T	An Evangelistic Tour (Luke 10:1-16)
April 8.	W	The Need of Laborers (Matt. 9:35-38)
April 9.	T	Two by Two (Mark 6:7-13)
April 10.	F	Working Together (1 Cor. 3:1-9)
April 11.	S	Doing the Work of God (John 4:30-35)
April 12.	S	Commissioned to Serve (Acts 1:6-8; 2:1-4)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 30.

*Place.*—Authorities differ. Robinson, in his *Harmony of the Gospels*, gives Capernaum as the place of the sending the seventy, and Jerusalem as the probable place of their report to Jesus. Pittenger, in his *Interwoven Gospels*, gives Jerusalem as probably the place of sending the seventy and their return. The *Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia* and *Scriptural Dictionary* gives Jerusalem as the place. But if the place had been important to us, it would have been recorded.

*Persons.*—Jesus and seventy of his disciples.

*Lesson Links*—On a former occasion Jesus sent the twelve on a mission to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, with instructions similar to those given to the seventy. The text of our lesson does not include all the instructions Jesus gave the seventy. These additional instructions should be taken into consideration in studying this lesson.

There are some social requirements in these additional instructions, as well as there are some requirements concerning their preaching. "And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you." That is good table manners even today; and all Christians, especially preachers, should profit by that admonition. They were also to be able to work miracles in healing the sick. But their miracles of healing were meant to give force to their preaching, which was their main work. The burden of their preaching was, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." And to the people of any city who would not receive them they were to say, "Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh." John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, preached, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 3:2.) When Jesus began a few months later to preach, he

said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." (Mark 1:15.) When Jesus sent out the twelve apostles on their first mission, he commanded them to announce, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." It has been argued that the kingdom had really come nigh to the Jews in the early ministry, and that the Jews could have had the kingdom by accepting Jesus as the Messiah; but they rejected him soon after the sending out of the twelve on this first mission, and that it was never afterward said that the kingdom had come nigh. Unfortunately those who so argue fail to notice that the events of our lesson, in which it is announced that the kingdom was nigh, occurred near the close of the ministry of Christ. Verse 16: "He that heareth you heareth me: and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me."

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Seventy Preachers Sent (Verse 1)

"The Lord appointed seventy others." This refers to the twelve apostles whom he had formerly sent on a like mission. He sent these "two and two" as he did the twelve. They were going out into a work altogether new to them. Perhaps the requirement to have two or three witnesses in judicial trials had become a sort of fixed principle with Jews in dealing with one another, and two would therefore have more weight than only in what they might say about Jesus and the coming kingdom. And also two would be a source of strength and comfort to each other. He must have named the cities and places they were to visit, else they would not have known "whither he himself was about to come." These men could cover a lot of territory in a short time. However it is possible that each pair was to confine their labors to the first place that received them.

#### The Harvest and the Laborers (Verses 2, 3)

Let us not conclude that because there are many people in a community, the harvest is plenteous in that community. There might be hundreds of acres of wheat, but no harvest, because the wheat was not ready for the reapers. The harvest is plenteous only when there are ripened fields of grain; and so it is in spiritual affairs. The instructions that Jesus gave the seventy show that some places would not have anything to do with them—the harvest was not plenteous in such places. People who fight against the gospel are not ripe for the harvest—there is no harvest among such people. At the time Jesus uttered this language the laborers were indeed few, for he had only a small group of followers. What was true then might not always be true, for there might come a time when there would be many laborers. It is not right, therefore, to quote this verse as applicable at all times and in all places. The fact is, in our limited knowledge we never know beforehand that the harvest is plenteous in any untried field. As we do not know as much about fields as Jesus did, why apply his language to all places? Jesus did not refer to all places in that language. The Lord knows where a field is ripe for harvest; we can therefore pray



the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the ripened fields. Even then do we expect him to call and send them as he did the seventy?

To these seventy laborers whom the Lord was sending into the harvest Jesus said, "Go your ways; behold, I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves." These were not real wolves, but men of ferocious disposition. Such figures of speech are common in the Bible. Some, failing to recognize the frequent use of such figures of speech, have given fanciful interpretations to such passages as Isa. 11:6-9; 35:9.

#### **They Went Empty-Handed (Verse 4)**

In making a journey people usually carry some money and other necessities along with them. These disciples would have done so, had not the Lord demanded that they go empty-handed. They were to carry no money, not even an empty purse, nor a wallet in which to carry some food or other supplies. As they would walk, it is not supposed that a pair of such shoes as they then had would last very long; yet they were not to take with them an extra pair of shoes. In giving similar instructions to the twelve on their first mission, Jesus added, "The laborer is worthy of his food." The people who were benefitted by their miracles and teaching would see to it that their needs were met. This they should have been glad to do, for food and clothing would be but a small return for the healing of their ailments, and the preaching. The announcement they were to make concerning the kingdom would be of more value to the people that believed them than anything they could do for the preachers.

#### **Their Conduct in Homes Outlined (Verses 5-7)**

"Peace be to this house"; that was a prayer, and also a pledge that the visitors were on a peaceful mission; for a man cannot pray earnestly for peace unless he himself is a man of peace. It was also a very impressive form of salutation. "Son of peace" is a man of peace, a peaceful man. If he was a man of peace, the peace for which they prayed would rest upon him. If he was not a man of peace, the peace for which they prayed would return upon themselves; by carrying out the Lord's will they would promote their own peace with the Lord. And while they were in any city or place they were to remain "in that same house." They were not to stay at different places every night. A preacher may destroy the effectiveness of his preaching by lodging in a home of suspicious characters. People have a way, and rightly so, of rating a person by the company he keeps and the homes in which he likes to stay. No church should want its preacher or any elder to put in his time going alone from house to house; some men have got themselves into serious trouble by that sort of indiscriminate visiting alone. They were to eat such things as were set before them. The cooking might not be up to the best standards, but a Christian gentleman will not show by word or deed any displeasure at what willing hands have done for him. They were not paying for the food; why then should they show any displeasure at what was granted them freely? And as if remaining in the same house was very important, Jesus repeats the injunction: "Go not from house to house."

**The Seventy Return and Report (Verse 17)**

When anyone is sent to do a certain work, he should, when he finishes the work assigned him, make as full report as possible to those who sent him. Jesus had sent the seventy to do a certain work; now they return with joy. The thing that seemed to give them the most joy was that demons were subject to them in the name of Christ. But in the reply Jesus made, he gave them a much greater cause for rejoicing: "Nevertheless in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." Could there be any greater cause for rejoicing on the part of anyone than to know that his name was written in the book of life?

**Jesus Thanks the Father (Verse 21)**

Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and stated the grounds for his rejoicing in his thanks to the Father. If God had made no revelation to man, and yet had left matters so that the wise could discover the way of life, the ones who found the way would have been puffed up with pride over their discovery; it would also have given grounds for every fanatic to claim that he and he alone had discovered the way. But the way of life had to be revealed; even so, it is not really revealed to them that think they do not need any revelation, and will therefore pay no attention to the things revealed. Babes in this verse are not infants, but those with a childlike trust. It is revealed to those who realize their need of revelation. So long as a person feels so wise that he thinks he does not need any revelation from God his case is hopeless. "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.)

**Eyes That Are Blessed (Verses 22-24)**

All of God's plans and purposes concerning things on the earth centered in Jesus the Christ—all had been delivered to him. To a limited degree we may know the Son, but only the Father knows him fully. And we may know the Father in a limited degree by the works of nature, if we are thoughtful; but even so our ideas would be very hazy and defective. The Son knows him, and reveals him to whom he wills to do so. This is not a mysterious statement which the Lord makes; neither does it show any partiality. The preceding section shows to whom revelations are made. Nothing is revealed to a person who will not accept what is said, no matter how many Bibles there might be. The Bible is really not a revelation to those who will not read it; or, if they read it, will not believe it. It is a revelation to those who love it and read it, and who earnestly strive to make it their rule of life. A lot of people have eyes, but they will not see; they have ears, but will not hear. To his disciples Jesus said, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see." In Matt. 13:16 Jesus said, "But blessed are your eyes, for they see." Yes, people can shut themselves out from the best things of life by refusing to see and hear. These humble disciples were hearing and seeing things which great men of past ages had desired to see, and saw them not. "For I say unto you, that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not." The time for such revelation had not come when these prophets and kings

lived. And think of the untold millions living then and have since lived, that refused to hear the gospel and refused to see any good in it. A man must have an ear to hear before he can hear, and an eye to see before he can see. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." One of the traits of David that made him a man after God's own heart was the love he had for God's word and God's ways. Something of this trait in David may be seen by reading Psalm 119. Paul gave up everything he had formerly prized for the gospel. "Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." (Phil. 3:8.)

### SOME REFLECTIONS

When the twelve were first sent out, and when the seventy were sent, conditions were very different from what they are now. These men were not going on as long journeys as preachers now frequently make. Hotels, or inns, were not so plentiful then as now. Besides, Jews generally felt obligated to take care of a fellow Jew. However a preacher even now, if he does not burden himself and the brethren where he goes with a lot of excess baggage, will make a better impression.

Customs have changed, but human nature is now as it was then. A preacher is human—at least, he should be. He has his likes and dislikes, but he should not allow these propensities to make himself disagreeable in homes that furnish him food and lodging. He should be content with such food as the family is used to having. A reporter of meetings sometimes tells where he made his home during a meeting, and adds, "They certainly know how to treat a preacher"—as if a preacher were some rare bird that needs special food and treatment.

You cannot tell a man anything who thinks he is wiser than you are. No matter how much such a person needs information, you can tell him nothing. Jesus revealed nothing to those wise Pharisees—they would not hear. Few are more ignorant than the self-esteeming wise.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Social conditions among the Jews at the time of Christ's personal ministry.  
The preacher's conduct in the pulpit and out.  
Why Jesus spoke in parables (Matt. 13:13-15).  
Matt. 13:16, 17; Luke 10:21, 22.

### QUESTIONS

Where is the lesson found?  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, place, and persons.  
Discuss the instructions given the seventy which are not in our text.  
Repeat verse 16.

#### Verse 1

What advantage was there in sending the seventy by twos?

#### Verses 2, 3

Why cannot verse 2 be applied to all places at all times?  
Does a great number of people always make a plenteous harvest and why or why not?  
Why should we hesitate to apply that passage to any given field?  
How do we expect for the Lord to answer our prayers for more laborers?  
Discuss verse 3.

#### Verse 4

Discuss verse 4.

**Verses 5-7**

Discuss the requirements in each of these verses.

**Verse 17**

Why would the disciples report back to Jesus?  
 What did they report to Jesus?  
 What reply did Jesus make?

**Verse 21**

Repeat the thanks Jesus gave.  
 In what way are these things hidden from the

wise?

When is a thing really revealed to anyone?

**Verses 22-24**

What did Jesus say concerning all things?  
 To whom does the Son reveal the Father?  
 To whom is the Bible really a revelation?  
 What did Jesus say about many prophets and kings?  
 Name one commendable trait of David.  
 Discuss the reflections.

Lesson III—April 19, 1942

**GROWING TENSION WITH FALSE LEADERS**

Luke 11:37-48, 52-54

37 Now as he spake, a Pharisee asketh him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.

38 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first bathed himself before dinner.

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now ye the Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter; but your inward part is full of extortion and wickedness.

40 Ye foolish ones, did not he that made the outside make the inside also? 41 But give for alms those things which are within; and behold, all things are clean unto you.

42 But woe unto you Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and every herb, and pass over justice and the love of God: but these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

43 Woe unto you Pharisees! for ye love the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces.

44 Woe unto you! for ye are as the tombs which appear not, and the men that walk over them know it not.

45 And one of the lawyers answering saith unto him, Teacher, in saying this thou reproachest us also.

46 And he said, Woe unto you lawyers also! for ye load men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

47 Woe unto you! for ye build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

48 So ye are witnesses and consent unto the works of your fathers: for they killed them, and ye build their tombs.

52 Woe unto you lawyers! for ye took away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

53 And when he was come out from thence, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press upon him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things;

54 Laying wait for him, to catch something out of his mouth.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."  
 (Luke 11:23.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 26:1-7.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

April 13. M

April 14. T

April 15. W

April 16. T

April 17. F

April 18. S

April 19. S

Woes Upon the Pharisees (Luke 11:37-44)

The Growing Opposition (Luke 11:45-54)

Jesus Faces Criticism (Mark 2:23-28)

False Leaders Condemned (3 John)

The Courage to Oppose Wrong (Matt. 21:12-17)

Walking in Integrity (Psalm 26:1-7)

Christ's Last Warning (Matt. 23:23-36)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 30.

*Place.*—Some place in Judaea, probably Jerusalem.

*Persons.*—Jesus, the Pharisees, scribes, and lawyers. A lawyer in any country is one versed in the laws of that country. Among the Jews a lawyer was an expert in the law of Moses and the tradition of the elders. Scribes gained that name from their work of making copies of the law. They would become experts in the law, though they might not be expert in the tradition of the elders. They made no copies of the tradition of the elders; these traditions were not reduced to writing till many years after Christ lived on earth. However the terms lawyer and scribe are sometimes applied to the same person. They were of the sect of the Pharisees.

*Lesson Links*—From the record it seems that the first criticism the leaders of the Jews made of Jesus was, that he ate with sinners and publicans; but as time went on and Jesus became more and more prominent before the people, they became more severe in criticizing and denouncing him. It is interesting to read the records and notice the various grounds on which they criticized him, and the number of times they tried to entrap him in his talk. After they began to notice him, they never let up on their opposition to him. Perhaps they were not conscious of all the things that so enraged them. (1) He had not been educated in their great schools at Jerusalem, and therefore had not been authorized to teach by those who gave such authorization. (2) He attracted many more hearers than all of them combined could attract, and that filled them with envy. (3) He had no regard for their traditions which they held to be even more sacred than the written law of Moses. (4) He criticized them severely, and that infuriated them. They wanted no reformer to come along and accuse them of being great sinners, when they felt themselves so superior to him. At the time of our lesson they had about reached the point where they were ready to resort to any means to rid their country of him.

On the occasion of our lesson, when Jesus cast out a demon, "some of them said, By Beelzebub the prince of the demons casteth he out demons." Jesus showed them the folly of such a charge, for it was equal to saying that Satan was making war against himself. In the course of his reply Jesus informed them that he had overcome the devil, had taken from him his armor, and divided his spoils. Matthew reports Jesus as asking, "How can one enter into the house of the strong man, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man?" (Matt. 12:29.) It is easy to draw a conclusion from that, for Jesus was actually spoiling Satan's goods.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Jesus Dined and Criticized by a Pharisee (Verses 37, 38)**

When we take into consideration the growing hostility of the Pharisees toward Jesus, and their schemes to get him to incriminate himself in his talk, we can feel sure that this Pharisee did not ask Jesus to dine with him as an act of true hospitality, nor as a gesture of good will. Jesus, utterly disregarding the tradition of the elders, sat down to dinner without first having bathed himself.

"When the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first bathed himself before dinner." "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders; and when they come from the marketplace, except they bathe themselves, they eat not." (Mark 7:3, 4.) If they had been out in a crowd they feared that they might have touched some unclean person, and thereby become defiled. Jesus had just come in from the throngs of people; hence, the astonishment of this Pharisee that he did not bathe before he ate. From the reply Jesus made, this Pharisee must have been rather severe in his criticism of Jesus. The average Pharisee was so righteous in his own estimation that he was very harsh toward those who did not measure up to his traditional standards.

### **A General Statement of Pharisee Faults (Verses 39-41)**

The Pharisee depended much on forms and ceremonies, especially those things which the law of Moses said nothing about. They were very prompt and exacting in keeping their body clean, but entertained all sorts of evil thoughts and purposes in their hearts. It is well to keep the body clean, but to bathe as a religious ceremony when no bath is needed, is to put more attention on the body than on the heart. For such practices Jesus said to them, "Ye foolish ones." They were not foolish in the sense that they had no intelligence, but in the sense that men are foolish when they lead sinful lives. They were foolish because they kept the outside clean, but inside they were full of extortion and wickedness. He that made the outside made the inside also; the outside perishes, but the inside endures forever. They would keep up a fair outward appearance that they might the more successfully extort from the less suspecting. Some people will never learn that the outward appearance is not a true index to what is in the heart. When the devil comes they expect him to look like he is so often pictured, not believing what Paul said, that he is able to transform himself into an angel of light. Jesus admonished these hardhearted self-righteous Pharisees to give alms of the things that are within. The best and most valuable thing any person has is a good heart, a good inner man. A good heart means a good understanding, good motives, and good purposes. Many people need teaching and encouragement, and a man with a good heart is able to give that the best alms any man can give. And if he has a good heart, he will give what material assistance he can. It all comes from within.

### **"Woe Unto You Pharisees" (Verses 42-44)**

The Pharisees had been drawing pictures of themselves, and found themselves very satisfactory to themselves. And when that Pharisee stood up in the temple to pray, he exhibited to the Lord a picture of himself drawn by himself. That beautiful picture must have made the publican feel more sinful, but it did not fool the Lord. These Pharisees had exhibited pictures of their own drawing before the people, till the people rated them as full of righteousness; but Jesus saw beneath the outer surface, and found them full of all sorts of corruption. They were faithful in tithing the small things—garden truck, but passed over justice and the love of God.

It was right for them to pay the tithes, but why pay tithes while neglecting the weightier matters? So far as gaining any favor with the Lord was concerned, they were merely throwing away their tithes so long as they neither dealt justly nor loved God. Some people do such little service, and what they do render is done in such a heartless way, that what little they do is a distinct loss to them. And the Pharisees loved prominence, and they let no opportunity pass to keep themselves prominently before the people. They had an inordinate desire to be looked up to, and to be saluted in public places. And that unholy desire sometimes gets into members of the church. Diotrephes loved to have the pre-eminence, and became so puffed up with a feeling of importance that he would not even recognize the apostle John. But how could such prominence-seekers be like tombs that have been so leveled off that no one knows that he is walking over the putrid matter that was beneath his feet? They were so skilled in hiding the corruption of their hearts that no one suspected what was there. Too many people are fooled by outside appearance.

### **A Lawyer Objects (Verse 45)**

"Thou reproachest us also," said a lawyer. Jesus had not singled out the lawyers in what he had said, but this lawyer saw that the language of Jesus described the lawyers also. If Jesus had not directly addressed his remarks to the Pharisees, these lawyers would have thought that he was talking about them; as it was, they recognized that his description of the Pharisees fitted them also. Certain types of humanity are found in all parts of the world. Frequently when a preacher shows the faults of a certain type, having no one especially in mind, someone in the audience comes around after dismissal, and says, "Who has been telling you about me?" Usually it does no good to say, "No one"; for such a one does not realize that he or she is only one specimen of a type.

### **"Woe Unto You Lawyers" (Verses 46-48, 52)**

It was tragical, that the best informed men, as well as those claiming to be the most righteous, were so wrong in heart and practice. The tradition of the elders was very exacting; the lawyers would be experts in this field. The tradition of the elders had not been committed to writing at that time, but was handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. These lawyers would busy themselves to see that the common people observed all things required in the tradition of the elders; they would not make the burdens lighter, nor help the people bear them. By such tyranny they supposed that they were showing their superiority; such is the folly of all tyrants. And though these lawyers builded tombs for the prophets their fathers killed, they acknowledged themselves to be the sons of the murderers of the prophets; and their efforts to destroy Jesus, another of God's prophets, showed that they were no better than their fathers; in fact, by their conduct they were endorsing what their fathers did.

"Ye took away the key of knowledge." Compare verse 52 with Matt. 23:13. By their traditions and their materialistic interpretation of the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament, these leaders

would keep themselves and others from entering the kingdom. They had taken away the key of knowledge by their materialist conception of the kingdom, and some are even now in a like condition. With their ideas of the kingdom, they had no key to the correct knowledge of the kingdom. The Jews were not contented with acquainting themselves with the promises and prophecies of their scriptures, but they figured out a scheme of things, a regular program that they felt sure the Lord would follow. They thought they knew exactly what the Messiah would do and what his kingdom would be. For that reason the leaders could not understand that the promises and prophecies were being fulfilled right before their eyes. When the Lord did not follow their program, they rejected him. Their own planning had taken from them the key to the right understanding of God's plans.

### **They Try to Trap Jesus in His Talks (Verses 53, 54)**

Even before the events of this lesson, many leaders of the Jews had wanted to put Jesus to death; but the fame of Jesus had become so great that they feared the people. When they tried to humiliate him before the people by argument, he gained more favor with the people by putting to rout his antagonists. But it seems that they now hoped to do one of two things; either to get him to say something that would turn the people against him, or to say something that they could use as a basis for a charge of treason against the Roman government. They, of course, would be satisfied with either result. And the speech that he had just made, made them even more furious, so that they "began to press upon him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things; laying wait for him, to catch something out of his mouth." For the moment they were too angry and excited to think up anything that Luke considered worth reporting. Being noisy, as a bunch of Jews are when they are excited or angry, they likely all tried to talk at once. On some other occasions they were very deliberate in planning what they would do and say, but not now—they took no time to plan anything.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

A man in a private home and in personal conversation is likely not to be guarded in his speech as in public. Perhaps that is the reason the Pharisee asked Jesus to dine with him, for the Pharisees were continually trying to trap Jesus into making some damaging statement. If that was the motive of the Pharisee, he had reached a very base degree of hypocrisy.

Fanaticism in religion and self-righteousness develop strange traits in people. They reach the point where they will commit all sorts of persecution to maintain what they think is right principles—do what they know is wrong to maintain or forward what they think is right. Even today people of one religious body will knowingly misrepresent the teaching and practice of another religious body. They seem to think it is right to do so.

The Pharisees claimed that their traditions, sometimes called the tradition of the elders, were a set of teachings that Moses delivered orally, which had been delivered to succeeding generations by word



of mouth. If that claim had been true, Jesus would have respected such teaching. Some of the traditions likely had been set up by judicial decisions, and some had come from custom. Even today some people are more wedded to tradition, custom, or superstition than they are to the word of God.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

What a fanatical party spirit in religion does for people.

Discuss some of the complaints the leaders made against Jesus.

How some people show more respect for custom and superstition than they do for the word of God.

### QUESTIONS

Where is the lesson found?  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, place, and persons.  
Name some of the things about which the Pharisees criticized Jesus.  
Give what seems to you to be the grounds of their bitterness toward him.  
Give some of the incidents in the chapter from which our lesson is taken.

#### Verses 37, 38

Why would a Pharisee ask Jesus to dine with him?  
What fault did this Pharisee find with what Jesus did?  
Did Jesus violate the law?

#### Verses 39-41

What rebuke did Jesus give the Pharisees?  
What was the real trouble with the Pharisees?  
Why do people think the devil appears in some hideous form?  
How give alms from within?

#### Verses 42-44

Discuss these verses.

#### Verse 45

Why did the lawyer object to what Jesus said?

#### Verses 46-48, 52

Discuss one at a time these verses.

#### Verses 53, 54

Discuss what occurred immediately after Jesus made his speech.  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson IV—April 26, 1942

### WAYSIDE CONVERSATIONS

Luke 13:22-35

22 And he went on his way through cities and villages, teaching, and journeying on unto Jerusalem.

23 And one said unto him, Lord, are they few that are saved? And he said unto them,

24 Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us; and he shall answer and say to you, I know you not whence ye are;

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou didst teach in our streets;

27 And he shall say, I tell you, I know not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

28 There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and yourselves cast forth without.

29 And they shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 And behold, there are last who shall be first, and there are first who shall be last.

31 In that very hour there came certain Pharisees, saying to him, Get thee out, and go hence: for Herod would fain kill thee.

32 And he said unto them, Go and say to that fox, Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected.

33 Nevertheless I must go on my way to-day and to-morrow and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings, and ye would not!

35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:27.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 63:1-7.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

April 20.	M	The Last Journey to Jerusalem (Mark 10:32-34)
April 21.	T	Lessons by the Way (Luke 13:18-30)
April 22.	W	Mourning Over Jerusalem (Luke 13:31-35)
April 23.	T	Friends with Christ (John 15:1-15)
April 24.	F	The Test of Discipleship (Luke 14:25-33)
April 25.	S	The Cost of Discipleship (Matt. 10:34-39)
April 26.	S	Failing to Stand the Test (Mark 10:17-22)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—A.D. 30 or 31.

*Place.*—Perea, the exact location not given.

*Persons.*—Jesus, the disciples, and certain Pharisees.

*Lesson Links*—Before this last journey of Jesus to Jerusalem, it does not appear that he had spoken in clear terms of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation. The connection in which the following language was used shows that Jesus meant that the signs of the times pointed to some coming change in conditions: "Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times." (Matt. 16:3.) There are threatened calamities to the Jews in the first verses of the chapter from which our lesson is taken. However the statement, "Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish," has so often been quoted as applying to the alien sinner and the final doom of the wicked, that the plain application of the passage has been greatly obscured. Jesus was not talking to alien sinners, but to Jews, who were already in covenant relationship with God, and who therefore were not aliens; neither was he talking about punishment in the next world. "Now there were some present at that very season who told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered and said unto them, Think ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they have suffered these things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish." Notice the force of the phrase, "In like manner." These Galileans had died by the sword; these Jews would perish "in like manner," except they repented. "Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, think ye that they were offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "Likewise"—in a like manner. Jesus did not say, "Except ye repent,

ye shall perish," but "in like manner"—"likewise" perish. These plain statements were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem and the nation of the Jews, as anyone can easily see by reading Josephus' account of the terrors of that awful judgment that befell the Jews. And to illustrate why such calamity would befall the Jews, Jesus spoke the parable of the barren fig tree. The owner of the vineyard ordered a fig tree cut down, because it bore no fruit. The keeper of the vineyard asked that the tree be spared till he had done all he could to cause it to produce fruit; "and if it bear fruit thenceforth, well; but if not, thou shalt cut it down." About forty years of cultivation under the gospel produced no good fruit; the tree was then cut down by the Romans. The Jews did not repent, and they perished, as the Lord had said they would.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON**

#### **On the Way to Jerusalem (Verse 22)**

Jesus and his disciples were traveling down through Perea. The Feast of the Passover was drawing near; many Galileans would be thronging this highway on their way to Jerusalem, for the Galileans did not follow the most direct route through Samaria to Jerusalem. Following this route down the east side of the Jordan would give Jesus an opportunity to teach many people as he journeyed along to Jerusalem. "And he went on his way through cities and villages, teaching, and journeying on unto Jerusalem." He had spent at least one Sabbath along the way. While he was teaching in a synagogue on that Sabbath, he discovered "a woman that had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years; and she was bowed together, and could in no wise lift herself up." Jesus healed her. The law of Moses did not prohibit practicing the art of healing on the Sabbath; the tradition of the elders did. The ruler of the synagogue, fuller of devotion to tradition of the elders than of mercy for human sufferings, said to the people, "There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the day of the sabbath." Jesus was not soft in his rebuke: "Ye hypocrites, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, to have been loosed from this bond on the day of the sabbath?" His adversaries were put to silence, but the multitudes rejoiced.

#### **"Are They Few That Are Saved?" (Verses 23, 24)**

People frequently ask questions the answer to which could not be of the least benefit to them. "Lord, are they few that are saved?" If this querist had been interested in his own fate, he would have asked about his own salvation. Whether few or many were saved had nothing to do with his own salvation. Jesus did not give a direct answer to his question without first telling him what to do. "Strive to enter in by the narrow door." Strive is a strong word; and the Greek word is, if any difference, stronger than the English. To strive is to put forth all our energies and resources. Seek is not so strong a word as strive. Many "shall seek to enter in, and

shall not be able." Yet Jesus says in Matt. 7:7, "Seek, and ye shall find." If we seek according to God's directions, we shall find; but many seek to enter in by their own ways, or by the ways laid down by man; these are they who fail to enter. "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.) People who undertake to follow their own ways, or the ways of man, wander off blindly into darkness, despair, and death. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes; but he that is wise hearkeneth unto counsel." (Prov. 12:15.) And only those who hearken to the counsel of God are safe. Does this seem narrow? If so, remember that Jesus said, "Strive to enter in by the narrow door." "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby." (Matt. 7:13.)

### **Entrance Refused to Some (Verses 25-27)**

There will come a time when even this narrow door will be shut; all opportunities are then gone. People who follow their own ways in this world are not serving God, even though many such think they are doing valuable service. So sure are some people of their right to heaven that they will attempt to argue the question with the judge of all the earth. They forge the Lord's name to their own doctrines and requirements, and then claim that they are operating by his name; they will so contend at the last day: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:22, 23.) And so it is plain that people can follow man's ways, and be so deceived as to feel sure that they are doing great things in the service; yet in the eyes of the great judge they are workers of iniquity. God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor are our ways God's way.

### **The Anguish of the Lost (Verses 28-30)**

"The weeping and the gnashing of teeth"—these terms are expressive of great anguish and suffering. The kingdom of God here referred to appears to be the eternal kingdom—the kingdom in heaven. We cannot see how Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets can now be in the kingdom, or the church. Besides, there were no weeping and gnashing of teeth on the part of these rebellious Jews for being out of the church. But when all accounts are in, and the last opportunity past, it will be an awful thing for a man to realize that he is cast out for all eternity. The last opportunity gone, and—lost, lost! And yet to these Jews had been given the first opportunity to enter by that narrow door.

Verse 30 is a proverbial expression, the force of which it is somewhat difficult to comprehend. But it is a fact that the blessings of the gospel were first offered to the Jews; they had also been first as God's chosen people. To be last is another way of expressing what is said of them in verse 26; for it cannot be that Jesus was outlining two different futures for the same people.

**Certain Pharisees Warn Jesus (Verses 31, 32)**

Herod had killed John the Baptist much against his own feelings; that murder weighed heavily upon him, so much so, that when he heard of the mighty works of Jesus he said, "John, whom I beheaded, he is risen." (Mark 6:16.) This gives us an insight into the feelings of Herod. The Pharisees were enemies of Jesus, and would like to get rid of him. Jesus was now in Herod's territory, and that worried Herod. It seems therefore certain that Herod sent these Pharisees to act as if they were merely giving Jesus a friendly warning to leave the country. In this very thing we see both the cowardice and the cunning of Herod. Now a fox is both cunning and cowardly. Jesus therefore used an appropriate term, and also let them know that he understood matters thoroughly, when he said to them, "Go and say to that fox." Also in what he said he gave both them and Herod to understand that he had his own course mapped out, and that their scheme to intimidate him would not change his course in the least. He would go on performing his works of mercy, till he ended his course. For "am perfected," the marginal reading has, "Or, end my course." Everything would go through according to the divine plan, and no cunning scheming on the part of the Pharisees and Herod would cause the least variation. It was their unbelief in him that made them think they could change his plans, and it is unbelief in him now that causes people to think that he did fail in his plans, and therefore changed them, and put off the execution of them to some indefinite future. And yet many misguided professed Christians today think Jesus did fail in his plans, and deferred their execution till his second coming.

**Jesus Laments Jerusalem (Verses 33-35)**

Jerusalem was the center of all things Jewish. With the Jews there was no distinction between the religious, social, and political affairs—they all merged into one system; and the Sanhedrin was the head of it all. Their function was to enforce the law of Moses, but they had built up a system of traditions to which they were so wedded that they made void the law by their traditions. This made them antagonistic to every true prophet of God, for a true prophet of God had no regard for their traditions. Any man who disregarded their traditions fell under their condemnation. "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." Hence their religion was a perverted and corrupted religion; and that sort of religion is always bitterly opposed to the right. A corrupted religion is a persecuting religion.

Jesus saw Jerusalem as it was—full of corruption, bigotry, and fanaticism; and he saw its coming doom. The suffering stored up for its people' filled him with sorrow. In the light of what happened to that once glorious city, the lamentation of Jesus over its coming doom touches one's heart. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings, and ye would not!" He had given them every opportunity to be saved, but they would not be saved. They were responsible for whatever fate befell them. No matter how rich the provisions may be that God makes for the uplifting and the saving of any person or people, the final decision must be made by those whom God would save. If they will not be saved,

then God does not save. "Ye would not"—"ye will not," and so they perish. "Your house is left unto you." The word desolate was supplied by the translators to give what they conceived to be the sense of the passage, but it does not really help. It had been the Lord's house; they had so perverted its services and worship that it was no longer his—it was theirs, and he was leaving it to them. "Ye shall not see me, until." This does not mean that they would see him with their natural eyes as we see objects about us. On another occasion Jesus said to the wicked high priest, "Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matt. 26:64.) Jesus was simply picturing things as they would be.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

"Strive to enter in by the narrow door." Truth is narrow, no matter where it is found. Two times two is four, whether you like it or not; and a man does not show broad-mindedness by saying that it could be some other way. It is hazardous to try to be broader-minded than the truth. A really broad-minded person accepts all truth; to accept only such truth as pleases us is to be narrow-minded, no matter how much we might boast about being of a broad mind.

The way is open now for all to be saved. The door does not stand ajar—it stands wide open to all who will come by the narrow door. But there will come a time when the door will be shut, and no more admittance allowed. The foolish virgins found the door shut against them. When once the door is shut, we may plead, "Lord, open to us"; but it will be too late, and the Lord will say, "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life."

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Who will be saved?

Why some seek to enter, and fail.

The things Jesus said about the fall of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation.

### QUESTIONS

Where is the lesson found?

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

name?

What will the Lord say to such people?

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, place, and persons.

What had Jesus said to show that some change would

come to the Jews?

Discuss Luke 13:1-5.

#### Verse 22

Discuss verse 22.

#### Verses 23, 24

What question did one ask Jesus?

What reply did Jesus make?

Discuss the force of the word "strive."

Why do some seek to enter in, and fail?

Discuss Jer. 10:23 and Prov. 12:15.

#### Verses 25-27

What god does a man serve when he follows his own ways?

How do religious people often forge the Lord's

#### Verses 28-30

What does weeping and gnashing of teeth indicate?

Why this weeping and gnashing of teeth?

What kingdom is here referred to?

Discuss verse 30.

#### Verses 31, 32

Discuss the cunning and the cowardice of Herod.

What reply did Jesus give the Pharisees?

How did these people show their lack of faith in Jesus.

#### Verses 33-35

Why were the leaders of the Jews so antagonistic to God's prophets?

Discuss verse 33.

Discuss the lament Jesus made for Jerusalem.

What shows their responsibility?

Discuss verse 35.

Discuss the reflections.

Lesson V—May 3, 1942  
**SUNDAY: THE DAY OF ACCLAIM**  
 Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:41-44

1 And when they draw nigh unto Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth two of his disciples,

2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village that is over against you: and straightway as ye enter into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon no man ever yet sat; loose him, and bring him.

3 And if any one say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye, The Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him back hither.

4 And they went away, and found a colt tied at the door without in the open street; and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had said: and they let them go.

7 And they bring the colt unto Jesus, and cast on him their garments; and he sat upon him.

8 And many spread their garments upon the way; and others branches, which they had cut from the fields.

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:

10 Blessed is the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom Of our father David: Hosanna in the highest.

11 And he entered into Jerusalem, into the temple; and when he had looked round about upon all things, it being now eventide, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

41 And when he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it,

42 Saying, If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a bank about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

44 And shall dash thee to the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Mark 11:9.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Isa. 40:1-11.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

April 27.	M	
April 28.	T	The Triumphal Entry (Mark 11:1-11)
April 29.	W	Thy Kingdom Cometh (Zech. 9:9, 10)
April 30.	T	The Festal Throng (John 12:12-19)
May 1.	F	The King and His Kingdom (John 18:33-37)
May 2.	S	The King Weeps Over Earthly Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44)
May 3.	S	The New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:1-5, 22-27)
		The King of Kings (Psalm 2:1-12)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 31.

*Places.*—Bethany, Bethphage, the Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem. Bethphage was a village near Bethany; and Bethany was a village on the southeast of the Mount of Olives, beside the Jericho road, nearly two miles from Jerusalem. Here lived Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, in whose home Jesus often was a guest. The Mount of Olives is the range of hills to the east of Jerusalem, and separated from Jerusalem by the brook, or valley, of Kidron.

*Persons.*—Jesus, the twelve apostles, and the multitudes.

*Lesson Links*—The conversations which we studied in our last lesson occurred in Perea. At that time Jesus was on his last journey

to Jerusalem; the conclusion of that journey is told in the text of our present lesson.

The Feast of the Passover was at hand; immense crowds attended these feasts. It was necessary for the Jew to take along some money with which to buy his sacrifices and to make his freewill offerings. The rich made large freewill offerings, as we learn from Mark 12:41-44. The hills and caves were infested with robbers, and at such times these robbers would be able to reap a rich harvest, if people had traveled alone or in small groups. It would therefore seem certain that friends and neighbors in distant villages and cities would start out together; these would be joined by others along the way. This would give protection against the robbers along the way. By the time Jesus and the crowd accompanying him had reached Jericho, it had become a great multitude, so much so that Zacchaeus, being small of stature, could not see Jesus because of the intervening throngs.

Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem to attend his last Passover Feast. The enmity of the leaders toward Jesus had become so intense that they were determined to kill him as soon as possible. "Now the passover of the Jews was at hand: and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the passover, to purify themselves. They sought therefore for Jesus, and spake one with another, as they stood in the temple, What think ye? That he will not come to the feast?" These people knew that Jesus was accustomed to attend the feasts. Thinking that he too might have come early to Jerusalem, they sought for him; and yet knowing of the decree made by the authorities in Jerusalem, they thought it possible that he would not come to this feast on account of that decree. "Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given commandment, that, if any man knew where he was, he should show it, that they might take him." For an account of this despicable scheme and decree read John 11:47-57. Had the people known Jesus, they would have known that no scheming and plotting of the Jews would keep him from obeying the law of God.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Jesus Again in Bethany (Verse 1)

The student should realize that in the narratives of the life of Christ we have but a brief report of what occurred. Sometimes one writer mentions things not recorded by the other. It is true concerning this arrival of Jesus at Bethany. In John 12:1-11 we have some interesting incidents not mentioned by the other writers. At Bethany Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead; and this miracle caused so many of the people to believe on Jesus, that the leaders held a council and decided definitely to put Jesus to death. "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." Now he is back at Bethany in the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. "The common people therefore of the Jews learned that he was there: and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. But the chief priests took counsel that they might put Lazarus also to death; because that



by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus." It seems that Jesus spent the Sabbath day in Bethany. On that day the feast mentioned in John 12:2-8 must have been given.

### **Jesus Prepares to Enter Jerusalem (Verses 1-7)**

Neither of the writers gives us the names of the two disciples here mentioned. It will be noticed that he gave the two disciples orders, as one having authority. "He sendeth two of his disciples." The village into which Jesus was sending the two disciples was most likely Bethphage. "And straightway as ye enter into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon no man ever yet sat." Here Jesus manifests his power to know things which were beyond the vision of the natural eye. His directions were exact—they would find the colt tied inside the village, at the very entrance. The disciples were so slow to comprehend his powers, that one wonders if they discussed, as they went along, how he could know what he was talking about, or whether he did really know. The owner of the colt must have been a disciple, at least, a friend, of Jesus; for they were to say to any who inquired as to what they were doing, "The Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him back hither." This was to let the owner know that the Lord did not want the colt permanently; he would return him to the owner as soon as he was through with him. And that is a good plan for all borrowers to follow. Some people, even members of the church, are not very prompt in returning things or money they borrow.

It must have strengthened the faith of the two disciples when they found everything to be as Jesus had said. They found the colt as Jesus had said they would; and, as Jesus had foreseen, "Certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?" From Luke we learn that it was the owners of the colt, who asked this question. When the owners learned that the Lord had need of the colt, and would soon return him, "they let them go." To give promptly what the Master asks, whether it be money, time, ability, or whatever we have, is the proper spirit of Christian service. "And they bring the colt unto Jesus, and cast on him their garments; and he sat upon him." Jesus was now ready for the great demonstration, ready for what is usually called the triumphal entry.

Before the time of this lesson Jesus had held his friends and followers in check. When they would have made him king, he sought refuge in more quiet places. When the apostles confessed him as the Christ, he charged them to tell no man who he was. He did not allow Peter, James, and John to tell about the transfiguration. He avoided public demonstrations as much as possible, for he knew the danger of mobs. Besides, he did not want to stir up his enemies more than was necessary; it would be a hindrance to his work. But now his work on earth is about finished, and he is not only to allow a great demonstration, but seems to be deliberately planning one. He will demonstrate to all Jerusalem and to all Jews from every quarter, that he is not sneaking into Jerusalem as they expected, that he is not organizing or equipping an army for war, that he does not come on a horse, the symbol of war and kingly pride, but on an ass, the symbol of peace, work, and toil. After that, the people, including his enemies, may do what they will.

**The Great Demonstration (Verses 8-11)**

It was now the first day of the week in which the passover was eaten. Crowds were already gathering in Jerusalem. People, knowing of the decree made by the council to kill Jesus, were discussing as to whether he would come to the feast. If anyone should know where Jesus was, he was commanded by the council to tell the council. Well, he himself would show them where he was, in a way that no one would fail to know. They could then form their own plans. When all was ready, he started on this march to Jerusalem. He must have gone the short way over the Mount of Olives, instead of circling around the base of the mount; for Luke tells us that the shouting and praising God began "at the descent of the mount of Olives." Here they were in full view of the city. "And many spread their garments upon the way; and others branches, which they had cut from the fields." This they were doing in honor of him as their king. From John 12:12, 13 we learn that the crowds in Jerusalem, hearing and seeing the demonstration, came in throngs to meet them, and to join in the procession. They waved palm leaves, and cried, "Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed is the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David: Hosanna in the highest." They were expecting the immediate inauguration of a kingdom like the kingdom of David, which would spread over all the earth, and bring universal peace. Concerning this day's demonstrations John adds this significant explanation: "These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him."

It seems that Jesus, after he entered the city, went directly to the temple, where were congregated those who had decreed his death, and who had commanded that anyone who knew where he was should tell it, that they might take him; but they were completely nonplused by that great demonstration. They did not know what to do. "The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Behold how ye prevail nothing; lo, the world is gone after him." (John 12:19.)

**Jesus Weeps Over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44)**

We can well imagine that when Jesus reached the point where the city lay in full view before him, he paused to reflect over its past glory, its then present moral and religious degradation, and its future destruction—"and wept over it." And what a picture—the Son of God in the midst of such demonstrations weeping over the beloved city! That city had not known the things that belong to peace, so blind were its leaders. But even so, they would have a few more years in which either to grow better or to reach deeper depths of degradation. To see the deep degradation into which the upper classes of the Jews had fallen, read what Jesus said to them in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew. With such leaders and teachers the mass of the people would eventually be brought to such a state of corruption that the nation would be no longer fit to exist. In the providence of God the destructive forces of Rome would be held off till the nation reached that stage of corruption. Sometimes events try the Christian's faith; yet so long as he believes in God, he cannot think that any nation will be completely destroyed from the face of the earth so long as God desires that it continue.

Instead of being so antagonistic to Rome, these leaders should have known from the past history of the Hebrew race, that their condition was due to their own sins. And had not God promised to prosper them and to make them triumph over their enemies so long as they were faithful to him? And had he not also threatened them with disaster when they sinned against him? Had they believed in God, as they should have done, they would have blamed themselves for their downtrodden condition; but they failed to believe, as men do today, "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." (Dan. 4:25.) These leaders knew this scripture, and they knew the threats and promises God had made concerning them, and they knew how these things had worked out in their past history; but it does not seem that they believed their own scriptures. Because they did not believe the scriptures, they did not believe they had brought their present distress upon themselves. And we should also know that whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning.

The calamities which Jesus mentions briefly in our lesson he gave more in detail two days later, as recorded in Matt. 24. Though Jerusalem was a walled city, their enemies would overcome that barrier by casting up a bank around the wall. They would lay siege to the city, completely surrounding the city, so that no one could escape. When the time did come for these things to happen, a million Jews perished by starvation, the sword, and pestilence. Concerning the time of these awful calamities here foretold, Jesus said, "Then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be." The student should, if possible, read the account Josephus gave of the destruction of Jerusalem—read it in connection with the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

The entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem amid the enthusiastic shouts of praise from the throngs accompanying him is most often referred to as the triumphal entry; but when we try to figure out wherein it was a triumph for him, we find ourselves at a loss. Triumph over what?. It was a great display of enthusiasm on the part of the people; but the real triumph of Jesus was his death and resurrection.

When people become filled with a party spirit based on a false theory in religion, they become devoid of all sound reason and all sense of justice. The Pharisees had become so wise in their own conceit, and so righteous in their own eyes, that they could tolerate nothing that did not go out from them. Because Jesus did not get his authority to teach from them, they did not think he had any right to teach; and because he did not meet their plans and specifications for the Messiah, they rejected him, even though they knew he performed many miracles.

### **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

What were the main defects in the Pharisees?

Why were they so determined to put Jesus to death?

What Jesus said about the coming destruction of Jerusalem.

**QUESTIONS**

Where is the lesson found?  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

What had the chief priests decided about Lazarus, and why?

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.  
Tell something about Bethphage and Bethany.  
Why was it wise for crowds to go together to these feasts of the Jews?  
Why did some go early to the feast?  
Why did they think Jesus might not attend this Passover?  
Discuss the scheme and decree of the council.

**Verses 1-7**

Tell all about the preparations Jesus made to enter Jerusalem.  
What did Jesus now allow that he had formerly forbidden?

**Verses 8-11**

Describe his journey into Jerusalem.

**Luke 19:41-44**

Discuss as fully as possible these verses.  
Discuss the reflections.

**Verse 1**

What had Jesus done on his last visit to Bethany?  
Why did he go out of the land of the Jews?

Lesson VI—May 10, 1942  
**MONDAY, THE DAY OF AUTHORITY**  
Matt. 21:12-22

12 And Jesus entered into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold the doves;

13 And he saith unto them, It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer: but ye make it a den of robbers.

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.

15 But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children that were crying in the temple and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were moved with indignation,

16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these are saying? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea: did ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

17 And he left them, and went forth out of the city to Bethany, and lodged there.

18 Now in the morning as he returned to the city, he hungered.

19 And seeing a fig tree by the way side, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only; and he saith unto it, Let there be no fruit from thee henceforward for ever. And immediately the fig tree withered away.

20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How did the fig tree immediately wither away?

21 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do what is done to the fig tree, but even if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into the sea, it shall be done.

22 And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." (Isa. 56:7.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Isa. 9:1-7.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

May 4.	M	Jesus' Right to Command (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:17-23)
May 5.	T	Jesus Exercises His Authority (Mark 11:12-26)
May 6.	W	Opposers Silenced (Mark 11:27-33)
May 7.	T	The Cleansing of the Temple (Matt. 21:12-17)
May 8.	F	A House of Prayer (Isa. 56:6-8)
May 9.	S	Respect for Authority (1 Pet. 2:13-25)
May 10.	S	A Tree without Fruit (Matt. 21:18-22)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 31. Monday of the week in which Jesus was crucified.

*Places.*—The temple in Jerusalem and the road between Bethany and Jerusalem.

*Persons.*—Jesus, the traders and money exchangers in the temple, the priests, the scribes, some children, and the disciples.

*Lesson Links*—From the very beginning of the ministry of Jesus he acted, both in word and in deed, by the authority of the Father that sent him. "As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do." (John 14:31.) "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.) He was God manifest in the flesh; he therefore possessed inherent divine authority. It was this authority that enabled him to say, "But I say unto you." Notice how often this is repeated in the fifth chapter of Matthew. And when he finished the Sermon on the Mount, "the multitudes were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes." (Matt. 7:28, 29.) Early in his ministry he astonished the worshipers at Capernaum by the manner of his teaching, "for his word was with authority." (Luke 4:31, 32.) He had authority over all evil spirits. When he cast an unclean spirit out of a man at Capernaum, the people in the synagogue were amazed, "insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this? a new teaching! with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." (Mark 1:23-27.) He had authority over the winds and the waves. He exercised as much authority in cleansing the temple the first time as he did in cleansing it on the occasion mentioned in our lesson for today. Every day was a day of authority with Jesus, even though he was not then the crowned Messiah.

To keep up the connection, let us note again Mark's brief statement of the activities of Jesus after he reached Jerusalem on the day of his "triumphal entry": "And he entered into Jerusalem, into the temple; and when he had looked round about upon all things, it being now eventide, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve." And from Mark's record we learn that the events of our present lesson occurred the next day—"on the morrow." On the day of his entrance, so far as the record shows, he did no teaching and performed no miracles. He made a thorough inspection of all that was going on in the temple, but did nothing about it on that day.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Jesus Cleanses the Temple (Verses 12, 13)**

The cleansing here mentioned is not the cleansing spoken of in the second chapter of John. The temple, of course, was under the control of the priests; and they had officers to enforce whatever regulations they made to govern the temple area. After Jesus cleansed the temple the first time these traders and money exchangers re-established themselves in the temple. This was done, of course, by the consent and cooperation of the priests. They were therefore carrying on their business under the protection of the priests, and the priests would profit by their business in rentals or

commissions. It is not reasonable that these priests would allow the temple to be cluttered up by all this traffic, if they were getting nothing out of such traffic. Had this business been carried on outside the temple in an honest and business way, it would have been an accommodation to the people. Many worshipers who lived in distant parts of the country could not well bring along their animal sacrifices; this would be true especially of those who lived in foreign cities. To have a place near the temple where they could buy their animal sacrifices was almost a necessity. The Jew living in foreign countries would come with the money of his country, but the half shekel would have to be in Jewish money. Money-changers would serve a good purpose for this, and for making change for other gifts in the temple service. But these men were committing a double crime—they were polluting the temple, and carrying on their business in such a way that they were robbing the people—charging such prices for their animals and for their exchanging money that it amounted to thievery. These things Jesus had observed when he was looking round about on all things in the temple. He may have given these men on that day a hint that they were carrying on an unlawful business. By the next day, the day of our lesson, they would have had time to move out, but they had not done so.

It will be noticed that Jesus drove out of the temple "all them that sold and bought." Both parties to an illegal transaction are guilty. If no one bought that which was offered for sale illegally, there would be no illegal selling. He made a clean sweep of the traders and the money-changers; then he said, "It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer." This is a quotation from Isa. 56:7. Jesus then adds these stinging words: "But ye make it a den of robbers." A den is a place of refuge, a place of security, for animals. Hence, the house of prayer, God's house, under the protection of the priests and their temple police, had become a place of security for these robbers of the people! At first thought it may seem strange that neither these men nor the temple police offered any resistance to what Jesus did; but there were sufficient reasons for their not doing so. They knew they were guilty as charged; besides, they remembered that great demonstration of the day before. Too many of these people were close by, and perhaps were applauding what Jesus did. All they could do was to clear their stuff out of the temple, and do a little quiet grumbling to themselves.

### **The Children Shout Their Praises (Verses 14-17)**

While in the temple Jesus healed the blind and the lame. Jesus was not doing such works for any personal gain, but purely as acts of mercy. His works were very different from that of the traffickers whom he had driven out of the temple. Such deeds of mercy were lawful anywhere and any time; but his actions did not please the chief priests and the scribes. Such deeds would increase his popularity with the masses of the people; he was already too popular to suit them. Neither were they pleased with the children's crying, "Hosanna to the son of David." "They were moved with indignation." Nothing was going to suit them. As they had been expecting Jesus to slip quietly into Jerusalem, the demonstration as he entered must have been a great shock to them. In their presence he had boldly driven the traffickers out of the temple, and proceeded to perform numerous cures; and now the children were shouting

his praises. They had given commandment, that if anyone knew where he was, he should tell them, so that they might take him. Now here he was before their eyes, exercising authority over what went on in the temple; and they could do nothing about it. They could not even stop the shouting of the children. Their complaint to Jesus was really an appeal to him to quiet the children. "Hearest thou what these are saying?" "And Jesus saith unto them, Yea"; that is, Yes, I hear them. Now, as these men, especially the scribes, professed to know all about their scriptures, there is a touch of irony in the reply Jesus made: "Did ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise"? This is a quotation from the eighth Psalm. It does not seem so much to be a prophecy of this event, as the statement of a general truth. When children voluntarily give praise, it is genuine praise. Much of the praise given by grownups is nothing more or less than polite hypocrisy; but we should give praise to whom praise is due and to that which is worthy of praise. He who praises everything really praises nothing; that is, his praise is worth nothing.

After his day's activities in the temple were over, Jesus went out to Bethany to a home where he loved to linger—the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. That must have been a pleasant home—an ideal home. Here Jesus could rest without being disturbed by any unpleasantness between the members of the family. It seems that Jesus spent every night of this week in that home; that is, every night before his arrest.

### **The Withered Fig Tree (Verses 18-20)**

On the morning here mentioned Jesus and his disciples must have left Bethany before the morning's meal was served, for he became hungry before they reached the city; "and seeing a fig tree by the way side, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only." This fig tree was not the property of any individual; standing by the wayside, it was public property and anyone might gather its fruit, if it had any. It was a promising looking tree, but Jesus found nothing on it but leaves. Jesus said to the barren tree, "Let there be no fruit from thee henceforward for ever. And immediately the fig tree withered away." It seems that this was a lesson in miracle, a symbolic miracle, a sort of parable in action. The tree promised much, but yielded nothing but leaves. And that fairly represented the Jewish nation. It made great pretense of service to God, but it was pretense only. Jesus had already pronounced the doom of that nation; and like the fig tree it would soon wither and die.

Matthew had a way of grouping related things without always giving them in their chronological order. By referring to Mark's account of this miracle and what the disciples said about it, the student will see that the doom of the fig tree was pronounced as they journeyed to Jerusalem on the day before; that is, the day in which Jesus cleansed the temple; and that the disciples mentioned the complete death of the tree on this day, the morning after the doom of the tree was pronounced. "And as they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Rabbi, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away." On the import of this miracle Bloomfield has this to say: "This was emblematical and

figurative; according to the usual custom of the sages of the East to express things by symbolical actions. It was also prophetic. Our Lord intended to prove that his power to punish the disobedient was as great as that to confer benefits. It was, moreover, to prefigure the destruction of the perverse Jews, because in the time of fruits they had borne none (see verses 33-41); and, likewise, to read a very important lesson to all his disciples of every age—that if the opportunities for the approving themselves virtuous be neglected, nought will remain but to be withered by the fiat which shall consign them to everlasting destruction."

### **Removing Mountains—Acceptable Prayer (Verses 21, 22)**

The twenty-first verse would not seem so difficult, if students would bear in mind that Jesus and his inspired writers used the everyday language of the people. Difficulties and obstacles are sometimes referred to as mountains. When Jesus sent his apostles out he gave them various miracle-working powers, but the ability to remove literal mountains was not included in those gifts. Besides, to have cast Mount Olivet into the set would have served no useful purpose. Special miraculous powers were given to certain men, but to none was given the power to remove literal mountains. (1 Cor. 12:4-11.) Even those who had power conferred upon them to do certain miracles, could not perform such miracles at any time they doubted their ability to do so. Because of unbelief, not unbelief in God, but unbelief in their ability to cast out a certain demon, the disciples failed on one occasion to cast out a demon, even though they had been given that power.

Faith is an essential element in prayer. There must be faith in God as a Father who is able and willing to grant the requests of his children. To doubt his ability and willingness to answer us is to defeat our prayers before we pray. Disobedience will defeat our prayers. (Psalm 66:18; Prov. 28:9.) A desire for self-indulgence will hinder our prayers. (James 4:3.) If therefore a man doubts, or is disobedient to God, or asks for things with which to gratify his own lusts, the Lord will not grant his requests. And we must always recognize the truth that God knows what we need, and that we do not always know what is best for us. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen." (Eph. 3:20, 21.)

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

When a man begins to disregard the sacredness of that which belongs to God, he soon becomes unreliable in his word and in his dealings. A man who will sacrifice his religious principles for profit will also sacrifice his honesty. And the man who has no religious convictions, but makes a pretense of religion for policy's sake, is no better than one who sacrifices his religion for policy's sake.

If you want to know how to pray, a close study of the following will help: "And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my border, and that thy hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it be not to my sorrow! And God granted him that which he requested." (1 Chron. 4:10.)



**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

The sacredness of God's church, and how the church may be defiled.  
 The lesson of the withered fig tree.  
 The elements of acceptable prayer.

**QUESTIONS**

Where is the lesson found?  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.  
 By what authority did Jesus act?  
 Show that from the beginning of his ministry  
 he spoke and acted as one having authority.

**Verses 12, 13**

Where is recorded another cleansing of the temple  
 by Jesus?  
 Whose business was it to keep the temple?  
 How had they violated their trust?  
 What sins were the traffickers in the temple  
 committing?

**Verses 14-17**

What other works did Jesus do in the temple?  
 Tell about the children.  
 What effect did all this have on the authorities?  
 Why did they not arrest Jesus?

**Verses 18-20**

Discuss the lesson of the withered fig tree as it  
 applied to the Jews, and how it may apply to us  
 also

**Verses 21, 22**

Discuss verse 21.  
 Discuss some of the essential elements in acceptable  
 prayer.  
 Discuss the reflections.

Lesson VII—May 17, 1942

**TUESDAY: THE DAY OF CONFLICT**

Matt. 22:41 to 23:11

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question,  
 42 Saying, What think ye of the Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David.

43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying,

44 The Lord said unto my Lord,

Sit thou on my right hand,

Till I put thine enemies underneath thy feet?

45 If David then calleth him Lord, how is he his son?

46 And no one was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

1 Then spake Jesus to the multitudes and to his disciples,

2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat:

3 All things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe: but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not.

4 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.

5 But all their works they do to be seen of men: for they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

6 And love the chief place at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

7 And the salutations in the marketplaces, and to be called of men, Rabbi.

8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren.

9 And call no man your father on the earth: for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven.

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, even the Christ.

11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"The stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner."  
 (Mark 12:10.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 2:1-8.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—*

May 11. M	The Suffering Servant (Isa. 53:1-12)
May 12. T	God's Message Rejected (Jer. 25:1-7)
May 13. W	His Own Received Him Not (John 1:1-11)
May 14. T	Rebellion Against Jesus (John 7:37-52)
May 15. F	The Wicked Husbandmen (Mark 12:1-12)
May 16. S	The Stone Rejected (Matt. 21:42-46)
May 17. S	Desolation Follows Rejection (Jer. 25 8-11)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—The Tuesday of the week of the crucifixion.

*Place.*—The temple.

*Persons.*—Jesus, his disciples, the Pharisees, and the multitudes.

*Lesson Links*—The student should not conclude from the title of this lesson that it means that Jesus had only one day of conflict during his life, for only the week of the crucifixion is under consideration. Tuesday was the main day of conflict during that week. During his whole ministry he engaged frequently in discussion with his enemies. In all his controversies he spoke truth and spoke it with authority. He therefore could not yield any point for the sake of peace; nothing is more exacting and uncompromising than truth, and yet nothing else is so benevolent and helpful as truth. Jesus fought error because he loved man; and he held up truth before man because it is man's only light and the only thing that will make man free. There can, therefore, be no friendly relations between truth and error. In the fight that Jesus made, these matters stand out boldly. Notice his uncompromising fight on this "day of conflict"—the day in which the incidents of our lesson took place.

The conflict really began that day when the priests and the elders of the people came to him with this question: "By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?" Since the multitudes the day before had acclaimed him the Messiah, and he had not rebuked them, these men evidently expected him to say that he had done these things on his authority as the Messiah; they would then seek to make out a case of blasphemy against him. He did not refuse to answer their question, but pledged himself to answer their question if they would first answer his. "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or from men?" As these men had refused the baptism of John, this question immediately put them on the defensive, with nothing with which to make defense. So they held a consultation among themselves to see if anyone could think up a good answer. "If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why then did ye not believe him?" This reasoning of theirs shows plainly that a refusal to be baptized of John and a refusal to believe him was one and the same thing. And that same principle will hold good in our relation to Christ Jesus—to refuse his baptism is to disbelieve in him. The people held John in such high esteem as a prophet of God, they were afraid to say that his baptism was of men. And in saying, "We know not," they disqualified themselves as authorities on what should or should not be taught. Because of this, and because they would not have made proper use of any information he gave them, Jesus refused to answer their question. Jesus then spoke some parables which the Pharisees recognized as being aimed at themselves. They then tried to trap him with some questions, but failed.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Whose Son Is the Christ? (Verses 41, 42)**

Jesus knew that the Pharisees knew about the prophecies concerning the Christ. They had been trying him with questions; now he would put their understanding of the prophecies to the test. "What think ye of the Christ? whose son is he?" He was here leaving himself out of consideration. The Pharisees were expecting the Christ, the Messiah; when he comes, what will be his line of descent? From what family will he come? They answered readily, "The son of David." That the Christ was to be the son of David was learned from such passages as 2 Sam. 7:12, 13, 15; Psalm 89:3. But the Jew of today who is still looking for the Messiah will not be able to show that he is of the seed of David, nor even of the tribe of Judah, for all records were destroyed long ago. This should be a matter for serious consideration for the orthodox Jew. Jesus presents a different problem to his critics.

**Christ David's Son and His Lord (Verses 43-46)**

"How then doth David in the Spirit call him Lord?" Jesus then quotes Psalm 110:1, in which David speaks of the coming Messiah as "my Lord." It seems that the Pharisees readily conceded that this prophecy referred to the Christ. How then could Christ be both the son and the Lord of David? "And no one was able to answer him a word." They could not see how the Christ could be the son of David and also his Lord. They did not expect the Christ to be God manifest in the flesh; they did not expect him to be divine as well as human. In his human nature he was of the seed of David; in his divine nature he was, and is, Lord of all. He was, and is, both the son of David and the Son of God. Jesus had asked these men two questions; one they refused to answer, and the other they could not answer; "neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions." They had learned that asking him questions did not help their cause, but rather gave him an opportunity to expose them.

**The Pharisees "Say, and Do not" (Matt. 23:1-3)**

The scribes belonged to the sect of the Pharisees; this accounts for their being so often mentioned together. "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat." They were generally regarded as experts in the law, and their word was supposed to be final; at least, they wanted it to be so regarded. When Jesus said, "All things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe," he meant this to apply only to what they said as teachers of the law of Moses, and not to the traditions of the elders which they sought to impose upon the people. Jesus refused to submit to their traditions; and while he taught the disciples to obey the law of Moses, he also taught them to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The doctrines of the Pharisees and the Sadducees were such things as they taught, things not found in the law of Moses. It was an admonition to them to beware of the doctrines of men; and it is the Christian's duty to do likewise. But the particular charge that Jesus at this time made against the scribes and Pharisees was that they did not practice what they demanded of others. "They say,

and do not." There is danger that any teacher, or any preacher, may become so absorbed in directing others that he forgets his own obligations. And it is possible for a person to make a great show of righteousness by being so insistent that people do right; he may do this to cover up his own shortcomings. He may also deceive himself into thinking that his faithfulness in teaching others will in a measure atone for his own shortcomings. It is easy for people to fool themselves.

### **They Sought the Applause of Men (Verses 4-7)**

"Yea, they bind heavy burdens . . . and lay them on men's shoulders." They lay not simply one burden on men's shoulders, but bind heavy burdens into bundles, so to speak, and lay the whole bundle on men's shoulders. And all this in addition to what the law of Moses required, and that law was heavy enough. These heavy burdens which they bound as in bundles were the things required by their traditions; with them the tradition of the elders held supremacy over the law of Moses, so much so that Jesus said to them, "Full well do ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition." Some, but not all, of the things bound on the Jews by the tradition of the elders are mentioned in Mark 7:1-13. These various things would be especially burdensome to the poor man who had to work every daylight hour to make a living—"grievous to be borne." And not one thing would these leaders—the religious bosses—do to make any man's burden lighter. By this domineering attitude toward the people they thought to parade themselves as the great men of the nation. All their plans and efforts were directed to that end. "But all their works they do to be seen of men." They were thus guilty of a very degrading sort of hypocrisy. For that reason, when the Pharisees asked Jesus why his disciples did not walk according to the tradition of the elders, he replied, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." These were the men who gloried in the fact that they were the religious leaders of their nation, and they loved for the people to so regard them. They made themselves prominent in every way possible. They loved for people to address them as Rabbi—"my master." With all the teaching that Jesus did along these lines, there developed among his followers this desire for pre-eminence; they disputed as to who should be greatest in his kingdom, and James and John wanted the chief places in his kingdom. Later there were such men as Diotrephes, who loved to have the pre-eminence. Much of the continued division and strife in the religious world today are due to such men. One child in a family who tries to dominate the others is a troublemaker. Such a man in a church is a constant source of ill will, which frequently leads to open division. A man with an overweening desire to be counted great has no consideration for others save as he can use them to gain his ends; such a one is thoroughly selfish.

### **Some Admonitions (Verses 8-10)**

Authorities tell us that with the Jews Rab meant master; Rabbi, my master; and Rabboni, my great master; and that Rabboni was the most honorable title of all. "But be not ye called Rabbi." This

would seem plainly to prohibit the disciples from wearing any titles that would indicate a superiority of one over others; for Jesus immediately assigns this reason for the prohibition: "For one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren." Jesus himself is our teacher, and he made his teaching known through his chosen representatives—that teaching is recorded in the New Testament. What is written therein we should believe and practice; beyond it we should not go. There should be no titles of distinction among brethren. However we cannot always control the speech of others; a preacher cannot always keep others from applying titles to him, but he can refrain from adopting such titles as rightfully belonging to him. And we can also usually discourage the applying of such titles by others.

When Jesus said, "Call no man your father on the earth," he was not speaking of fathers in the flesh; but about fathers in a religious or spiritual sense. In this spiritual sense we should call no man on earth our father; in that sense we should have but the one Father, who is in heaven. Spiritually, or religiously, no such relationships should exist between people here on earth; and yet they do. If a man originates something, he is its father, and is therefore the father of all those who belong to his institution; but no such religious institutions should exist, and therefore there should be no such things as religious fathers. If a person is a Christian, his Father is in heaven; and no man on earth is his father unless he attaches himself to some institution founded by man. There should be no grounds for anyone to call any man on earth his father in a religious sense. And yet we frequently hear the title "Holy Father" applied to a man.

"Neither be ye called masters." The Greek word here translated masters literally means, in the singular number, guide, leader, teacher.' We as Christians have only one guide, or leader, even the Christ. Too many members of the church aspire to be leaders, when not one should have that ambition. Christ is our leader; we are his followers. If all professed Christians were faithful followers of Christ, none would be ambitious to be leaders, and there would be no clamoring for better leaders.

### **The "Greatest Among You" (Verse 11)**

The thought of this lesson is not complete without verse twelve, which the student should read. There is a true road to greatness, but it is not through scheming for greatness, nor through using others as steppingstones. God's standard of greatness is not man's standard. Somewhere on earth God's greatest man lives; it is not likely that his name is written in "Who's Who?" but it is written in the Lamb's book of life. The one who renders the greatest service to God and man is God's greatest man. Such a man is striving to be of service instead of striving for a name among men. Verse 12: "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted." Frequently the service that a Christian is called upon to render is lowly, and a person must humble himself to render useful service in many such cases. A true servant of God is willing to render any needed service no matter how lowly the service may be.

**SOME REFLECTIONS**

The Jews rejected Christ because they were not seeking truth and righteousness, but were using their religion to enhance their popularity. Such a condition of heart now, as then, utterly unfits one for believing. "How can ye believe, who receive glory one of another, and the glory that cometh from the only God ye seek not?" (John 5:44.)

When Jesus finished the admonitions of our lesson text, he turned his attention to the scribes and Pharisees. He had tried to teach them, but they scorned his teaching; he sought to help the poor outcasts, and these leaders despised him for so doing; he had performed great miracles among them, they themselves being witnesses, but they would not believe in him. Now he proceeds to tell them what they were. (See verses 13-36.)

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

The burdens of the tradition of the elders.  
The evils of ambition for fame.  
The spirit of true service.

**QUESTIONS**

Where is the lesson found?  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

the scribes and Pharisees commanded them to do?

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, place, and persons.  
Why did Jesus engage in so much controversy ?

Give some points discussed on the day of our lesson.

The disciples were to beware of what?  
What did Jesus say of the scribes and Pharisees?

**Verses 4-7**

What heavy burdens did the scribes and Pharisees lay on others?

Name some of these burdensome things.  
What was the main ambition of these scribes and Pharisees?

**Verses 41, 42**

Discuss the question Jesus asked his critics.

**Verses 43-46**

How could the Christ be the son of David and also his Lord?

Why could no one now be proved to be the son of David?

**Verses 8-10**

Discuss in turn verses 8, 9, and 10.

**Verse 11**

Discuss God's standard of greatness.

Discuss verse 12.

Discuss the reflections.

**Matt. 23:1-3**

When could the disciples afford to heed what

Lesson VIII—May 24, 1942

**THURSDAY: THE LAST DAY WITH THE DISCIPLES**

Luke 22:14-30

14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the apostles with him.

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

16 For I say unto you, I shall not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17 And he received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

18 For I say unto you, I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

19 And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

20 And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you.

21 But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

22 For the Son of man indeed goeth, as it hath been determined: but woe unto that man through whom he is betrayed!

23 And they began to question among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

24 And there arose also a contention among them, which of them was accounted to be greatest.

25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them; and they that have authority over them are called Benefactors.

26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27 For which is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am in the midst of you as he that serveth.

28 But ye are they that have continued with me in my temptations;

29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me,

30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"This do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING*—John 14:1-6.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

May 18. M

May 19. T

May 20. W

May 21. T

May 22. F

May 23. S

May 24. S

The Upper Room (Luke 22:7-13)

The Lord's Supper (Luke 22:14-20)

The Betrayer (John 13:21-30)

Peter's Denial Foretold (Luke 22:31-34)

The Bread of Life (John 6:41-51)

Reverence for the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:27-34)

In Remembrance of Christ (1 Cor. 11:23-26)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—A.D. 30 or 31; generally understood to be Thursday night of the week of the crucifixion.

*Place.*—An upper room in Jerusalem.

*Persons.*—Jesus and his disciples. It is a matter of dispute as to whether Judas Iscariot was present when the Lord's Supper was established, and yet it is a matter of no importance to us. It is likely that many a hypocrite has eaten the Lord's Supper since then.

*Lesson Links*—The Passover was the first of the three annual feasts required by the law of Moses. Its origin and the reason for its continued observance is recorded in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. In connection with the Passover, and really a part of the Passover observance, was the feast of unleavened bread; the passover lamb was killed on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread. Hence the two were really different parts of one feast. "And the day of unleavened bread came, on which the passover must be sacrificed. And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and make ready for us the passover, that we may eat. And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we make ready? And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house whereinto he goeth. And ye shall say unto the master of the house, The Teacher saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover." It is said that any spare

room was open to any who came from places outside of Jerusalem to eat the passover; but the instructions Jesus gave Peter and John indicate that Jesus had already made arrangements with this man for a room. At least, the man must have been either a disciple of Jesus or a friend to him, for Peter and John were told to remind the man that the teacher wanted a room in which he and his disciples might eat the passover. To get all the facts about the matters of this lesson, that the different writers give, the student should read Matt. 26:20-29; Mark 14:17-25; 1 Cor. 11:23-34.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### **Jesus Had Earnestly Desired to Eat This Passover (Verses 14-16)**

When the first passover was eaten these regulations were to be observed: "And thus shall ye eat it: with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is Jehovah's passover." (Ex. 12:11.) They were to observe these regulations that night, so as to be ready to march at a moment's notice; but the fact that Jesus and his apostles sat, or reclined, at the table shows that such regulations were not to be perpetuated. They were meant to meet the emergency of that first night. "Now when even was come, he was sitting at meat with the twelve disciples." (Matt. 26:20.) Though Judas Iscariot had already bargained with the chief priests to deliver Jesus into their hands, he had the shameless boldness to sit down with his Lord to eat the passover. He was still so ignorant of the powers of his Lord that he did not think the Lord would know what he had done. He must therefore have been astonished when he found that Jesus did know. Jesus had earnestly desired to eat this passover with his disciples, the last passover he would eat, and the last one that anyone would eat by divine authority. The law that required the Passover ended at the cross on the following day. The Passover was typical; that type, as well as others, was fulfilled in the kingdom of God. "For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ." (1 Cor. 5:7.)

#### **Jesus Received a Cup (Verses 17, 18)**

Commentators think the cup of verse 17 was one of the cups used during the feast, but the text does not make that a certainty. It is not certain that they had at that time begun to eat the passover. It is possible that Jesus was arranging to use this cup in the institution of the Lord's Supper. The next verse seems to connect it with the Lord's Supper: "For I say unto you, I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." It is certain that Matthew's report of what Jesus here said is connected with the cup of the Lord's Supper: "But I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." On this verse from Matthew, McGarvey makes these comments: "The literal use of wine is not here meant; for Jesus does not literally drink wine with his disciples in the kingdom as it now is, nor will he do so in the eternal kingdom. The term drink, therefore, is used figuratively for that communion which Jesus has with his disciples while they are drinking the wine of the Lord's Supper."



**The Material Elements of the Lord's Supper (Verses 19, 20)**

"He took bread." This was unleavened bread, bread without any yeast or anything to make it rise, for that was the only bread allowed at the Passover and during the week that followed. No leaven was allowed even in their homes. "Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread." Loving care and skill should be put into making bread for the Lord's Supper. "And when he had given thanks." For "thanks" Matthew and Mark use the term "blessed." And that does not mean that he blessed the bread; there is no "it" after blessed in the Greek, nor in the American Standard Version. Paul, as well as Luke, says he gave thanks. If therefore we allow scripture to interpret scripture, the words "blessed" and "gave thanks" here mean the same thing. When brethren ministering at the Lord's table say, "We cannot bless the bread, as Jesus did, but we can give thanks for it," what do they think the Lord imparted to that bread? Was that bread any different in quality from that which we now use? Jesus did not bless the bread; he blessed or gave thanks. "He brake it." Some disciples, even in a small group of brethren, where only one plate is used, would not think of passing the bread till they had broken it into at least two pieces. Is that what Jesus did? Adam Clarke takes for granted that Jesus broke the bread into fragments for each communicant, and argues that it should be so done now. Is that what Jesus did? But such separating the bread into pieces, whether into two pieces or many, can have no symbolic meaning for the body of Jesus was not broken into pieces. In common speech, to break bread was to eat. "Breaking bread at home" (Acts 2:46), was eating their food at home. The disciples at Troas came together to break bread, that is, to eat the Lord's Supper. (Acts 20:7.) Hence Jesus took bread, ate some of it, and passed it to the disciples. He set them an example, and they followed his example. "This is my body." Not his literal body, for his literal body was still alive and sitting before them, and he was holding the bread in his hand. Jesus and his disciples were not eating the literal body of the Lord and drinking his literal blood while he was sitting alive before them! But such expressions as he used are common. In the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis we have these expressions: "Judah is a lion's whelp"; "Issachar is a strong ass"; "Joseph is a fruitful bough"; "Dan shall be a serpent in the way"; "Naphtali is a hind let loose." And this: "Ephraim is a cake not turned." (Hos. 7:8.) Everyone understands the figurative nature of such expressions. When Jesus said of the bread, "This is my body," it still remained bread. In the communion Christians eat bread, not flesh. In 1 Cor. 10:16, 17 we have these expressions: "The bread which we break"; "We all partake of the one bread." In chapter 11 we have these expressions: "As often as ye eat this bread"; "Whosoever shall eat the bread"; "So let him eat of the bread." Hence, inspiration says it is bread we eat, and not the flesh of the Lord. The Lord's Supper is not complete without the fruit of the vine. It is a symbol of his blood, "which is poured out for many unto remission of sins." Jesus did not shed his blood for any crime he had done, but for our sins. He bought our salvation, and holds it in trust for us, and graciously bestows it upon all who will comply with the terms of inheritance; but he forces it on no one. "This do in remembrance of me." We do not eat the Lord's Supper in order to remember the Lord, but in memory of him. And

please notice that Jesus says for us to do this in memory of him, not merely in memory of his death. It is a monument of him—of what he did and of what he is. And Paul gives this additional statement made by the Lord on that night: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." In eating the supper in memory of him, we preach his death.

### **The Betrayer Was There (Verses 21-23)**

It is argued by some that Luke mentions this statement about the betrayal out of its chronological order, and that this speech about the betrayer was made during the Passover supper, and that Judas Iscariot left before the Lord's Supper was instituted. But it does not seem to be a matter of much importance to us, for many hypocrites have eaten the Lord's Supper. The announcement of this betrayal and the woe that should come upon the betrayer fill the disciples with sorrow. Jesus did not say how soon this betraying would be done. None of the innocent disciples knew what he might do in the distant future, and they questioned, "Is it I?" Of course Judas had to keep up appearances; so he said, "Is it I, Rabbi?" "The object of this conversation was both to show the foreknowledge of Jesus and to give Judas a solemn warning in reference to the crime which he was about to commit. If it had been the purpose of Jesus to overwhelm the guilty wretch with fear and dismay, and thereby compel him to desist from his horrible undertaking, we cannot conceive of words better for this purpose. Yet so utterly calloused had the conscience of Judas become, that with brazen effrontery he asks, 'Master, is it I?' Such hardihood in crime is a more convincing evidence of deep depravity than his previous covenant with the chief priests."—McGarvey.

### **Which Shall Be the Greatest (Verse 24)**

Had these disciples really understood the significance of the supper just instituted, and had known what was before them that night and the days immediately following, a discussion about who was accounted to be the greatest never would have entered their minds; but they could not foresee Gethsemane, nor the mock trials, nor the cross. They were still thinking about a great earthly kingdom, and were debating about who would be accounted best suited to the places of highest honor in that kingdom. With their ideas of matters it is not strange that such places of honor should be sought by them. But events proved how wrong they were.

### **"But Ye Shall Not Be So" (Verses 25-27)**

These apostles at that time would still share that common prejudice of the Jews against the Gentiles. It must therefore have been a surprising rebuke to them to be told that they had ambitions for the things that prevailed among the Gentiles. But among his followers, the greatest among them must be as the younger. There must be no effort on the part of one to exercise lordship over another, but rather to serve. Jesus himself was among them as one that served. No needed service was too lowly for him, as was shown by his washing the feet of the disciples at a time when that service was needed. In all these acts of needed service he left us an example. Useful service in the name of the Lord, and not ambition to rule, makes for true greatness.

**"I Appoint Unto You a Kingdom" (Verses 27-30)**

On another occasion Jesus made a statement similar to that which Luke here records. (See Matt. 19:28.) The student should compare that with this. The disciples had followed Jesus in his trials—they had not forsaken him. "I appoint unto you a kingdom"; he was speaking to his apostles. They could not then understand the nature of that kingdom, but they would understand that the promise was to be fulfilled to them while they lived. They would eat and drink at his table in that kingdom; that refers to the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is in the kingdom which he was to appoint them; and in that kingdom they would sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Jesus was not talking about a kingdom that is yet in the future, nor would the apostles so understand him.

**SOME REFLECTIONS**

There is such a thing as a man's selling himself to do evil; certain kings did that. (1 Kings 21:20.) So did others. (2 Kings 17:17.) In selling Jesus to the chief priests Judas Iscariot sold himself to the devil.

Judas had sold Jesus to the chief priests, and yet he was so lacking in the instincts of a gentleman, to say nothing of a disciple of the Lord whom he had sold, that he could be a guest of the Lord at the Feast of the Passover; and during that feast he was anxiously waiting for the time to come when he could complete his part of that dastardly deal. And thus one who might have been a useful servant in the kingdom had allowed the love of money to make of him a criminal of the first rank.

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

"This do in remembrance of me."

How does the Lord's Supper proclaim the death of Christ?

What the Lord's Supper means to me.

When should the Lord's Supper be eaten?

**QUESTIONS**

Where is the lesson found?  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, place, and persons.  
What was the Passover?  
Give its origin.  
What directions did Jesus give two disciples about preparing the last Passover?

**Verses 14-16**

What temporary things were required at the first Passover?  
When did the Passover Feast cease to be required by the Lord?

**Verses 17, 18**

Discuss verses 17 and 18.

**Verses 19, 20**

What sort of bread was used in the establishment of the supper?  
Give reason.  
Tell what Jesus said and did at this time.  
Discuss each statement he made.  
Show that bread is eaten in the supper and not the flesh of the Lord.  
Discuss the additional statement made by Paul.

**Verses 21-23**

Discuss these verses.

**Verse 24**

Why would the disciples discuss who was accounted the greatest?

**Verses 25-27**

Discuss these verses, and also verses 27-30.  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson IX—May 31, 1942

**FRIDAY: THE DAY OF SUFFERING**

Mark 14:32-34, 44-46; 15:1-5

32 And they come unto a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here, while I pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly amazed, and sore troubled.

34 And he saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death: abide ye here, and watch.

44 Now he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he; take him, and lead him away safely.

45 And when he was come, straightway he came to him, and saith, Rabbi; and kissed him.

46 And they laid hands on him, and took him.

1 And straightway in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him up to Pilate.

2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering saith unto him, Thou sayest.

3 And the chief priests accused him of many things.

4 And Pilate again asked him, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they accuse thee of.

5 But Jesus no more answered anything; insomuch that Pilate marvelled.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Not my will, but thine, be done." (Luke 22:42.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Isa. 50:4-9.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

May 25. M

May 26. T

May 27. W

May 28. T

May 29. F

May 30. S

May 31. S

Thy Will Be Done (Mark 14:32-42)

The Betrayal (Matt. 26:47-56)

Jesus Arrested (Mark 14:53-56)

The Basis of the Accusation (Luke 23:1-9)

Jesus Condemned (Mark 15:1-15)

The Will of God (Heb. 10:1-10)

Perfect Through Suffering (Heb. 2:9-18)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 31; Friday, the day of the crucifixion; at least the majority hold to that idea.

*Places.*—Jerusalem, Gethsemane, the court of the Sanhedrin, and Pilate's judgment hall.

*Persons.*—Jesus, his disciples, Judas, the band of soldiers, the Sanhedrin, and Pilate.

*Lesson Links*—Immediately before and during the Passover week the leaders in Jerusalem, in their determination to kill Jesus, made several changes in their plans and schemes. They, of course, knew that Jesus was aware of their intention to kill him. They would therefore expect Jesus, if he came to the feast at all, to slip into the city and keep under cover as much as possible; and so they gave this order: "Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given commandment, that, if any man knew where he was, he should show it, that they might take him." (John 11:57.) But when Jesus came openly into the city with so many shouting his praises, they were greatly disturbed. Their command became useless, for they themselves knew where he was, but did not know what to do about it. "The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Behold how ye prevail nothing; lo, the world is gone after him." (John 12:19.)

They were for the moment baffled, but were still determined to kill him. "Then were gathered together the chief priests, and the elders of the people, unto the court of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas; and they took counsel together that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him. But they said, Not during the feast, lest a tumult arise among the people." (Matt. 26:3-5.) But help came from an unexpected source. It is evident that Judas Iscariot was very indignant at what was done and said at the feast in the house of Simon the leper. "Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said, What are ye willing to give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they weighed unto him thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to deliver him unto them." (Matt. 26:14-16.) From Luke we learn that he sought to do this in the absence of the multitude. An opportunity for the performance of this base deed soon came, as we shall see in this lesson.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Jesus Goes to Gethsemane for Prayer (Verses 32-34)

John gives a fuller account of what occurred in the upper room where they ate the passover and the Lord instituted the Lord's Supper. It seems that the incidents mentioned in the latter part of the thirteenth chapter, the speech recorded in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters, and the prayer recorded in the seventeenth, all came after the supper and the going out of the city to the Garden of Gethsemane. Whether they sang the hymn before this speech and prayer or after, we are not informed. A congregation violates no principle if it sings no song just before dismissal. The language does not say that they sang a hymn, and went out of the house, but they went out of the city unto the Mount of Olives, as the language clearly indicates.

"And they come unto a place which was named Gethsemane." The fame of this small plot of ground is due entirely to this one visit of Jesus, and his agonizing prayers on that occasion. Had it not been for this visit, that plot of ground would have meant no more to us today than any other spot around the city of Jerusalem. The garden of the oil press was on that night the garden of prayer and agony—and of resignation. Jesus left eight of the apostles and others who might have been in the company, near the entrance to the garden. There was at least one other—"a certain young man." (Verse 51.) "And he taketh with him Peter and James and John." With these three he went farther into the garden. These three had been with him in the death chamber when Jairus' daughter was raised from the dead; they were with him on the mount of the transfiguration; and now he selects them to be near him in this hour of agony. "Began to be greatly amazed." This very forcible expression is used by Mark, where Matthew uses the milder term "sorrowful." We cannot imagine the crushing weight that was then settling down on the heart of our Lord. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." The shadow of the cross was casting its gloom across his heart. Jesus knew the tragedy of death as no one else could. To him it was no dream, but an awful reality—an enemy to be dreaded. But it was perhaps not so much the approach of his death that caused such sorrow. He could see, as none of us can, that

death is the result of sin, and in it he could see the wreck and ruin of the world. He knew the hatred and malice of the leaders of his own people, and knew that they had determined that he should die; and he knew, too, that his own apostle, whom he had so patiently taught and guided, was working to deliver him into the hands of those who would kill him. He could feel the burden of the world's sins upon him, and knew that they could be removed from men only by his death. It is no wonder that he sweat as it were great drops of blood and, drawing back with horror from such a death as awaited him, prayed, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." It was physically possible for the Father to keep Jesus from dying on the cross; but, should he do so, it would be morally impossible for him to carry out his plans concerning the redemption of man.

### **Judas Betrayed Jesus-The Mob Seized Him (Verses 44-46)**

Before he prayed in the garden Jesus said to the three close friends, "Abide ye here, and watch." But they did not watch; being so exhausted by anxiety and sorrow, they soon fell asleep. Jesus prayed three times, "saying the same words." To the sleepy disciples he said, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Could they have known what was so soon to occur, they could not have slept. "Behold, he that betrayeth me is at hand." And Judas thought Jesus would not know! Before Jesus had finished speaking to his disciples Judas was coming into the garden. He was followed by "a multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders." It was a mob coming to take an unarmed man. No formal charge had been lodged against him. By the standards of any civilized country it was an illegal procedure; they thought by questioning him they might find some semblance of an excuse for killing him. If they could not find an excuse, they would manufacture one; for they intended to kill him.

Judas did not want Jesus and the disciples to know that he was leading that mob; neither did he want them to seize the wrong man. "Now he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he; take him, and lead him away safely." He would therefore try to make it appear to Jesus and the disciples that he had been delayed in reaching them, but had now come to join them in quiet and peaceful rest. So he came straight to Jesus, and greeted him as Rabbi, my master, and then kissed him. It is amazing that Judas, after all his association with Jesus, still thought that he could deceive him. He found that Jesus knew all about his treachery; for when Judas kissed Jesus, Jesus said to him, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" And so we have "the traitor's kiss," as a sort of byword. But the spirit of Judas may be present when there is no kiss. If a person manifests friendliness to people so as to put them off their guard, that he may be able to use them to his own advantage, he is a Judas. Unselfish friendliness is a fine trait.

### **Jesus Before Pilate (Mark 15:1-5)**

From Matthew's report we learn that all the disciples fled when Jesus was seized; but evidently Peter and John soon recovered from their fright sufficiently to follow Jesus to see what would be done. Jesus was led to Annas first. Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible tells

us that Annas was "high priest from A.D. 6 to 15, an astute and powerful ecclesiastical statesman. At the time of our Lord's trial he was merely high priest emeritus, and his son-in-law Caiaphas, the acting high priest, presided ex officio over the meeting of the Sanhedrin. (Matt. 26:57; John 18:24.) Nevertheless, since the high priest emeritus retained not only his title (cf. John 18:15, 16, 19, 22; Acts 4:6), but all his obligations and many of his prerogatives, it is not surprising that the masterful Annas took an active and independent part in the proceedings." The Romans interfered with the Jews' religion to the extent that they set up and deposed high priests according to their own notion of things; and though Caiaphas, son-in-law to Annas, was the acting high priest by order of the Romans, the Jews still regarded Annas very highly for his ability, and counted him as one of the high priests. Evidently they thought that his ability might enable him to develop some sort of a charge against Jesus. He alone could not pass sentence, nor could the Sanhedrin pass a legal sentence in the night. Annas therefore led Jesus away to the house of Caiaphas the high priest. In the court of Caiaphas all the chief priests, and the elders, and the scribes gathered. The whole council therefore were present. Here they called witnesses in an effort to find something against Jesus, but the testimony of these witnesses did not agree. Only when Jesus himself confessed that he was the Christ, the Son of God, did they find anything on which to base a charge. On this confession they accused him of blasphemy; but even so, they had to wait till daylight to pass formal sentence on him. "And straightway in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him up to Pilate." But their charge of blasphemy was a matter that concerned their own religion; Pilate could not act on that sort of charge. If he executed Jesus in a legal way, it had to be on the grounds that Jesus had violated Roman law. The Jews were aware of this; hence they said to Pilate, "We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king." (Luke 23:2.) Pilate was shrewd and saw from the temper of these Jews that they were not in a judicial frame of mind, that they were not seeking that justice be done, but were moved by hatred and jealousy. When Pilate questioned him, Jesus confessed that he was king, and gave this explanation: "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." Of course we have only a condensed report of all that was said and done. Jesus must have gone into details about his kingdom, and so explained its nature as to convince Pilate that he intended to establish no worldly government, such as the Jews then expected their Messiah to establish. Had he explained his kingdom to be a world political power, with all other kingdoms destroyed and all peoples brought under him as king in Jerusalem, Pilate would have been bound to find him guilty of treason; but instead of that he announced to the Jews, "I find no crime in him." That was Pilate's decision, the judgment to which Jesus was entitled; but the clamoring of the Jews took that judgment from him. But after Jesus had told Pilate the nature of his kingdom and had obtained a judgment in his favor, though his enemies kept up their accusations against him, he said

nothing. Why should he say more? Judgment had been rendered, and the next thing in order was the dismissal of proceedings. Pilate wanted to be just, if it did not cost too much. He knew that Jesus was innocent, and that for envy the Jews were clamoring for his death. He tried to persuade them to allow him to let Jesus go, but they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate was in a "tough spot"; he wanted to release Jesus, and yet he saw that there was trouble afoot, if he did so. Rather than to have an uproar in Jerusalem and to have the Jews bring accusations against him before Caesar, he delivered Jesus to be crucified. And that is a sample of the boasted Roman justice—an innocent man delivered to death to satisfy some fanatical enemies. Pilate did not clear himself of responsibility and guilt in the matter by washing his hands as an indication that he would have nothing more to do in the matter.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Let us not be too hard on Peter for denying the Lord; he did have sufficient interest and courage to follow along to see what would be done with Jesus; the nine did not do this. Had Peter been allowed to fight in Gethsemane, he would have made good his boast to die for the Lord rather than to deny him. But disarmed and his Lord in the hands of powerful and determined enemies, Peter felt hopeless and helpless.

To have deep religious convictions and to be firm in maintaining these convictions is commendable; but when people mistake prejudice and passion and hatred for convictions, they are in a frame of mind to do awful crimes in the name of their religion. And this is why the leaders in the Jews' religion were so determined to have Jesus killed. They had no love for truth, no desire for justice; they lusted for the blood of Jesus.

Because of the remorse of conscience for the part he played in the dastardly deed, Judas went out and hanged himself; and it is said that Pilate also ended his life by suicide. The part Pilate played in the crucifixion of Jesus may have had something to do with his becoming a suicide. It seems that the leaders of the Jews were not in any remorseful frame of mind then, nor at any later time.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The Jewish high court.  
Judas—a character study.  
How we may betray the Lord.

### QUESTIONS

Where is the lesson found?  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

Tell what took place in that garden.  
Repeat the prayer of Jesus.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
Discuss matters found in *Lesson Links*

#### Verses 44-46

Tell about Judas, and how he betrayed his Lord.  
Give what facts you can about the arrest of Jesus.  
How may we act a Judas?

#### Verses 32-34

Name some things mentioned by John, but not mentioned by the other writers.  
After the supper, Jesus and the disciples went out to what place?

#### Mark 15:1-5

Who was Annas, and who was Caiaphas?



To what extent did the Romans interfere in the Jews' religion?  
 What was done in the house of Annas?  
 What in the house of Caiaphas?  
 Give what facts you can about the trial before

Pilate.  
 What was his decision, and why was it not carried out?  
 Discuss the reflections.

Lesson X—June 7, 1942

**FRIDAY: THE DAY OF SUFFERING**

Mark 15:33, 34; Luke 23:33-46

33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

33 And when they came unto the place which is called The skull, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left.

34 And Jesus said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And parting his garments among them, they cast lots.

35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also scoffed at him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if this is the Christ of God, his chosen.

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou art the King of the Jews, save thyself.

38 And there was also a superscription over him, **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

39 And one of the malefactors that were hanged railed on him, saying, Art not thou the Christ? save thyself and us.

40 But the other answered, and rebuking him said, Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42 And he said, Jesus, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom.

43 And he said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

44 And it was now about the sixth hour, and a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour,

45 The sun's light failing: and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

46 And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Isa. 53:5.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 22:1-5, 14-19.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

June 1. M

June 2. T

June 3. W

June 4. T

June 5. F

June 6. S

June 7. S

On the Way to Calvary (Mark 15:15-25)

Nailed to the Cross (Luke 23:33-33)

A Cry of Anguish (Psalm 22:1-5)

"It Is Finished" (John 19:28-30)

Sad Hearts (Luke 23:46-56)

Wondrous Love (Rom. 5:1-11)

"Lifted Up" (John 3:11-16)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 31; Friday of the Passover week.

*Place.*—Golgotha, "a Hebrew word, meaning a skull. From its Latin equivalent, calvaria, comes our English word Calvary .... The name was due, either to a rounded rock like a skull, or to the fact that it was a place of execution and that skulls were lying

there. The locality is not certainly known."—Johnson. There are other suppositions as to why the place was called Golgotha. The truth is, we do not know why the place was so named. It was outside the walls of Jerusalem.

*Persons.*—Jesus, some soldiers, Jewish rulers, and two thieves. The other writers mention others.

*Lesson Links*—Pilate had a peculiar custom; at the Passover Feast he released to the Jews one of their number from prison. It seems that the Jews were allowed to name the one they wished to be released. At this time he held in prison a Jew named Barabbas, "one who for a certain insurrection made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison." This man was also a robber. He was an all-round bad man, a dangerous man to be at large. When Pilate desired to release Jesus, the leaders of the Jews cried out, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas." They wanted to put to death the greatest benefactor that had ever come their way, and have turned loose on their people a dangerous and hardened criminal. And the more Pilate urged them to agree for him to release Jesus the more urgent they became that he be crucified. When Pilate washed his hands before them, as if that cleared his hands of blood, and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man," they replied, "His blood be on us, and on our children." When Jesus was delivered into the hands of the soldiers, they treated him shamefully and cruelly; but then they were heathen, and that was all fun to them.

To add to the shame of crucifixion it is said that the condemned criminal was compelled to carry his own cross to the place of execution, suffering the scoffing and the jeering of the people along the way. John says that Jesus "went out, bearing the cross for himself." But as they came out of the city, "they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to go with them, that he might bear his cross." The language of Luke—"to bear it after" him—indicates that he assisted Jesus with his burden. "And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him." To these women Jesus said, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." He said this in view of the calamities that would befall them in the destruction of Jerusalem, as the rest of what he said shows. The section from Mark will be considered in its proper connection.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### "They Crucify Him" (Verses 33, 34)

"And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death." (Luke 23:32.) Matthew and Mark call these two robbers; it may have been that they were members of Barabbas' gang. They would add insult to injury by crucifying Jesus between these two robbers. The cross was of two types: one with an upright beam, with a crossbar near the top; the other had two beams crossed like the letter X. The hands and feet were tied or nailed to the cross; Jesus was nailed to the cross. No one can realize the intensity of the suffering that attended the crashing of the rough spikes through the hands and feet; and even greater pains, if possible, would come during the long hours of hanging on the cross, when much of the weight of the body had to be held up by the spike-pierced hands, growing more tender and painful from increas-

ing inflammation. It would seem that human ingenuity never devised a more cruel method of torture. The Romans did not crucify Roman citizens; stoning was the Jewish method of execution. The victim in crucifixion was nailed to the cross, and the cross was then elevated and let drop into the hole prepared for it. The pain accompanying that performance must have been terrific. The cross was not so high as represented in the pictures we see; there was no need that it should be so high. In the midst of these cruel proceedings Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." That must have sounded strange to those who heard him. Did not the soldiers know they were crucifying the three? and did not the rulers know that they were having it done? And yet there was much about what they were doing that they did not know, and that is what counted most. They did not know that they were crucifying the Son of God, the Messiah; nor did they know the part they were playing in carrying out God's plan of human redemption. Jesus had said, "Pray for them that despitefully use you." And thus he would have us manifest the same spirit he manifested on the cross.

### **Jesus Reviled and Mocked (Verses 34-37)**

Four soldiers were engaged in the actual work of crucifying Jesus. John tells more of what the soldiers did with the garments of Jesus. "The soldiers therefore, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also the coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore one to another, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be." "And the people stood beholding," the people, in contrast with the rulers. If any of this multitude had any part with the mob in shouting, "Crucify him, crucify him? his sufferings had sobered them, and they now stand, silently gazing at the awful tragedy. But the hardened rulers gloated over his sufferings, feeling sure that they had finally triumphed over him. They scoffed at him. These rulers, the Sanhedrin, the high court of the Jews, who had been instrumental in having him crucified, instead of being judicial in their bearing, were gloating, like a frenzied mob, over his sufferings. Did any other nation of civilized people ever sink so low that its rulers could so act? No wonder their doom was near. In railing on Jesus these rulers showed their stubbornness of will and depravity of heart: "He saved others." They knew of his mighty miracles of healing. They argued with the man whose eyes Jesus opened, that the man who did it was a sinner. They knew also that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, and planned to kill Lazarus because he was a living witness of the power of Jesus over death. Now they think he is helpless to save himself. If Jesus had come down from the cross, they would not have believed. And the soldiers that crucified him also mocked him, and said, "If thou art the King of the Jews, save thyself." These soldiers were used to scenes of blood and suffering, and they were heathen; yet we would expect better things even of them; and the Conduct of the rulers of the Jews, the judges of the high court of the Jews, passes all understanding.

**Pilate's Superscription (Verse 38)**

It is said that the offense for which a man was crucified was written on a board, and the board was nailed to the beam of the cross above the victim's head. John gives a fuller statement about what Pilate wrote than does Mark: "And Pilate wrote a title also, and put it on the cross. And there was written, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title therefore read many of the Jews, for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city; and it was written in Hebrew, and in Latin, and in Greek. The chief priests of the Jews therefore said to Pilate, Write, not, The King of the Jews; but, that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written." Pilate may have had two objects in writing that title—to taunt the Jews, and to have grounds for defense if the matter was brought before Caesar.

**The Two Malefactors (Verses 39-43)**

Matthew and Mark say that both robbers railed on him. There is no contradiction; evidently both railed on him near the beginning of their suffering on the cross. Things happened that would cause any thoughtful person to reconsider. Matthew says, "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour." This, together with the patient suffering of Jesus and the prayer of Jesus for his murderers, must have caused one of them to decide that Jesus was what he claimed to be; so he rebuked the other, saying, "Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" Both were soon to be ushered into the presence of God—why be a mocker even in death? And there is another striking thing about this malefactor—he recognized the justice of his execution, and that is a rare thing among criminals. He knew that he had defied the law and disregarded the rights of his fellow man in his criminal career, and was fair enough to see the justice of his condemnation. "But this man hath done nothing amiss." This shows that he had knowledge of the life Jesus had lived and of the claims he had made, and realized the injustice of the charge lodged against him. He knew that Jesus was not a criminal. Being a criminal himself and confessing it, his testimony is the more remarkable. "And he said, Jesus, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom." It is not clear just what is included in this petition. It seems unreasonable to think that this criminal knew more about the nature of the kingdom of Christ than did the apostles who had been constantly in his company and under his teaching. The apostles then looked for an earthly kingdom; they shared the common ideas of the Jews that the Messiah would rule on a throne in Jerusalem. It does not seem possible that this criminal could have had a different sort of kingdom in mind; and he would hardly have thought of heaven as the kingdom of Jesus. He knew of the mighty miracles of Jesus. It seems reasonable to suppose therefore that these wonderful phenomena that were taking place in connection with the crucifixion of Jesus made him think that Jesus was about to show these mockers that he could save himself and come down from the cross. In that event he would assert his authority, and enter upon his reign at once. If so, the thief did not want to be left on the cross. The reply of Jesus informed him that no such kingdom would be established that day. Said Jesus, "To-day shalt thou be with me

in Paradise." Whatever else happened, it was some comfort to this man to know that he would be in the company of Jesus; he had not been used to such company.

From Acts 2:31 we learn that Jesus was in Hades between his death and his resurrection. Hades means the unseen, and refers to the unseen state of the dead between death and the resurrection; but as Jesus was also to be in paradise that day, it follows that paradise was that part of Hades where the righteous go when they die. So the thief's penitence, confession, and prayer had brought to him the promise of being with the righteous after death. He was a Jew, and therefore a member of the old covenant. He was not an alien sinner.

### **Jesus Yields Up His Spirit (Verses 44-46)**

Darkness came over the land, lasting from noon till three o'clock in the afternoon. Matthew mentions other miraculous demonstrations. "And the veil of the temple was rent in the midst." It was rent from top to bottom. This was a richly wrought curtain separating the Holy from the Most Holy place. It does seem that these rulers would have seen that God's hand was in these matters, but in their hatred and fanaticism they had lost all ability to reason. It is a mystery how they could be so blind. Perhaps these demonstrations made the people more thoughtful, and put them in a frame of mind to give heed to Peter's sermon on Pentecost. The centurion and the soldiers were greatly affected, and said, "Truly this was the Son of God." It is possible that this centurion was Cornelius.

Jesus did not say much on the cross. Three of his statements made on the cross are recorded by Luke. It would be good exercise for the student to look up some other statements recorded by the other writers. As the end drew near, he said, "It is finished." Then he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." He then breathed his last. To all observers it seemed that his enemies had conquered, and his enemies went home feeling that Jesus would bother them no more. That worry they felt sure had ended. But how little they knew of what was yet to come. How frail are men when they fight against God, or fail to take him into account in their plans! What seems to be their wisest moves frequently turn out to be their greatest folly.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

The betrayal, trial, and crucifixion was a real tragedy; and the many parts of that tragedy had been written by different writers at different times, without collaboration; and each actor, save Jesus, played his role without knowing that his part had been written.

To the one who has never been a Christian: Do not for a moment think you can "be saved like the thief on the cross." That is impossible. He was a Jew and in covenant relation with God; you are not. The gospel plan of salvation had not then been announced; it had not even been perfected. The thief did not believe that Jesus died for our sins, and he certainly did not believe that Jesus had risen from the dead. You cannot be saved without believing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 10:8-10.) Why not want to be saved like an honest man? Why not want to "be saved like" the Pentecostans? The gospel now is God's power for saving men.

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

The illegalities in the trial and condemnation of Jesus.  
 The words of Jesus on the cross.  
 Why we cannot "be saved like the thief on the cross."

**QUESTIONS**

Where is the lesson found?  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, place, and persons.  
 What custom did Pilate have with reference to prisoners?  
 Whom did he wish to release, and whom did he release?  
 How did the soldiers treat Jesus?  
 Tell about the journey to the place of crucifixion.

**Verses 33, 34**

Describe a cross, and what other shame was added to the crucifixion of Jesus?  
 For what did Jesus pray?

**Verses 34-37**

How many soldiers were engaged in crucifying Jesus?

What about his clothes?  
 Describe the conduct of the rulers and the soldiers.

**Verse 38**

Repeat the superscription, and what the Jews said about it.

**Verses 39-43**

Tell about the conduct of the robbers.  
 Tell what Luke said about one of them, and the answer Jesus gave him.

**Verses 44-46**

Discuss verses 44-46.  
 Discuss the reflections.

Lesson XI—June 14, 1942

**SUNDAY: THE RISEN CHRIST AND HIS DISCIPLES**

Luke 24:33-48

33 And they rose up that very hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

35 And they rehearsed the things that happened in the way, and how he was known of them in the breaking of the bread.

36 And as they spake these things, he himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit.

38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and wherefore do questionings arise in your heart?

39 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.

40 And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.

41 And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here anything to eat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish.

43 And he took it, and ate before them.

44 And he said unto them, These are my words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their mind, that they might understand the scriptures;

46 And he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day;

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

48 Ye are witnesses of these things.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Ye are witnesses of these things." (Luke 24:48.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 16:5-11.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—*

June 8. M  
 June 9. T  
 June 10. W  
 June 11. T  
 June 12. F  
 June 13. S  
 June 14. S

The Empty Tomb (John 20:1-10)  
 Reality of the Resurrection (Luke 24:33-43)  
 The Promise of Power (Acts 15:1-9)  
 The Ascension (Luke 24: 0  
 Highly Exalted (Phil. 2:5-11)  
 Alive Forevermore (Rev. 1:9-16)  
 Unseen, but Loved (1 Pet. 1:1-9)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—Probably A.D. 31; the Sunday following the crucifixion of Christ.

*Place.*—Jerusalem.

*Persons.*—Jesus and the disciples.

*Lesson Links*—When Jesus was crucified there was a multitude of silent spectators present; it does not seem that they had taken any part against Jesus. The demeanor of Jesus on the cross and the phenomena in nature made a deep impression on them. "And all the multitudes that came together to this sight, when they beheld the things that were done, returned smiting their breasts." It is likely that many of these were among the number that so readily accepted the gospel in Jerusalem and Judea.

At least two members of the Sanhedrin—Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea—had no part in condemning Jesus. When it was known that Jesus was dead, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus; he wanted that body to have a decent burial. Nicodemus assisted him, and they laid the body in Joseph's new tomb, "wherein was never man yet laid." On the next day the chief priests and the Pharisees said to Pilate, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said while he was yet alive, After three days I rise again. Command therefore that the sepulcher be made sure until the third day, lest haply his disciples come and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: and the last error will be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a guard: go, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone, the guard being with them." It is remarkable that the enemies of Jesus should make the testimony of his resurrection beyond dispute. But Jesus did arise. An angel from heaven rolled the stone away and sat upon it. There was also a great earthquake. The guards were overcome with fright. When they reported to the rulers what had been done, did these rulers, like honest men, say, "We have been wrong; he did arise"? No; they paid the soldiers money to say, "His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept." And that report was spread abroad among the Jews, and was never disputed by the enemies of Christ. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee." (Psalm 76:10.) Although Jesus had frequently told his disciples that he would rise again, it seems to be a fact, a strange fact, that none of them expected him to do so. Some devoted women, not believing that he would rise again, came with additional spices to put in his tomb. They had not learned of the seal on the tomb and the guards placed there. When some of these women saw Jesus and reported to other disciples that they had seen him, their "words appeared in theft sight as idle talk; and they disbelieved them." These disciples were not credulous—they were all doubters. It is not fair to single out Thomas and call him "Doubting Thomas," as if he were the only doubter in the group, or any more doubting than the others.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Two Disciples Report to the Eleven Apostles (Verses 33-35)**

The record concerning these two disciples begins with verse 13. They left Jerusalem before they heard that any of the disciples had seen Jesus alive; they had heard the report of certain women who had visited the tomb and found not the body, but had been told by angels that Jesus was alive. These two disciples were on their way to Emmaus, where possibly they lived. The topic of the disciples while Jesus was in the tomb would certainly be the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, with the inevitable question, "What shall we do now?" They had come up against darkness that could be felt, and there was no light ahead, so it would seem to them. As the two disciples journeyed toward Emmaus, "they communed with each other of all these things which had happened." Neighborhood gossip would not be of the slightest interest to the disciples at such a time. As they talked and questioned, Jesus joined their company; but they did not recognize him. After some questioning passed between them Jesus said, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?" The Jews had not connected the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah with the Messiah, else they would have known that he must die, be buried, and raised from the dead. "And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." One can scarcely refrain from wishing that this speech had been recorded. By invitation of the two disciples, Jesus entered their lodging place, perhaps their home; and at the table, while they were eating, they first discovered who he was. This discovery was so startling and important to them, that they rose up immediately, and departed for Jerusalem to tell the glad news; but they did not know what had already taken place in Jerusalem that day. When they found the apostles and other disciples gathered together, they were met with this statement: "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." He had also been seen by Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary." These two were not mentioned, perhaps, because they were not present to verify their report. Then the two disciples told of their journey to Emmaus, "and how he was known of them in the breaking of the bread." It is impossible for us to imagine their elation of spirit at this moment. By the death and burial of Jesus they had been plunged into the darkest despair. The two disciples on their way to Emmaus had expressed to their then unknown companion the feelings of all: "But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel." Now the clouds of doubt and the darkness of despair had vanished—Jesus had been seen alive by three of those who were present!

**Jesus Appeared to This Group (Verses 36, 37)**

It is not likely that they had much light in that room, for they were gathered there for fear of the Jews. (John 20:19, 20.) Their lights were not very bright at best. And of course there was great rejoicing and excitement as they talked about the happenings of the day. These things would account for their not seeing Jesus till he said, "Peace be unto you." They were not in a frame of mind to calmly consider what they saw and heard, and therefore "were



terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit." But this shows that they did not hold to the materialistic ideas of the Sadducees—they believed that a spirit could exist apart from the body. So far as the record shows none of the early Christians held to the materialistic theory of the Sadducees. We know that the inspired apostle Paul was not a Sadducee on the nature of man. (Acts 23:6-9.)

### **Jesus Identifies Himself (Verses 38-43)**

Jesus sought first to quiet these disturbed disciples; they could not weigh evidence or have any rational thoughts so long as they were so terrified. And so he calmly asked them, "Why are ye troubled? and wherefore do questionings arise in your heart?" There before them stood the body they had seen all the days of their journeys with them, the same body that had been nailed to the cross, the same hands and feet that they had seen nailed to the cross. Had it been a different body, a glorified body, a different body assuming the likeness of his natural body, there would have been deception; and one recoils from the thought that Jesus practiced deception on these bewildered men. To make the matter sure to them, Jesus said, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having." And so Jesus appeared to them in his natural body, and invited the disciples to satisfy themselves by the closest inspection. He showed them his hands and his feet. There could have been no mistake—the body that was crucified and buried now stood alive before them! And yet for the moment "they still disbelieved for joy." To them it was too good to be true the joy of seeing him was mixed with doubt as to whether it really was he. To further assure them and to bring them down to realities, he asked, "Have ye here anything to eat?" While they were in such a highly emotional state, that request would sound strange to them; who would think of eating on such an occasion? But the question served to bring them back to practical things; besides, who will say that Jesus did not want something to eat? At least, when they gave him a piece of broiled fish, he did eat. Here was a practical demonstration of his reality—a demonstration that the same Jesus who was crucified was now alive before them.

### **"Thus It Is Written" (Verses 44-48)**

Among other things which Jesus had formerly said to the disciples about the prophecies concerning him is the following: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all the things that are written through the prophets shall be accomplished unto the Son of man. For he shall be delivered up unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and shamefully treated, and spit upon: and they shall scourge and kill him: and the third day he shall rise again." (Luke 18:31-33.) The Jews did not always distinguish between the law, the psalms, and the prophets, for they sometimes included all the Old Testament in the term law; but Jesus would here have them to understand that there were prophecies concerning him, not only in the prophets, but also in the first five books of the Bible and also in the psalms. It is not necessary for us to conclude that Jesus used some miraculous powers in opening their mind. Paul was sent to the Gentiles to open their eyes. (Acts 26:16-18.) Such things are done by teaching, and that is what such expressions have meant all down the ages till now. If

a sinner has to wait for God to open his eyes in some miraculous way, then he is not to be blamed if his eyes are never opened, not to be blamed if he never understands what to do. Jesus placed the blame where it belongs when he said, "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them."

"And he said unto them, Thus it is written." Jesus was here affirming that, not only had the things he suffered and his resurrection had been foretold by the prophets, but that the prophets had also foretold that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." In view of much that is said these days about the object and scope of the Old Testament prophecies, this is an illuminating statement. Repentance and remission of sins had been preached by John the Baptist, but he did not preach repentance and remission of sins in the name of Christ—that was to begin at Jerusalem; and it had been so written in the prophets. This preaching was not to be done unto all the nations, and not merely to the Jews, beginning from Jerusalem. Jesus must have had such passages as the following in mind: "And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." (Isa. 2:2, 3.) This same thing is expressed in Mic. 4:1, 2. It is very important that we notice that this preaching repentance and pardon in the name of Christ was to begin in the city of Jerusalem. In a kingdom, in an absolute monarchy, no one can issue laws and grant pardon except the king, and he cannot do so till he is actually inducted into his office—till he is crowned king and assumes the throne. It was necessary therefore that Jesus be crowned and occupy his throne before repentance and remission of sins were preached in his name. One needs only to read the second chapter of the Acts to see that repentance and remission were preached that day in the name of Christ; he was then on his throne and offering pardon to criminals. Jesus had chosen his apostles as his witnesses, not only of his works, death, and resurrection, but "of these things," that is, of his teaching. And he authorized them to begin their witnessing in Jerusalem, where their testimony could have been disproved, if such were possible. The enemies tried to keep them from continuing to give their testimony, but they never tried to disprove what they said; and their failure to try to do so is overwhelming proof that they knew they could not disprove what these witnesses testified. They tried to intimidate, but never to disprove.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

The doubts and disbelief of these early disciples, when evidence began to come to them that Jesus had risen, is proof that they were not the sort of men to be imposed upon by fake evidence; and this slowness to believe is a guarantee to us that their evidence is reliable.

Some people think that faith ends where sight begins. Such expressions as this are heard: "When faith is lost in sight." But with these disciples faith began in sight—they would not believe till they saw. Thomas was no exception. Jesus said to Thomas, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed."

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

How the incredulity of the disciples increased the value of their testimony.  
The gospel for both Jews and Gentiles alike.  
The gospel of Christ is the scheme of redemption foretold by the prophets.

### QUESTIONS

Where is the lesson found?  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

What shows that neither Jesus nor the disciples were materialists?

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, place, and persons.  
What effect did the crucifixion of Jesus have on the multitudes present?  
Tell about Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.  
What plea did the priests make to Pilate, and what was done about it?  
Tell about the guards at the tomb.  
Was Thomas more doubtful than the others?  
Give reason for your answer.

#### Verses 33-35

Tell about the journey of two disciples to Emmaus, and their return.

#### Verses 36, 37

Tell about the appearance of Jesus.

#### Verses 38-43

Tell how Jesus identified himself to the disciples.  
In what body did he appear?

#### Verses 44-48

What had Jesus formerly told the disciples?  
In verses 46, 47, what did he say had been written?  
What particular thing was to distinguish their preaching repentance and remission of sins?  
Where had such things been written in the prophets?  
In an absolute monarchy, who can give laws and issue pardons?  
Of what were the disciples to be witnesses?  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson XII—June 21, 1942

### THE TASK COMMITTED TO THE DISCIPLES

Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:49-53

16 But the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

14 And afterward he was manifested unto the eleven themselves as they sat at meat; and he upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them that had seen him after he was risen.

15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation.

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.

17 And these signs shall accompany them that believe: in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.

20 And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen.

49 And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high.

50 And he led them out until they were over against Bethany: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven.

52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

53 And were continually in the temple, blessing God.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." (Mark 16:15.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Isa. 49:1-6.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

June 15. M

June 16. T

June 17. W

June 18. T

June 19. F

June 20. S

June 21. S

The Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20)

Stirring Up the Gift of God (2 Tim. 1:1-14)

Preparation for Service (Eph. 4:1-16)

Philip and the Ethiopian (Acts 8:26-40)

Come . . . and Help Us (Acts 16:6-10)

Approved unto God (2 Tim. 2:14-16)

The Gospel for All (Rev. 22:16, 17)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—The period of forty days between the resurrection and ascension of Christ.

*Places.*—Jerusalem, and a mountain in Galilee.

*Persons.*—Jesus, his eleven apostles, and above five hundred brethren.

*Lesson Links*—Jesus had taught and trained his chosen witnesses; he had shed his blood for the remission of sins, and had been "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." He showed himself alive to his chosen witnesses at different times and under different circumstances for the space of about forty days, so that they could not have been mistaken as to his identity. Now the time for the launching of his great plan of salvation was drawing near; the giving of the Great Commission was a necessary preparation for the launching of that plan. The promises to Abraham and the prophecies had pointed forward to this plan. It is generally conceded or understood that both promises and prophecies looked forward to only one plan of human redemption. That the gospel plan of salvation preached by the apostles is the plan foretold in promise and prophecy is plainly taught in the New Testament. Concerning the promise made to Abraham Paul says, "Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." (Gal. 3:16.) And if we are Christ's we are of the seed of Abraham, "heirs according to promise." And that the gospel plan of salvation preached by the apostles was and is the plan foretold by the prophets is plainly taught in the New Testament. Paul was designated as the apostle to the Gentiles, and preached that under the gospel God made no distinction between Jew and Gentile; and yet he affirmed to Agrippa that he preached "nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come; how that the Christ must suffer, and how that he

first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles." (Acts 26:22, 23.) "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which he promised afore through his prophets in the holy scriptures." (Rom. 1:1, 2.) "But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no distinction." (Rom. 3: 21, 22.) There are many other passages to the same effect. Hence, the plan of salvation foretold in promise and prophecy is that plan which was preached by the apostles—the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, it is strange that some say that the plan of human redemption foretold in promise and prophecy has not yet been inaugurated.

## **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON**

### **The Meeting in Galilee (Verses 16, 17)**

On the night of his betrayal, Jesus said to his apostles, "But after I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee." (Matt. 26:32.) On the morning of his resurrection an angel said to the women who were early at the tomb, "Go quickly, and tell his disciples, He is risen from the dead; and lo, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him." When Jesus met these women, he said to them, "Go tell my brethren that they depart into Galilee, and there shall they see me." But Jesus appeared to his disciples in Jerusalem a number of times before he departed into Galilee. It was eight days later when he appeared to Thomas. (John 20:26-29.) Hence, that meeting on a mountain in Galilee did not come immediately after his resurrection. Jesus had appointed a certain mountain and a certain time for that meeting; otherwise they would not have known where or when to meet him. Some of these disciples arrived in Galilee before the time for the appointed meeting. Peter, not wishing to be idle, or perhaps needing some food or funds, said, "I go a fishing." The others with him said, "We also come with thee." While they were fishing, Jesus appeared to them. John adds this note: "This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after that he was risen from the dead." That is, this was the third time he had appeared to the disciples as a group, for he had appeared to individuals.

At the appointed time the eleven disciples went to "the mountain where Jesus had appointed them." This shows that a certain mountain had been designated. As this is the only meeting mentioned, the time and place of which had been appointed, it must have been the meeting in which "he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once." (See 1 Cor. 15:1-7.) Perhaps the "some" who doubted were of the five hundred, who had not yet seen him after his resurrection; but of course their doubts soon vanished.

### **Jesus Speaks with Authority (Verses 18-20)**

The word "therefore" in verse 19 should center our thoughts on what is said in verse 18: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." By virtue of the authority given him he commanded the apostles to go, make disciples, baptize, and teach them. It has been argued, that though all authority had been given

him, it did not follow that he was exercising all authority! But the word "therefore" shows that he was giving those commands because he had been given all authority. "Make disciples." A disciple is a learner; he is one who has accepted a certain person as his teacher. Those who accept Jesus as their teacher, their master, are to be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Into indicates transition, and the name signifies authority. Hence baptism places one under the combined authority of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In that relationship salvation is enjoyed. Those who are so taught and baptized are to be further taught. Make disciples—baptize them—teach them to observe all things commanded. By the very terms of this commission the baptism of infants is ruled out. "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." McGarvey says, "This promise includes more than his mere presence. When we urge men to a dangerous and difficult undertaking, and say, We will be with you; we promise them our cooperation and support. Such is the meaning of Jesus: he is with his people to help them and to protect them. The promise is limited only by 'the end of the world.' The term rendered world (aion) frequently means age: but whether we render it world or age in this place the meaning is the same, for the age referred to must be the Christian age, and this will end with the world itself. While the world stands, therefore, Christ, possessed of all authority in heaven and in earth, is pledged to be with his church."

#### **A Meeting in Jerusalem (Mark 16:14)**

This is the meeting mentioned in Luke 24:33-43, which was in our last lesson. It was in the night of the day in which Jesus arose from the dead. At least, it is plain that it was not the meeting which occurred on a mountain in Galilee. Bible readers are too much given to thinking that Jesus announced the Great Commission on one occasion, and that Matthew, Mark, and Luke merely give their versions of what he said. But Jesus was with his disciples at different times during the forty days after his resurrection, "speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God." It seems therefore more reasonable to conclude that Matthew gives a condensed report of what he said on one occasion; Mark, on another occasion; and Luke, on another occasion.

#### **Mark's Record of the Great Commission (Verses 15, 16)**

In both Matthew's and Mark's report we have the command to go, and the whole world was to be their field of operations. It was not meant that any one person should go everywhere, for that would be impossible. Where Matthew has "make disciples," Mark has "preach the gospel." People must be informed about this great salvation through Christ. Up to the time of the giving of this commission no one knew, not even the apostles, why Christ died or what people must do to appropriate the benefits of his death. Absolute darkness prevailed; the giving of the Great Commission was the dawning of the day which blazed into full glory on Pentecost. In this commission, where Matthew has "baptizing them into the name," Mark has, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." This is so plain and emphatic that there is no excuse for anyone to misunderstand it or to ignore it. But not all would believe; "but he that

disbelieveth shall be condemned." To disbelieve is to refuse to give assent to what is heard; and the one who refuses to be baptized thereby refuses to give assent to what has been commanded. Hence, disbelief is in reality disobedience. To believe and be baptized is to be saved; to disbelieve is to be condemned. Here are two roads; one leads to salvation, the other leads to condemnation.

### **The Word Confirmed by Signs (Verses 17-20)**

Two things should be carefully noted: The distinction between miracles in general and miracles as signs, and the purpose of signs. The world and all things in it were created by a succession of miracles, but these were not signs; but when through human agency the sick are cured, the lame and blind are healed, or the dead raised, such manifestations of divine power were signs that God was with such a person—such miracles are called signs. It was necessary that they accompany a new revelation to show to the people that God's hand was in the matter, and it would help the one making the revelation to know that he himself was not the victim of a hallucination. Not all the early disciples had these miraculous powers, and only those who had these powers could do what Jesus mentions in verses 17 and 18. And the purpose of these signs is plainly stated in verse 20: "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed." Compare this with Heb. 2:3, 4, and you will note that those who heard the Lord speak this great salvation repeated it to others, "God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will."

### **The Ascension of Christ (Luke 24:49-53)**

We had Luke's record of the Great Commission in our last lesson. Each record sets forth plainly the duty of preaching to all nations, and putting them all together we learn what the sinner must do to be saved. From Luke we learn that the preaching was to begin at Jerusalem. "And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you." This promise was the power which would enable them to reveal the gospel and to confirm it by signs. This was the baptism of the Holy Spirit. "And, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence." (Acts 1:4, 5.) Jesus had repeatedly promised them this power. (Matt. 10:19, 20; John 14:25, 26; 15:26; 16:7-13.) This power was to bring to their remembrance all that Jesus had taught them, and also to guide them into all truth. It was through the men inspired by the Holy Spirit that the Holy Spirit was to exert his power on the hearts of men; the words they spoke were the words of the Holy Spirit. And because the Holy Spirit was to operate through human agency, the apostles were commanded to preach to the whole creation to all nations. "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8.) "And he led them out until they were over against Bethany." They were on the Mount of Olives, for Acts 1:12 tells us that they returned to Jerusalem from

the mount called Olivet. On Olivet he blessed them, and was carried up into heaven. Of course these disciples stood gazing after him, till a cloud received him out of their sight; and still they stood gazing into the heavens, hoping to get another glimpse of him. "And while they were looking stedfastly into heaven as he went, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven." (Acts 1:10, 11.)

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Jesus patiently taught his apostles during his personal ministry, and even after he arose from the dead spoke to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. During these forty days he commanded them on different occasions to carry the gospel to the uttermost part of the earth; and promised them infallible guidance and miracle-working powers. Why all this preparation? Because they were to be—

1. His witnesses.
2. Ministers of the new covenant. (2 Cor. 3:6.)
3. Ministers of reconciliation; and as such they were—
4. Ambassadors on behalf of Christ.

Since they were empowered to begin their work on Pentecost, the Lord has never told anyone in person what to do to be saved, nor has an angel done so. That is the reason Cornelius was required to send for Peter; also the reason Saul was sent into Damascus to be told what to do.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The authority of Christ.  
 The apostles of Christ.  
 Summing up the Great Commission.  
 The first sermon under the Great Commission.

### QUESTIONS

Where is the lesson found?  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

Discuss this meeting in Jerusalem.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
 Show that the plan of salvation announced in the Great Commission, and preached by the apostles is the plan foretold in promise and prophecy.

#### Verses 15, 16

Repeat verses 15, 16.  
 Compare these verses with Matt. 28:19.  
 Why was it necessary for the apostles to preach the gospel?  
 Discuss verse 16.

#### Verses 16, 17

What did Jesus and an angel say about a meeting in Galilee?  
 Name some of the appearances of Jesus before the disciples went to Galilee.  
 Tell how Jesus appeared to some of them before the appointed meeting.  
 How many saw him in that meeting?

#### Verses 17-20

Discuss the difference between miracles in general and miracles as signs.  
 Why were signs necessary in making new revelations?  
 Read and discuss Heb. 2:3, 4.

#### Luke 24:49-53

Give Luke's record of the Great Commission.  
 What power was promised the apostles?  
 How was the Holy Spirit to exert his power on the hearts of people?  
 From what point did Jesus ascend?  
 Tell what you can about this ascension.  
 Discuss the reflections.

#### Verses 18-20

Repeat verse 18; also verses 19, 20.  
 What is the significance of "therefore" in verse 19?  
 Discuss the items of verses 19, 20.

#### Mark 16:14



## Lesson XIII—June 28, 1942

**ALCOHOL FACTS VERSUS DRINKING PROPAGANDA**

Prov. 21:17; 23:32; Isa. 5:20-23; Hos. 4:11; Joel 3:2, 3; Eph. 5:18

- 17 He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man:  
He that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.
- 32 At the last it biteth like a serpent,  
And stingeth like an adder.
- 20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!
- 21 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight !
- 22 Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink;
- 23 That justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!
- 11 Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the understanding.
- 2 I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehosaphat; and I will execute judgment upon them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations: and they have parted my land,
- 3 And have cast lots for my people, and have given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink.
- 18 And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit.
- GOLDEN TEXT.*—"If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." (Prov. 1:10.)
- DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Prov. 3:13-18.
- DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—
- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| June 22. M | The Truth About Alcohol (Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35) |
| June 23. T | Alcohol, the Enemy of the Mind (Dan. 1:8-20)   |
| June 24. W | Alcohol, a Source of Poverty (Prov. 31:4-7)    |
| June 25. T | Alcohol and Race Welfare (Isa. 5:11, 12, 24)   |
| June 26. F | A Temple of God (1 Cor. 3:12-17)               |
| June 27. S | Liquor a Stumbling Block (1 Cor. 8:9-13)       |
| June 28. S | False Propaganda (Isa. 5:20-23)                |

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—This will be given in the discussion of each reference.

*Places.*—Places will be mentioned under each reference.

*Persons.*—These also will be given under each reference.

*Lesson Links*—As Jesus said of the poor, so we may say of the drink problem, that we have it always with us. No evil can be entirely eradicated; the drink evil is no exception. It can be held in check to some extent by teaching and proper law enforcement; but the church must confine its efforts to teaching, rebuking, and exhorting. In addition to this, the members can also set good examples.

Thousands of dollars are paid for advertising beer over the radio and in the press. Many whisky advertisements, arranged in the most attractive way man's ingenuity can think up, clutter up the pages of magazines. This great effort to popularize drinking is succeeding all too well. It is possible that this determined effort on the part of interested parties to increase the sale of intoxicating

liquors may turn the tide of public sentiment against the distillers and brewers. A long time ago for a special purpose Jesus used this proverb: "By their fruits ye shall know them"; and that proverb has a wide range.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Do Not Follow Sinners (Verse 17)

The proverbs were written by Solomon, king of the whole body of Israel; the book was evidently written in Jerusalem during his reign as king; that is between 1015 B.C. and 975 B.C. The Lord gave Solomon wisdom above all that were before him, but in many ways Solomon made poor use of that wisdom. Solomon started out well; he prayed for wisdom, that he might know how to govern the people over whom he had been placed. That was an unselfish plea; but it seems that Solomon became self-centered. Yet he retained his wisdom. An abundance of wisdom is set forth in the proverbs.

Very few sinners ever said something like this to the young: Do not follow my example; to do so will bring you trouble and ruin. And yet it is singular that a person who has ruined himself by self-indulgence will seek to drag others down with him. It is not supposed that an ungodly man will give good advice. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked." (Psalm 1:1.) "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and walk not in the way of evil men." (Prov. 4:14.) 'CA man of violence enticeth his neighbor, and leadeth him in a way that is not good." (Prov. 16:29.) "Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals." (1 Cor. 15:33.) A person cannot follow evil people without getting into evil things.

#### The Evil Effects of Drunkenness (Prov. 23:32)

In addition to Solomon's superhuman wisdom, he could speak out of the fullness of experience. Said he, "I searched in my heart how to cheer my flesh with wine." (Eccles. 2:3.) Solomon pronounced all his worldly experiments to be vanity and a vexation of the spirit; and that is as true now as it was then. The connection in which this verse of our lesson is found shows that Solomon was here speaking of excessive drinking. In verse 30 he speaks of those "that tarry long at the wine." And in the verse of our lesson we have the phrase "at the last"—"at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder," It is the stage in which the deluded victim of his own folly is suffering the nervous and mental disorder known as delirium tremens, as is shown by the next verse: "Thine eyes shall behold strange things." Did you ever see a victim suffering the horrors of delirium tremens? If not, count yourself fortunate. It is a horrible sight to behold, and it must be many times more horrible to the victim. It is a condition which the victim brought on himself—a condition which he could have avoided, but its being self-inflicted does not make it any less horrible.

#### Woes Pronounced on Evil Workers (Isa. 5:20-23)

Isaiah's introduction of himself and his prophecies: "The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah." His prophesying therefore began about 755 B.C., and perhaps continued till near 700 B.C. He lived and prophesied in Jerusalem, and the most of his prophecies were directed to the people of

the kingdom of Judah. From what he says in the sixth chapter it seems that he began to prophesy in the year that Uzziah died. The people of Judah had become very corrupt. His prophecies rebuked the wicked, and encouraged the righteous.

In studying this lesson we should read carefully verses 18 and 19: "Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of falsehood, and sin as it were with a cart rope; that say, Let him make speed, let him hasten his work, that we may see it; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!" Verse 18 speaks of those who sin on a big scale, and verse 19 shows their defiance of Jehovah. They daringly and contemptuously call on him to make good his threats, so steeped in sin and rebellion had they become. Continued indulgence in sin, or any sort of disobedience, so blinds the eyes and warps the judgment, that evil appears to such as the good and right thing to do, and the good, even good people, seem to them to be evil. It is not uncommon for such characters to call good people hypocrites. Anyone who has been engaged in a contest when moral questions were involved has seen this verse demonstrated. Even in religious matters some have become so wedded to things not found in the Bible that they speak disarmingly of some plain commands of the Lord. This opens up a field too wide to discuss here, but the student can see the truth of it by things he has heard. "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight. People of that sort are too numerous. Some of them reject the Bible as foolishness; and some who profess to accept the Bible as a revelation from God presume to know that certain commands of the Lord are not necessary. As the Bible makes no such statements, the one who does so state is wise in his own eyes—he professes to be wise enough to pass judgment on the Lord's requirements. All the afore-mentioned people are classed with those who "are mighty to drink wine." Woe is pronounced upon all of them. The phrase "mighty to drink wine" must refer to heavy drinkers; and occasionally someone brags of his ability to drink and keep going. Instead of being strong against falling into evil ways, they are strong to drink and to compound strong drink. And the man who thus drinks is a great enemy of himself—it injures his body, beclouds his mind, and destroys his soul. The drunkard is classed with the most corrupt and degraded characters, none of which shall inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Gal. 5:19-21.)

And a woe is pronounced upon those who justify the wicked for a bribe. It seems that bribery was widespread; it was bound to be so when wickedness of all sorts had become so alarmingly common in the land. Instead of conducting themselves as God's people should, the people of Judah had gone far from him. Had they adhered to the law of Moses, there would have been no bribes offered nor taken. Even the leading men of Judah led in wickedness. "Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth bribes, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them." (Isa. 1:23.) Their law said, "Thou shalt take no bribe: for a bribe blindeth them that have sight, and perverteth the words of the righteous." (Ex. 23:8.) The men upon whom these woes are pronounced "take away the righteousness of the righteous from him." That is a peculiar expression, and exactly what is meant is not so clear. Perhaps they slander the righteous, and thus make it appear to the people

that he is not righteous; or it may mean that by false judgments they deny him the righteousness of his cause, and so rob him of his rights.

### **Dissipation Takes Away the Understanding (Hos. 4:11)**

Hosea's introduction of himself: "The word of Jehovah that came into Hosea the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel." This puts the period of his prophecy between 785 B.C. and 725 B.C. Amos had been prophesying some years when Hosea began, and Hosea had been prophesying several years when Isaiah began. Micah began to prophesy while both Hosea and Isaiah were active. And so it seems that the more corruption there was in the land the more prophets God raised up. The northern kingdom, the kingdom of Israel, was carried into captivity shortly after the days of Hosea. The prophecies of Hosea are directed mostly to the kingdom of Israel, the ten tribes. It is not certain whether Hosea was a citizen of Israel or Judah. However every righteous person in the kingdom of Israel regarded Jerusalem as the place of worship.

Perhaps spiritual whoredom is referred to in this verse of our lesson. Israel had been espoused to Jehovah, and had violated that marriage covenant by going off after other gods. In doing so, they had lost all understanding of the right. Verse 6: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." And this condition was also speeded up by their much use of wine. It is a well-known fact that people under the influence of intoxicants have little or no understanding; and that is what makes them a menace both to themselves and to others.

### **Judgment on Nations (Joel 3:2, 3)**

Little is known of Joel; he merely introduces himself as the son of Pethuel. He prophesied in Judah, probably in Jerusalem. The date of his prophecies is not definitely known, but was probably between the years 810 B.C. and 795 B.C.

Jehovah had told his people what would come upon them if they did not hearken to his voice. (Deut. 28:15-68.) Now read the first and the second chapters of Joel and see what distress had come upon the people of Judah. Famine and war stalked in the land; later they would be carried into captivity. In the latter part of chapter two Joel makes a prophecy concerning the pouring out of the Spirit; Peter quotes this on Pentecost, as fulfilled on that day. Joel says, "In those days, and in that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat."

There is no account in those days of any place called the valley of Jehoshaphat; it perhaps is a figurative expression, and means the same as the valley of decision in verse 14. You will notice that the things mentioned were to come to pass "in those days, and in that time." The passage is difficult; the nations referred to were the nations that had oppressed God's people, "whom they have scattered among the nations." This prophecy speaks in this clause as if it had already occurred; that is frequently done in prophecies. Israel had not been scattered among the nations when Joel prophesied; but when that time came, the nations would do as they pleased with the land and the people. They would trade a boy for a harlot,

and sell a girl for wine. A nation is at a low ebb when things like that can happen; but nations are made up of people, and can be no better than the people who make them.

**"Be Not Drunken with Wine" (Eph. 5:18)**

Among the other evils to which drunkenness leads is rioting, and there is bloodshed in such drunken rioting. "But be filled with the Spirit." It would be hard to draw a wider contrast than Paul here sets forth. Drunkenness leads to degradation of body and soul here, and to destruction of the soul in the world to come; to be filled with the Spirit is peace and joy here, and eternal life in the world to come.

**SOME REFLECTIONS**

If you would be of use in the kingdom of God, you must lead a clean life. Suppose everybody led lives of drunkenness and other forms of degradation, what sort of country would we have? If everybody in the country—man, woman, and child—should all be drunk together for just one single day, what would result? If one has a right to be drunk for a day, then everybody has a right to be drunk the same day.

There is no worth-while thing that drunkenness helps a person to do. Is that not worth thinking about? And if you try to make a list of the evils that come from drunkenness, you will find yourself engaged in an endless task. No one can find a sensible answer to the question, Why be a drunkard? Not even the distiller will brag about how many drunkards his products have produced; that is one thing he does not advertise.

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

The evils of social drinking.  
Reasons for clean living.  
How corruption destroys a nation.

**QUESTIONS**

Where is the lesson found?  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

Name some such people.  
What is said here of wine drinkers?  
What is the Bible teaching on taking bribes?

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.  
How does law enforcement help to check drunkenness?  
What do you consider the most effective way to check drunkenness?

**Hos. 4:11**

Who was Hosea, and when did he prophesy?  
To whom did he mostly prophesy?  
Discuss this verse of our lesson.

**Verse 17**

Who wrote the proverbs?  
What sort of life did he live?  
Discuss this verse of our lesson.  
Give other appropriate verses.

**Joel 3:2, 3**

Who was Joel, and to whom and where did he prophesy?  
Name some things Jehovah had said would be the penalty for disobedience.  
What was the condition of Judah in Joel's day?  
What prophecy of his was fulfilled on the first Pentecost after Christ arose?  
What was to happen "in those days, and in that time"?  
What shows the deep corruption of the nations?

**Prov. 23:32**

Give the connection in which this verse appears.  
"At the last," what results from drunkenness?

**Isa. 5:20-23**

Who was Isaiah, and when did he prophesy?  
What is said in verses 18, 19?  
What does evil living do for one's judgment?  
Discuss the phrase, "Wise in their own eyes."

**Eph. 5:18**

Repeat this verse.  
Discuss the contrast.  
Discuss the reflections.

**MAP LINK**

**CLICK ICON FOR MAP**



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**THIRD QUARTER**  
**STUDIES IN GENESIS**

*AIM: To discover afresh in this book of beginnings evidences of the power, the care, the mercy, and the grace of God, and to increase our faith in God as Creator of the universe and as Ruler in the affairs of men and oi nations.*

Lesson 1—July 5, 1942

**GOD THE CREATOR**  
Gen. 1:1-5, 24-31; 2:1

- 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.  
 24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind: and it was so.  
 25 And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the ground after its kind: and God saw that it was good.  
 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.

1 And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

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

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 33:1-9.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

June 29.	M	God the Creator of the Natural Universe (Gen. 1:1-5)
June 30.	T	God the Creator of Man (Gen. 1:24-31)
July 1.	W	The Divinity of God (Rom. 1:18-25)
July 2.	T	The Power of God (Isa. 40:27-31)
July 3.	F	The Glory of God (Psalm 19:1-6)
July 4.	S	The Wisdom of God (Psalm 104:24-31)
July 5.	S	Praise to the Creator (Psalm 33:1-9)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—According to Usher's chronology, 4004 B.C.; according to Calmer, 4000 B.C.; according to Hales, who is described as "far superior in Biblical learning 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 dates back beyond the six days, how far no one knows.

*Places.*—The heavens and the earth. The exact location on the earth where animal and vegetable life was created is not known.

*Persons.*—The Godhead—The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit—and the first pair of human beings, Adam and Eve.

*Lesson Links*—In point of time no lesson can antedate this one, for this lesson deals with the beginning of all created things. But this lesson does have a close connection with all the lessons that follow. Genesis, the first book of the Bible, is aptly named; for the word Genesis means original, 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 sacrifices, human governments, the Hebrew race, the covenant of circumcision. It was written by Moses, and is the only authoritative history of the period it covers.

**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 told in one brief sentence, with no effort to embellish the statement with high-sounding adjectives. The statement itself bears the stamp of inspiration, for uninspired men use many words in telling of the beginning of anything they consider important. The beginning goes back of the six days of creation; how far back we know not. 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.

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 the whole universe. If you do not recognize the existence of God, you have to create in your mind some original cause that caused all things. Every made thing has a maker. Our experience



and observation prove this. This is common sense, and anything that is contrary to common sense is foolishness. 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 machine as the universe could not have been made by chance, and operated by "perpetual motion."

Before the six days of creation began, the earth was "waste and void," or, "without form, and void." Whether it was in this condition when created, 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 9, 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 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. As the heavens were created in the beginning, it would seem that the sun, moon, and stars were then created, for they certainly are a part of the heavens. Why, then, was there no light? Perhaps the fog and mists surrounding the earth were too thick for the light to penetrate; and although verses 14-19 seem to teach that the heavenly bodies were made on the fourth day, the language may mean that these heavenly bodies were made to appear on that day, the mist and fog having cleared away. But as all things are possible with God, he could have caused light without the sun. 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; and yet there is nothing so strange about it, for there is a mixture of light and darkness when it is neither very dark nor very light. When heavy clouds or dense fogs cover the earth it is neither very light nor very dark; 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 is called night; but when the entire period of twenty-four hours is included it is spoken of as a day. Both methods of expressions are found in verse 5: "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 and the Lower Animal Life (Verses 24-27)**

\_There was a natural order in creation. Animal life depends on vegetable life; hence vegetation was created before animals of any sort. And vegetable life must have light, and so light came before vegetables. 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 earthly creatures. He is dependent on the lower creation, and yet is master of it all. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Here is the "us" and "our" show plurality of persons. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit all had a part in the creation. 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 whence they came. Yet there is a vast difference between man and animals; and there is a difference in the phraseology used by Moses in describing their creation. It is said that man was created in the image of God; it is not so said of animals. Of all of God's earthly creatures man alone has the honor of bearing the image of God. 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 they certainly cannot be alike as to substance. "God is a Spirit." Yet in some way there is a likeness. God has intelligence, will, and emotions; he knows, wills, loves, hates, Man also has intelligence, will, and emotions; he has the power to know, to will, to love, to hate. And as God has, so man has, the power of speech. God has ruling powers; so has man, in a limited way. These are some of the points of likeness between God and man. Man was made 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." But in many ways man has made poor, and sometimes cruel, use of this God-given dominion; he has needlessly destroyed much that he should have protected. Only recently has he seen the real need of conserving forests and wild life, and many even now have no care for such things. Wild life is destroyed as a sport. In this respect the Indian was far more sensible and wise than the white man; for the Indian regarded wild life as his food supply, and conserved it.

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

The student should carefully read the second chapter. "God blessed them," the newly created couple, Adam and Eve. Because the woman was taken out of man, God 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 under moral conditions. The highest happiness and the greatest good for the human race lies in a strict adherence of God's plan. God also commanded Adam and Eve to subdue the earth and to have dominion over it. God did not intend that man should be idle even while in the garden of Eden. To subdue the earth requires both mental and physical energy and activity. The earth yields its bounty to man only as he subdues it. In the very beginning therefore God placed upon man great power and honor, and also great responsibility. The provisions God made for man, and the power and responsibility he placed upon him, show how highly God regards man. If the following quotation is read with the emphasis where it belongs, 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 with Psalm 8.) Hence, man, upright man, is but little lower than the angels. It is alarming 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 so till man's sin brought the whole world under the curse of Jehovah.

### **A Summary (Gen. 2:1)**

"And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." In the first chapter we have a general account of the creation of all things, and in the first verse of the second chapter we have a summary of creation. Also in the second chapter Moses begins the history of God's dealings with man; he therefore again repeated the origin of man. And so in this chapter we have more of the details of man's creation. In the first chapter we are told that God made man in his own likeness, and that he made a male and a female, and gave them dominion over the earth. 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 creation of the woman. In this second chapter we are told that God put this newly created couple into a garden, which he had planted for them eastward, in Eden. Jehovah therefore became the first gardener.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

All the powers, and all the possessions, we have are God-given, and they should be conserved and cultivated, and given wholeheartedly into the service of God. Gratitude, as well as a spirit of obedience, should prompt us to do so. All created things primarily belong to God, including all human beings. "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 ourselves, and whatever comes into our hands, for his honor and glory, and for the good of humanity.

The family is a divine institution: marriage is as old as the human race. In the sanctity and stability of the marriage relation 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 sometime, is responsible for much of the crime that now curses the earth. It is time that we were waking up to some unpleasant realities and trying to bring back the blessings of the home.

### **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

The Godhead in creation.  
The nature of man—what is man?  
The family and the divorce evil.

## QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.  
Why is Genesis an appropriate name for the first book of the Bible?  
Name some beginnings it records.

**Verses 1, 2**

Repeat the first two verses.  
What is striking about these two verses?  
Who laid the foundations of the earth and created the heavens?  
If we leave God out of creation, what then?  
What was the condition of the earth before the six days of creation began?  
What is said of the Spirit?

**Verses 3-5**

Discuss verses 3-5.

**Verses 24-27**

Give the order of creation.  
What shows a plurality of persons in the creation?  
Discuss the difference between man and animals.  
What dominion did God give man?  
How has man failed in his duty in respect to the lower creation?

**Verses 28-31**

Give God's first law to man.  
Discuss these verses.

**Gen. 2:1**

Repeat this verse.  
Give some facts told in the second chapter.  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson II—July 12, 1942  
**ADAM AND EVE: TEMPTATION AND SIN**  
Gen. 3:1-13, 23, 24

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.

23 Therefore Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

24 So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

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

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—1 John 1:5 to 2:2.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—*

July 6.	M	Temptation and Sin (Gen. 3:1-13)
July 7.	T	Works of the Flesh (Gal. 5:16-24)
July 8.	W	God Hates Sin (Prov. 15:1-9)
July 9.	T	The Consequences of Sin (Rom. 6:15-23)
July 10.	F	Contrition for Sin (Psalm 32:1-7)
July 11.	S	Christ Overcomes Temptation (Matt. 4:1-11)
July 12.	S	Christ Our Helper (Heb. 2:13-18)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—According to Usher, 4004 B.C., the year of the creation; but Hales gives the date of the creation as 5411. But there is no certainty in these dates; neither is it at all plain that Adam and Eve sinned the year they were created. For their food God had planted a garden in Eden before he placed them in it. "And out of the ground made Jehovah God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food"; and gave them permission to eat the fruit of all trees, save one. These trees were not created bearing fruit; they grew out of the ground. It takes time for a tree to reach fruit-bearing age. Think it over; they may have lived in that garden a hundred years! Then they may have remained there only a short time; no one knows.

*Place.*—The Garden of Eden. No one now knows the location of that garden, nor the limits and bounds of Eden. It might have been where the Persian Gulf now is.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, Adam, Eve, and the devil working through the agency of the serpent. Here Satan appears in the serpent. 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 greater light as the adversary of man; "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." He is also spoken of as "the evil one," "the prince of the powers of the air," "the prince of this world," "the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan."

*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, save only the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; death was the penalty for their disobedience in eating the fruit of that tree. This prohibition would serve as a test of their willingness to let God be their ruler. Adam and Eve were not to idle away their time in that garden; their duty was to dress the garden and keep it. There was work for them, but no toil, no weariness; for they could eat of the invigorating, the life-giving, fruit of the tree of life. It is known that weariness is the result of the death of the cells of the body; the fruit of the tree of life to which they had constant access prevented this death of cells, and consequent weariness. There is no fountain of perpetual youth, but there was a fruit of perpetual youth.

In studying this lesson you should carefully read the entire chapter, and realize that Moses gives a very brief account of what occurred.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****The Temptation of Eve (Verses 1-5)**

What form the serpent had we know not; but he must have been upright, for the curse placed upon him made him to go upon his belly. It could not be that he was 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 assumed friendliness, and not as an enemy—not letting her know that he was seeking her downfall. No schemer advertises his real purpose, but seeks to make the impression on his intended victims that he is greatly interested in their welfare. He gains a favorable hearing by flattery and this pretended interest in them. No one ever flattered another for the other's good: flattery is artistic selfishness. No doubt but that Satan flattered Eve on the beauty of her surroundings and on having such a variety of the fruit, and then asked her if they really were allowed to eat of all the fruit, making her feel that any restrictions would be a reflection on them. Perhaps Eve felt a little ashamed to admit that God did not allow them to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that the penalty for eating that fruit was death. Then the devil took square issue with Jehovah, and boldly affirmed that Jehovah knew that eating the fruit would not cause death, but that eating that fruit would make them as God, "knowing good and evil." He would make the impression on her that Jehovah was holding them in ignorance, because he did not want anyone else to be as wise as he. Of course eating the forbidden fruit did not make them as wise as Jehovah, but it did enable them to know by experience what was good and what was evil. There was therefore enough truth in what the devil said to make it a most deadly lie.

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

Satan had planted in the heart of Eve distrust of Jehovah., The fruit had three attractive qualities; it was beautiful, it would make her wise, and it was good for food. The devil must have demonstrated this last quality before her. Everybody likes to see a tree laden with 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 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 the serpent had so far destroyed these restraints that she was now ready to follow the devil instead of God. 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. 2:4.) Adam did not believe what the devil said; his transgression was deliberate, in so far as a man can be deliberate under the strong persuasion of his wife. It is certain that he was influenced by her to eat the fruit, 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.)

"And the eyes of them both were opened." This does not mean that they just then began to see with their physical eyes. Their eyes were opened in the sense that they began to see their sinfulness in disobeying God—they saw themselves as guilty sinners. They also became self-conscious, body conscious; and in their feeling of shame for their nakedness they sought to hide their nakedness with clothing made of fig leaves. Being now afraid for God to see them, they tried to hide from him. They did not know that it was impossible to hide 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 evidence that Adam and Eve knew this truth about God; and so they sought to hide from him. Hence, sin not only separates from God, but seems also to create a desire for that separation.

### **Adam and Eve Make Excuses (Verses 9-13)**

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; the woman got him into the trouble. The woman also made a sort of confession with an excuse as a defense. The serpent caused her to eat the fruit. Instead of freely confessing their sins, and pleading for mercy, 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 few Christians escape. Usually if they make any sort of confession, they are inclined to say that their sin was caused by what someone else did; or they make a sort of blanket confession, and leave the people to guess at what it was all about. We need to learn that a confession with defense is no confession at all. When David saw his sin in having Israel numbered, he "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." If a people sin, they sin; and it does not lessen their guilt to lay the blame on someone else or on circumstances. If a matter of sin is between you and God alone, confess that to him, and not to a church.

### **Adam and Eve Driven from the Garden (Verses 23, 24)**

The whole chapter is really a part of our lesson, though some of it does not appear in our printed text; these missing verses must be studied, or the lesson is not complete. In them some of the results of the sin of Adam and Eve are set forth.

The serpent was to be cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field. The marginal reading has "from among" instead of "above." And there would be perpetual enmity between the serpent and the woman—between the snake family and the human

family. And we know how that enmity continues to the present day. Nothing pleases the average person much more than to kill a snake—to bruise his head. The serpent would bruise the woman's heel. The poisonous snake habitually strikes low. This is the literal side of the famous fifteenth verse. But the verse is usually interpreted as being a prophecy of the coming of Christ, Satan's persecution of him and his followers, and the ultimate triumph of Christ. It possibly has this prophetic significance, but it is a fact that no New Testament writer so applies it. It may have no other than a literal significance. The statement could not have meant to Adam and Eve what people read into it today.

Now consider the results to Adam and Eve, and to their posterity. Adam and Eve had been commanded to multiply and fill the earth. On the woman God laid the burden of bearing children. But now, because of her sin, pain was added to the burden of childbearing, and she was to be in subjection to her husband. "And thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." In this matter many otherwise good women are disobedient to Jehovah. "And unto Adam he said, 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." Adam was required to work before he sinned, but now he would have to work against many hindering causes, many difficulties would beset his way. Work would be toil—"in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." He would no more eat of the invigorating fruit of the tree of life. He would have to work unto weariness; for his bread he would have to fight against thorns and thistles, and all other noxious growths. Work was not the curse placed upon Adam, but the curse was the conditions under which he would be compelled to make his living. But these were not all the penalties placed upon Adam and Eve and their posterity. They must not be allowed to live always; the supreme penalty for their sin was death. He was therefore driven from the garden, "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." He did not, as some think, become mortal as a result of sin; he was as mortal before he sinned as after he sinned. So long as he had access to the fruit of the tree of life, he would continue to live. And the language of verse 22 shows clearly that he would have continued to live after he sinned, had he continued to have access to the tree of life. And as we cannot have access to the tree of life here on earth, we die. Hence we die as a result of the sin of Adam and Eve, but physical death is not final; "for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Sin is not a part of human nature, for Adam and Eve were as human before they sinned as after. Sin is a foreign element in human character, as is a cinder in the eye. Sin is not transmitted to one's children any more than is a cinder in the eye.

While we do not inherit Adam's sin, we do suffer its consequences. In many ways we suffer the consequences of the sins of other people. And we also 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.) As we die through no fault of our own, so also we are to be raised from the dead through no righteousness



of our own. On our part both death and the resurrection are unconditional. "Marvel not at this: for 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." The folly and the enormity of sin is seen in its results. For the fleeting pleasure of eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve gave up the delights of the Garden of Eden and the blessings of daily communion with God, and plunged themselves and the world into suffering and death. In sinning against God they also sinned against themselves and their posterity. This reminds us that we should abstain from sin, and fight it with all our might.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

We may sin in thought, word, and deed.

The enormity of sin is seen in—

1. What it does for the sinner.
2. The suffering it causes the innocent.
3. What it cost to redeem us from sin.
4. The punishment due on account of sin.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

State the natural results of eating the fruit.  
What did Adam and Eve do?

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, place, and persons, and discuss each.  
What two trees of special mention grew in the garden?  
What was the duty of Adam regarding the garden?

#### Verses 9-13

What sort of confessions did Adam and Eve make?  
Discuss confessing sins.

#### Verses 23, 24

What curse was placed upon the serpent?  
Discuss verse 15.  
What did the Lord say to Eve?  
What did the Lord say to Adam?  
What was the curse respecting work?  
What proof that Adam and Eve would have continued to live after they sinned, had they remained in the garden?  
Why do we die?  
To what may we look forward?  
Discuss the reflections.

#### Verses 1-5

What is said of the serpent?  
Repeat and discuss the conversation between Eve and the serpent.

#### Verses 6-8

What three attractive qualities did the fruit have?  
Why did the fruit have a stronger appeal to Eve than did the command of God?  
Why did Adam eat the fruit?  
Did he believe the devil's lie?

### Lesson III—July 19, 1942 CAIN AND ABEL: A CONTRAST Gen. 4:1-15

1 And the man knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man with the help of Jehovah.

2 And again she bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Jehovah.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And Jehovah had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

6 And Jehovah said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up? and if thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door; and unto thee shall be its desire; but do thou rule over it.

8 And Cain told Abel his brother. And it came to pass. when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

9 And Jehovah said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper?

10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

11 And now cursed art thou from the ground, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee its strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth.

13 And Cain said unto Jehovah, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

14 Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the ground; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth; and it will come to pass, that whosoever findeth me will slay me.

15 And Jehovah said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And Jehovah appointed a sign for Cain, lest any finding him should smite him.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous." (Heb. 11:4.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 51:10-17.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

July 13.	M	Well-Doing and Evil-Doing (Gen. 4:1-8)
July 14.	T	Evil-Doing Punished (Gen. 4:9-15)
July 15.	W	Well-Doing Rewarded (Matt. 25:14-23)
July 16.	T	Evil-Doing Through Jealousy (James 3:13-18)
July 17.	F	Well-Doing Through Faith (Heb. 11:1-6)
July 18.	S	Faith and Works (James 2:14-26)
July 19.	S	The Righteous and the Wicked (Psalm 1:1-6)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 3876 B.C.; according to Calmet, 3871 B.C.; according to Hales, 5210 B.C. But there is nothing certain about any of these dates.

*Place.*—Not known.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel.

*Lesson Links*—The record in the first five chapters in Genesis covers a period of many hundreds of years. Of necessity only a small portion of the things said and done in that long period could be recorded in so small a space. And this short record shows that not all events were recorded in their chronological order. Many people were born whose names are not given. We have no idea as to how many sons and daughters were born to Adam and Eve. In the very nature of things these sons and daughters had to marry among themselves.

After murdering his brother Abel, "Cain went out from the presence of Jehovah, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden: . . . and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch." (Verses 16, 17.) Now it takes a lot of people to make a city; but the numerous births and the extreme age to which people then lived made a rapid increase of the population.

If the patriarchal form of worship was then practiced, as it seems to have been, then both Cain and Abel were heads of families, for both performed priestly functions in making their sacrifices.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Cain and Abel Born to Adam and Eve (Verses 1, 2)**

It seems that Cain and Abel were the first children born into the world, though it cannot be definitely proved that these were the first children born in this new family. Adam Clarke expresses the opinion that Cain and Abel were twins, but his reasoning seems to be inconclusive. But it seems certain that they had so advanced in years as to reach the years of maturity when Cain killed Abel. Both had established themselves in occupations. "And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground." There were no great factories, and there was no such thing as "the unemployment problem." There was no "land problem," for everyone had access to the wide open spaces. Life was simple; they were not vexed with the complex problems of modern civilization, and yet their civilization was as modern to them as ours is to us. We talk so much of modern civilization and of these modern times, that we forget that every period of history was modern to those who lived in that period. The study of history was a simple matter to them; Adam and Eve could tell them all there was to know about it.

**Cain and Abel Bring Offerings to Jehovah (Verses 3-5)**

Where did Cain and Abel get the idea that they should bring offerings to Jehovah? Did they get the idea from Adam? Nothing is said about his making any sacrifices, though he probably did. If so, where did he get the idea? They could not have reasoned out that sacrifices would be pleasing to Jehovah; nor is it likely that they had any natural desire to part with what they had. Apparently both brought their sacrifices at the same time; it is not likely that both by their own processes of reasoning would have reached the same conclusion at the same time. If Jehovah had said nothing to them about making sacrifices, why should he reject Cain's and be pleased with Abel's? Besides, it is plainly stated in verse 7 that Cain had not done well, but had sinned, in making his offering. And a statement in Heb. 11:4 makes it even more certain that the offering of sacrifices had been commanded; there it is stated that Abel offered his sacrifice by faith. This shows that he had confidence in God, and showed it by doing what God said. Faith comes by hearing. The one who believes in God will do what he commands. We cannot please God without faith. "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." (Heb. 11:5, 6.) It is not enough that we believe that God is. Both Cain and Abel did that, and both brought offerings to him; but Cain had confidence in himself—he thought he could manage his own worship in his own way; Abel had confidence in God—he believed that God's way was the best. Any effort to change God's way shows a lack of faith in God—it shows that such a one has more confidence in himself or some blind leader than he has in God. Cain was therefore guilty of changing God's order to suit his own convenience. Anyone who does that is not really obeying the Lord at all—he is merely trying to serve God in his own way. The reference in Hebrews shows that Abel offered gifts—"God bearing witness in respect of his gifts." His action is a lesson to us—"through it he being dead yet speaketh." And so what Cain did

is a lesson to us—he did a part of what God commanded, and decided that the rest was nonessential. In that respect there are many Cains today—men who think it is not necessary to be so particular about doing what God says, just so you believe in him; and they thereby prove that their faith and obedience are as defective as was Cain's, and like Cain they are much opposed to those who claim that God's will must be followed clear through. Cain evidently expected, with no sort of doubt in his mind, that God would accept his offering, and was very angry when Jehovah did not accept his offering.

### **Cain Kills His Brother (Verses 6-8)**

Cain's behavior shows how great was his disappointment when the Lord did not accept his offering; he had felt sure that the Lord would accept his offering, even though he was not rendering complete obedience. He was full of wrath, the more so perhaps because he had no one to blame but himself. His case shows how men can render a partial obedience, which is no obedience at all, and yet deceive themselves into full confidence that the Lord will be pleased. Isaac Leeser, a learned Jew, gives this translation of verse 7: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou does not well, sin lieth at the door; and unto thee is its desire, but thou canst rule over it." Here is the principle of all acceptable worship or service—"If thou doest well," and a man is not to be his own judge as to when he does well; if so, Cain would have been accepted. "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes." "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes." But God is to be the judge, and his plan, not ours, is to be the standard of judgment. If a man does well if he does the will of God, he is acceptable to God; if he does not well, "sin coucheth at the door." "In every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:35.) But what the Lord said to Cain did not modify his feelings. He was really angry with Jehovah, and took out his spite on Abel. John tells us that "Cain was of the evil one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his works were evil, and his brother's righteous." (1 John 3:12.) In cases too numerous to mention, people have become angry at what God has said, and have taken out their spite on some man, generally on the man who acted as spokesman for God. Murder was in Cain's heart. If Abel was God's favorite, then he would get even with God by killing his pet! And so there was more than murder in Cain's heart. Jude pronounces a woe upon certain characters, "for they went in the way of Cain."

### **"Am I My Brother's Keeper?" (Verses 9, 10)**

In an absolute sense no one is his brother's keeper. No one can keep his brother's feet tied so that he cannot walk where he pleases, nor can he so bridle his brother's tongue that he cannot speak wrong words. Anyone who thinks knows that no one is responsible for all that his brother does, nor can he know at all times where he is; but Cain knew where his brother was. He thought he could deceive God with a lie. While it is true that no man is his brother's keeper in an absolute sense, his obligation toward his brother is great. He must meet his brother's needs in every way he can, and that includes both his temporal and his spiritual needs. Feed him, if he is hungry;

clothe him, if he is naked; teach him, if he is ignorant; rebuke him, if he sins; encourage him, if he needs it, comfort him in his sorrows; set a good example before him. You can help a brother to do right, but you cannot force him to do so.

Cain quickly learned that he had not hid his crime, nor deceived God with his lie. "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." That blood crieth out a protest against murder and for vengeance against the murderer. But the blood of Jesus, which was shed for the remission of sins—shed for the sins of the whole world—speaks better things than that of Abel. (Heb. 12:24.) But even that blood may be spurned, and its benefits not appropriated.

### **Jehovah Passes Sentence on Cain (Verses 11, 12)**

Murder could not go unpunished without breaking down the moral government of God. "The way of the transgressor is hard." Cain was to learn that he could not kill his brother and then lie to God about it, and then escape punishment. "And now cursed art thou from the ground, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand." It must have been a surprise to Cain to learn that he could not hide his deed from God, and God knew exactly what had become of Abel; now he learns that he cannot escape punishment for his wicked deed. Cain was a farmer, and now no matter how hard he worked the land would not produce so well as formerly—"when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee its strength." "A fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth"—fleeing from ever-present danger, with no certain haven of safety. It was to be a miserable life—he could never look at his hands without thinking of the blood of his brother; he would always be haunted with fear; his harvests would always be disappointing. Life would be as a constant nightmare. On no day could he hope that things would be better tomorrow. But that was the life that he, in a fit of jealousy and anger, had brought upon himself.

### **Cain's Complaint (Verses 13, 14)**

Cain began to see the force of the sentence Jehovah pronounced upon him, and he saw no way to avert the consequences of his deed. It does not seem that he complained at the injustice of the sentence passed upon him, but felt that it was greater than he had the strength to bear. Added to the sentence that God pronounced upon him would be the constant memory of his brother's blood, memory of the agonies of his brother as he beat him to death. Some years ago a man who had killed another made this statement: "It was either kill him or be killed; but if I had a million dollars, I would gladly give it all to have him back with his wife and children." Cain was driven out of his native land, and from the face of God. He was shut off from any further communion with God, a man without God and without hope for better days. How much God had revealed to these ancients we know not; but we know that later the avenger of blood, and it seems that he was nearest of kin to the murdered man, might pursue the murderer, and kill him. The language of Cain seems to imply that such was then the law.

### God's One Gracious Provision for Cain (Verse 15)

Later, when the children of Israel were settled in Canaan, they were to appoint cities of refuge to which a man who had killed another might flee from the avenger of blood and in which he would be safe till his case could be tried. (Num. 35:6-34.) But no such city had been appointed in Cain's day; but Jehovah decreed that no one should kill Cain. "And Jehovah appointed a sign for Cain, lest any finding him should smite him." What that sign was we are not told; but it shows that even in Cain's day the human family had grown to considerable proportions. While that sign protected Cain, it also advertised him as a man, who, without the sign, would be a proper subject for the avenger of blood.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Sometimes people are famous for something that is no credit to them. Cain is famous as the first murderer, a fratricide. There is nothing to his credit. Being wrong in his worship—his religion—led to the slaying of his brother. There is always an antagonism between the right and the wrong. The right cannot compromise with the wrong; to attempt to do so is to surrender to the wrong.

Faith in God means more than to believe that he is; it is to believe also that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him; it is therefore to have confidence in him. A man will have confidence in something if it is nothing but himself. That was Cain's trouble. Abel had confidence in God, and therefore did what God said.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Cain's descendants and their occupations.  
The blessings of worshiping as God directs.  
The evils of worshiping in one's own way.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, place, and persons.  
Discuss conditions then prevailing.

#### Verses 1, 2

Give the occupations of Cain and Abel.  
Give some difference between conditions then and now.

#### Verses 3-5

What proof can you offer that sacrifices were of divine origin?  
Discuss the sacrifices, or offerings, Cain and Abel made.  
Why did God accept Abel's offering and reject Cain's?  
What does faith lead a person to do?  
How does Abel yet speak to us, and what is the lesson?

#### Verses 6-8

Why did Cain kill his brother?  
What had God said to Cain about being accepted?  
Give some other scriptures bearing on the matter.

#### Verses 9, 10

Why cannot a man be absolutely responsible for his brother?  
What can he do about it?

#### Verses 11, 12

What curse was put upon Cain?

#### Verses 13, 14

Discuss Cain's complaint.

#### Verse 15

Discuss this verse.  
Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson IV—July 26, 1942

**NOAH: GOD'S COVENANT WITH MANKIND**

Gen. 9:1-16

1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.

2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the heavens; with all wherewith the ground teemeth, and all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they delivered.

3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; as the green herb have I given you all.

4 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

5 And surely your blood, the blood of your lives, will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it: and at the hand of man, even at the Hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man.

6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

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.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"I will remember my covenant." (Gen. 9:15.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—2 Pet. 3:8-13.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

July 20.	M	God's Covenant with Mankind (Gen. 9:1-7)
July 21.	T	The Sign of God's Covenant (Gen. 9:8-17)
July 22.	W	Deliverance of the Godly (2 Pet. 2:1-9)
July 23.	T	A Covenant of Peace (Ezek. 34:25-31)
July 24.	F	An Everlasting Covenant (Psalm 111:1-10)
July 25.	S	The New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34)
July 26.	S	Christ the Fulfillment (Luke 1:67-79)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—According to Calmet, 2343 B.C.; according to Usher, 2347 B.C.; according to Hales, 3154 B.C.

*Place.*—Most likely somewhere in the country called Ararat. The ark had rested on the mountains of Ararat, not on Mount Ararat. When the sons of Sennacherib slew him, "they escaped into the land of Ararat." (2 Kings 19:37; Isa. 37:38.) Jeremiah speaks of the kingdom of Ararat. (Jer. 51:27.) As the incidents of our lesson

seem to have occurred soon after the ark rested on the mountains in that country, it is not likely that they had left the country at that time.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, Noah, and his three sons; and of course the wives of the four men were in the group. All the people of the earth after them were included in the covenant.

*Lesson Links*—In preparing this lesson the student should carefully read chapters 6, 7, and 8. These chapters really are a part of the lesson.

The human family increased rapidly in numbers and wickedness. Soon after they had greatly multiplied, "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." There is little hope of reforming people who have reached that state of depravity; so the Lord determined to destroy man from the face of the earth, Noah and his family only would escape destruction. But even Noah and his family would not escape without some effort on their part. He was to build an ark according to certain specifications; and, like Abel, he had sufficient confidence in God to follow directions. "According to all that God commanded him, so did he." And so will any man do, who believes in God as he should. And when the ark stood finished, completed in every detail, it stood as a result of Noah's faith. "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." (Heb. 11:7.)

When the ark was finished, at the command of God Noah entered into the ark with his wife, his three sons, and their wives. God had also given this order: "Of every clean beast, thou shalt take to thee seven and seven, the male and his female; and of the beasts that are not clean two, the male and his female: . . . to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth." By close calculation the student will see that Noah remained in the ark a year. Apparently the first thing Noah did after coming out of the ark was to build an altar; and he "took of every clean beast, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar." No more would there be such a flood. "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." Order would be re-established.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Man and His Use of Animals (Verses 1-3)

The command of verse I is a repetition of the command given to Adam. It is hard for us to imagine conditions on the earth when only eight people lived on it. But man was the master of all the lower orders of life—all the lower orders of living things would fear and dread man. Had it not been for this fear and dread of man, human life never could have survived. Many animals far exceed man in strength. Even the horse, which has been so constantly used, and so often shamefully abused, could easily kill his master. Even animals which sometimes kill men apparently do so through dread of man; they do not want him to encroach on their territory. "Into your hand are they delivered." Hence, Jehovah gave all these animals and fishes to man; they belong to man. It is a pity that he



has made such poor use of his property. Some species he has completely exterminated, and others for years have been on their way to extermination. Many people came to realize this, and for some years now the government is doing something to stop this drift toward extermination. Some men will unmercifully abuse a faithful horse, and then give him poor food, and frequently no shelter. This is criminal. "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." (Prov. 12:10.)

From the following statement some have concluded that man ate no flesh before the flood: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; as the green herb have I given you all." But that language is not conclusive on the point. There was a distinction between clean and unclean animals before the flood, and it is not easy to see why this distinction was made if none were allowed to be eaten. However it is a matter of no practical importance to us one way or the other.

### **Murder and Eating Blood Prohibited (Verses 4-7)**

"But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." Because blood is the life they were commanded not to eat. This law was enlarged upon, or rather more fully explained, and enforced in the law of Moses. "And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among them, that eateth any manner of blood, I will set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life .... And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among them, who taketh in hunting any beast or bird that may be eaten; he shall pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust." (Lev. 17:10-13.) This prohibition against eating blood is repeated in numerous places. As the prohibition against eating blood was based on the truth that the blood is the life, that reason still exists. It was prohibited before the law of Moses was given, and the law is enforced in the New Testament. (Acts 15:28, 29.) We are not allowed to eat anything strangled, for its blood would still be in it. A chicken's neck should not be merely broken, for that would be the same as if strangled. All animals and fowls and birds to be eaten should be well bled. If a person respects God's law, he will obey this command as faithfully as any other command. The law against murder carries with it the penalty of death. From verse 6 it seems that the brother of the murdered man was the one to enforce the penalty. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." Here again we have a law based on the very nature of things, and that reason is as true today as then. Of course this shedding of the blood of a murderer must be done in a legal way, or it would also be murder. One of the ten commandments says, "Thou shalt not kill." It is astonishing beyond measure when a Bible student uses this commandment as an argument against capital punishment; for the rest of the law named in the neighborhood of twenty crimes punishable by death. God did not contradict himself; he did not give a law and then require people in numerous instances to disobey it. The command, "Thou shalt not kill," had no reference to legal

executions; it prohibited murder, and there is quite a difference between legal executions and murder. When matters are carefully weighed it will be seen that no government can exist without capital punishment. Desperadoes would have the free run of the country; no officer would be allowed to kill one for any cause, for killing desperadoes for resisting arrest is one form of capital punishment. Can you imagine what the country would be without this form of capital punishment? But as to whether Christians should take part in the enforcement of the laws of the land will have to be determined on other grounds.

### **The Flood Covenant (Verses 8-11)**

In addition to destroying the wicked, the flood may have saved the righteous from being destroyed by the wicked. When people reach a degree of depravity, as the people had before the flood, wherein every imagination of their hearts is evil continually, they are in a fair way to destroy themselves completely. From that wicked world Noah and his family were saved by the flood; it was in this sense that they were saved by water. But God made a covenant with Noah and his sons that no such destruction by a flood would ever be visited upon the earth again. A covenant is usually an agreement between two or more parties, with certain stipulated conditions which are to be performed by each party to the covenant; the violation of the conditions by one party releases the other. But this flood covenant 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 included beasts and birds. No conditions are named; nothing is required of man as conditions to be performed by him so as to insure the perpetuity of the covenant. The Lord covenanted, pledged, or promised that never again would the earth be destroyed by a flood. Had not the Lord given this pledge, the people living at that time, or near that time, would have been frightened every time it began to rain. The pledge gave them assurance and peace of mind. But the pledge does not give assurance that the earth will have a continued existence as it now is. Peter assures us that there is yet to be a terrible destruction. "For this they wilfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God; by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men .... But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up .... But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet. 3:5-13.) What manner of persons ought we to be?

### **The Token of the Flood Covenant (Verses 12-16)**

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) the permission to eat flesh; (4) prohibition against

eating blood; (5) capital punishment; (6) the earth nevermore to be destroyed by a 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 been a common sight in all previous time. But here, as in many other things pertaining to the Bible, they are too anxious to find fault; this anxiety to find fault frequently betrays ignorance, or is the cause of ignorance. There is nothing in the record to show that the rainbow had not been seen in all past ages. "I do set." It is well known that the present tense is frequently used to express continuous action; but 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, or sign, or a memorial. The Lord did not make a new day of the week when he appointed the seventh day of the week to be the Sabbath, a sign between him and the children of Israel. The rainbow is purely a natural phenomenon, "a bow or arc exhibiting the several colors of the spectrum, and formed opposite the sun by refraction and reflection of the sun's rays in drops of rain, or spray, mist, etc." We all admire its beauty. It is a singular thing that the rain, which in part, caused the flood, should be the means of giving back a sign of the covenant that there would not be another such flood.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Men are prone to form snap judgments. They are much inclined to see only that which they want to see, and to believe only that which they want to believe. It takes little evidence to lead one to believe that which he wants to believe. People read that God is love, and often fail to notice the statement that "our God is a consuming fire." The flood shows that God takes vengeance when that is the only remedy. But the world had become so full of wickedness, that the people would perhaps have utterly destroyed themselves had they been allowed to continue in their wickedness. The flood saved eight souls.

The eight souls that were saved by water must have had a queer, but relieved, feeling when they first emerged from the ark into this world, now free from moral corruption, greed, strife, and murder. And this lesson finds them in a world purified from its former wickedness. How terrible had been the judgment of God! The waters which had destroyed the sinners that the world might be pure morally had also continued long enough to destroy all the putrefying bodies that the earth might also be pure physically. Hence these eight souls found themselves in a world that had been made pure in a double sense. They could realize as never before that it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God. They could realize both the severity and the goodness of God.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- Lessons from building the ark.
- Lessons from the flood.
- Capital punishment.
- Some covenants and their tokens or signs:

**QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

What is said about it in the New Testament?  
What penalty would the murderer suffer ?  
Discuss capital punishment.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, place, and persons.  
Why did the Lord bring on the flood?  
Discuss the work assigned to Noah, and what he did about it.  
Who and what entered the ark?

**Verses 8-11**

What covenant was made, and what was its nature?  
Discuss what Peter says about the next destruction of the world.

**Verses 1-3**

What position did God assign to man with reference to the lower orders of life?  
How has man abused his rights?

**Verses 12-16**

What world-lasting things did God say to Noah, or establish with him?  
What was the token of the no-flood covenant?  
Do you think there has been no rainbow before this time?  
Discuss the reflections.

**Verses 4-7**

What was said about eating blood?  
On that point, what did the law of Moses say?

Lesson V—August 2, 1942

**ABRAM: A PIONEER IN FAITH**

Gen. 12:1-9; Heb. 11:8-12

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 Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel 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.

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 even Sarah herself received power to conceive seed when she was past age, since she counted him faithful who had promised:

12 Wherefore also there sprang of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of heaven in multitude, and as the sand, which is by the seashore, innumerable.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." (Gen. 15:1.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 25:1-6.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

July 27.	M	Pioneering in Faith (Gen. 12:1-9)
July 28.	T	God's Covenant with Abram (Gen. 17:1-9)
July 29.	W	God Keeps His Covenant (Acts 7:1-10)
July 30.	T	The Triumph of Faith (Heb. 11:8-12)
July 31.	F	Obedying God's Call (Mark 2:13-17)
August 1.	S	Justified by Faith (Rom. 4:1-8)
August 2.	S	The Victory of Faith (1 John 5:1-5)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Hales, Abram left Ur 2093 B.C.; then went from Haran to Canaan 2078 B.C.. According to Usher, he left Ur 1921 B.C., and reached Canaan the same year. But the facts are against his reaching Canaan the same year he left Ur. Gen. 11:31: "And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there .... And Terah died in Haran." Verse 5 of our lesson speaks of "all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran." This shows that they remained at Haran a considerable time. The letter to the Hebrews was probably written between the years A.D. 60 and 69.

*Places.*—Ur, Haran, Canaan, and probably Rome. While Ur is not mentioned in our lesson text, it was the city in which Abram lived when first called. Haran, now called Harran, is in the north part of Mesopotamia, in the district then called Padan-aram. (Gen. 28:3, 5; 29:4.) Now, Haran is a long way off the route anyone would travel in going to Canaan from the Ur situated on the lower reaches of the river Euphrates. There must have been another Ur. "Hence, too, the traditional identification with Urfa, the Greek Eddessa."—Hastings Dictionary of the Bible. It is thought that Paul wrote Hebrews while he was a prisoner in Rome.

*Persons.*—Abram and his wife Sarai, and his nephew Lot, Abram's servants, and the Canaanites. Abram was the son of Terah, and the brother of Nahor and Haran; Lot was the son of Haran.

*Lesson Links*—Abram was a descendant of Noah's son Shem. His genealogy is given in Gen. 11:10-26.

Before Noah's descendants scattered abroad to any great extent, they fell on a plan that they thought would give them a center of attraction, and stop the tendency to scatter abroad. "And they said, Come, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven .... lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." It is strange that some have thought that they wanted to build a tower so high that they could go to heaven from its top! No such thought is in the text. They wanted to build these big things to serve as a rallying point; "lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." It was a scheme for compact unity, but the Lord had a different plan for them. He confounded their language, so that they could not understand one another. "So Jehovah scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off building the city."

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Abraham's Call and the Promises (Verses 1-3)**

Jehovah's call to Abram came before he dwelt in Haran. "Brethren and fathers, hearken: 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. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Haran: and from thence, when his father was dead, God removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell." (Acts 7:2-4.) "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." But it seems that Abram did not do exactly as he was commanded, for his father came with him to Haran; here he was providentially detained till his father died. Whether God repeated this call at Haran is a matter of no importance to us; but the promises made to Abram are of great importance, for all the rest of the Bible is a record of the development and the fulfillment of these promises.

The first promise, is really a combination of promises, all summed up in the one promise, "I will make of thee a great nation." This promise was therefore national. To make of him a great nation it would be necessary to bless him and to protect him from all who would seek to harm him and his posterity. For his descendants to prosper and develop into a great nation, it would be necessary for them to have a national home, a territory of their own. At the proper time God gave them the land of Canaan. But for a nation to prosper it must be religious and have government—must have just laws and honest officials. To give Abraham's descendants both religion and government, God gave them the law of Moses. The Old Testament gives us a record of the fulfillment of this promise. It shows how the descendants of Abram increased and prospered, so long as they obeyed God, and how trouble came upon them when they wandered away from God into sin and rebellion. Any nation makes a fatal mistake when it leaves God out of its plans. The history of the Jews should be a lesson to all nations. While the first promise was being fulfilled, the way was being prepared for the fulfillment of the second promise.

"And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The promises of verses 1-3 were repeated to Abraham when he offered up Isaac. (Gen. 22:15-18.) They were repeated to Isaac (Gen. 26:1-5), and also to Jacob (Gen. 28:13, 14). The second promise is stated in more definite language in Gen. 22:18 than in the verses of our lesson: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Paul uses this statement to show that it was God's purpose to bless all the nations of the earth through Christ, and not through national Israel. "Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." (Gal. 3:16.) Christ was of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, and in him were all the nations to be blessed. The New Testament shows how this second promise was fulfilled; and it shows plainly that the plan of salvation through Christ as preached by the apostles is the scheme of human redemption foretold in promise and prophecy. If therefore

men do not accept salvation on the terms of the gospel of Christ, no other plan will yet be ushered in. "Now is the day of salvation." If all nations are not blessed in Christ, it is their fault.

### **Abram Goes to Canaan (Verses 4-6)**

Concerning Abram Stephen says, "Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Haran: and from thence, when his father was dead, God removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell." "God removed him into this land"—this shows that, not only had God commanded him to go, but had guided him in his going. It is worthy of note that God did not take him on to Canaan so long as Terah lived. God had commanded him to leave his father's house; but Abram thought to bring his father along, or else Terah had persisted in going with his son. But he did take Lot with him, and Lot proved to be a source of trouble to him. The fifth verse shows that they had remained at Haran a considerable time, for there they had gathered substance and slaves. They did not stop when they entered the borders of Canaan, but "passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the oak of Moreh." What is here referred to only as "the place of Shechem" later became an important city, and figured largely in the history of the descendants of Abram. If the student can do so, he should by all means consult a Bible dictionary.

### **The Land Promise (Verses 7-9)**

At the command of Jehovah Abram had left his native land to go into a country which Jehovah would show him; he had traveled over much territory without knowing what land the Lord would show him. When he reached the place of Shechem, Jehovah said to him, "Unto thy seed will I give this land." This statement shows that the land promised was made to Abram for a home for his descendants, and not that he would own it himself. When these descendants became sufficiently numerous, God brought them out of Egypt into the land of Canaan; Joshua then announced to them "that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which Jehovah your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, not one thing hath failed thereof." (Josh. 23:14.)

Abram was a religious man, a man of faith, before he left his native land; but so far as the record shows he built no altars till he reached the land of promise, and not then till God told him he was in the land promised him. But as worship is an essential part of religion, and sacrifice a part of worship, it is possible, even likely, that Abram had made altars and offered sacrifices before this time. From the place of Shechem Abram soon moved in a southerly direction to a mountain between Bethel and At, "and there he builded an altar unto Jehovah, and called upon the name of Jehovah." Bethel became a noted place in Hebrew history. Here Jacob, as he fled to Padan-aram, saw the vision of angels, at which time Jehovah repeated to him the promises made to Abram. (Gen. 28:10-20.) Abram did not tarry long at Bethel. "And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South." The term "the South" here refers to a district of country, a district lying south of Judea. It is said to have consisted of "the deserts of Shur, Zin, and Paran, the mountainous country of Edom, or Idumea, and part of the Arabia Petrea."

### **"By Faith Abraham... Obeyed" (Heb. 11:8)**

It seems that the letter to the Hebrews was written not long before the destruction of the Jewish nation and Jerusalem. The Jews had grown fiercer and more fanatical in their opposition to the church, and more corrupt in every way. Some of the Christians among the Jews would not be able to stand the persecution. Of this period Jesus said, "And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold." (Matt. 24:12.) The Hebrews contains many arguments to keep these Jewish Christians from forsaking Christ under this severe persecution. This chapter on faith is a mighty appeal to them to hold on to their faith.

By faith Abraham obeyed; he went at the command of God, not knowing where he was going. This required a high degree of faith. The term faith frequently includes all the acts of obedience to which faith leads. In this full sense it means taking God at his word and doing what he says. By taking God at his word and doing what he said Noah built an ark. By faith Abraham offered up Isaac—by taking God at his word and doing what he said Abraham offered up Isaac. And by taking God at his word and doing what he says we are justified; hence, justified by faith. Abraham's faith transferred him from his native land to the land of Canaan. But faith only did not do any of the things mentioned in this eleventh chapter of Hebrews; yet they were all done by faith. Because of the outstanding quality of Abraham's faith, he is referred to as the friend of God, and an example to all who believe.

#### **Abraham a Sojourner in the Land of Promise (Verses 9, 10)**

A sojourner is a temporary dweller; Abraham realized that no place on earth could be a permanent abiding place. Besides, it seems that he frequently changed his location in Canaan. He had great flocks and herds, which would require much pasturage. Feeling himself to be a sojourner, he built no permanent house, but dwelt in tents. He looked for a better country, that is, a heavenly. (Verse 16.) In that heavenly country he expected to find a city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God. These statements show that Abraham expected a glorious home after his sojourn here on earth ceased. The Old Testament heroes believed in a life after death, a better life in the city of God.

#### **Isaac a Child of Promise (Verses 11, 12)**

When Sarah was past the age of childbearing, and Abraham was "as good as dead," Jehovah promised them a son, and that his seed would be as the stars of heaven in number. (Gen. 15:1-6; 18:9-15.) They believed Jehovah; and because of Sarah's faith, she "received power to conceive seed when she was past age, since she counted him faithful who had promised." Sarah therefore, as well as Abraham, had great faith. Their faith pleased Jehovah.

#### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

The people among whom Abraham grew up were worshipers of idols; it seems that even his father worshiped idols. (Josh. 24:14.) To free Abraham from such evil influences it was necessary to separate him entirely from his idol-worshipping kindred and friends, and to place him among strangers. Hence God called him away from such evil environs into a strange country.



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. He knew him whom he believed.

It is not enough simply to believe that God is. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." This means that a man must have confidence in God—must believe that he will fulfill his promises, no matter how unreasonable they seem.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Take each of the three reflections for investigation and discussion.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.

Discuss the matters mentioned under Lesson

Links.

#### Verses 1-3

Repeat verses 1-3. Memorizing these verses is important.

Where was Abram when God first called him?

Tell about his father Terah.

Discuss the first promise.

Name some things necessary to a nation.

How was this first promise fulfilled?

Discuss the second promise.

How was that promise fulfilled?

#### Verses 4-6

What shows that God was managing Abram's travels?

To what point in Canaan did God lead Abram?

Tell about Shechem.

#### Verses 7-9

Discuss these verses.

#### Heb. 11:8

Why was the Hebrew letter written?

Discuss verse 8.

#### Verses 9, 10

Discuss these verses.

#### Verses 11, 12

Discuss these verses.

Discuss the reflections.

Lesson VI—August 9, 1942

### ABRAHAM'S INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Gen. 18:23-33

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?

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.

33 And Jehovah went his way, as soon as he had left off communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"The supplication of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—John 17:1-11.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

August 3. M	Abraham's Prayer for Sodom (Gen. 19:23-33)
August 4. T	Daniel's Intercessory Prayer (Dan. 9:15-19)
August 5. W	The Value of Intercessory Prayer (James 5:13-18)
August 6. T	Intercession for Wisdom in the Church (Eph. 1:15-23)
August 7. F	Intercession for Love in the Church (Phil. 1:3-11)
August 8. S	Christ's Intercession for His Disciples (John 17:9-15)
August 9. S	Christ's Intercession for US (Rom. 3:31-39)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1897 B.C.; according to Hales, 2054 B.C.

*Place.*—"And Jehovah appeared unto him by the oaks of Mamre." (Verse 1.) "And Abram moved his tent, and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron." (13:18.) Hebron is in the south part of Palestine, about eighteen miles south of Jerusalem. "Its most ancient name was Kirjath-arba." For a long time it figured prominently in the activities of the descendants of Abraham. Read about it in your Bible dictionary.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, Abraham, and the people of Sodom. It is possible that Jehovah, as here mentioned, was the second person of the Godhead, who, for the occasion, had assumed the form of man. In verse 2 Abraham's visitors are spoken of as three men, but verse 22 says, "And the men turned from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before Jehovah."

*Lesson Links*—In studying Bible heroes we should remember that they were human, and liable to err; we should not put them on such a high pedestal of perfection as almost to deify them, and thus to put them so far beyond our reach as to make them worthless as examples to us; nor should we use their errors as excuses for wrongdoing on our part. Even though Abraham was a man of great faith, he made mistakes. In his first call to Abraham God commanded him to get out of his country, and from his father's house, and from his kindred; and yet his father Terah went with him as far as Haran, and Lot went with him to Canaan. At Haran God detained him till his father Terah died: "and from thence, when his father was dead, God removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell." (Acts 7:4.) And it seems to have been weakness on his part that caused him to go to Egypt because of a famine in Canaan; and this move caused him, through fear, to deceive Pharaoh. (Gen. 12:10-20.) The following quotation shows another point in which Abraham's faith weakened: "And he said unto him, I am Jehovah that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, O Lord Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" (Gen. 15:7, 8.) When Jehovah promised Abraham that his seed should be as the stars of heaven, he believed Jehovah, though all nature seemed against the realization of such promise; but when

Jehovah promised him the land, he, like many good people today, wanted more evidence than "the mere word of God." Zacharias, another good man, made the same mistake. (Luke 1:8-20.) But Abraham's faith grew stronger and stronger till it could stand the severest test—the offering of his son Isaac at the command of Jehovah. It was a sort of double test. He loved his son, and now he is asked to take his life. Besides, God had promised him that in Isaac should his seed be called. Now to offer him in sacrifice would, according to nature, destroy the possibility of the fulfillment of that promise. But his faith was triumphant, though it was a severe test.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Abraham's First Plea for Sodom (Verses 23-26)

Soon after Abraham returned from Egypt his flocks and herds and those of Lot became so great that there was not sufficient pasturage for them to use the same territory for grazing their stock. Because of this there was strife between Abraham's herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen. To put a stop to this strife Abraham proposed that Lot take his choice of territory. "So Lot chose him all the Plain of the Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the Plain, and moved his tent as far as Sodom. Now the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceedingly." (Gen. 13:11-13.) This is our first introduction to the wickedness of Sodom. Having given itself over to wickedness, it naturally grew worse as time went on, till it finally reached such deep depravity that Jehovah would endure it no longer. When a people reaches that point in depravity wherein no influence for good avails anything, they are fit only for destruction.

Lot lived in Sodom, but his influence counted for nothing. The people before the flood became so wicked that Noah's preaching had no effect, and so the Lord destroyed them; "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.) So wicked had Sodom become!

As Abraham sat in his tent door by the oaks of Mamre in the heat of the day, three men appeared; these he invited into his tent, and entertained them with true hospitality, not knowing that he was entertaining angels. "Forget not to show love unto strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Heb. 13:2.) Before leaving Abraham the angels gave him specific promise that his wife would bear him a son. (Verses 1-15.) The men then started toward Sodom, "and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way." Abraham knew not the near approach of Sodom's 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, for reasons which he names. Abraham would become a great and mighty nation, that is, his descendants would so become. The eighteenth verse is a repetition in a condensed form of Genesis 12:1-3. Abraham controlled his children and his household. Besides Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham

was the father of six other sons. (Gen. 25:1, 2.) The many servants that Abraham had were a part of his household, and he was responsible for the teaching and training of these. He had to do this without the help or the hindrance of schools, colleges, universities, preachers, prophets, newspapers, magazines, and books. It was a one-man job; but Jehovah knew that Abraham would succeed, "to the end that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Then Jehovah told Abraham by implication the doom of Sodom, "And the men turned from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before Jehovah." Then Abraham began to plead for Sodom. "And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked?" It was not for the sake of the wicked that he wanted the city spared. "Peradventure there are fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou consume and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?" More had been said previous to this plea than was recorded, for the word "consume" indicates that Abraham had learned how the Lord proposed to destroy the city. His question shows that he doubted that there were fifty righteous people within the city. His plea for the city was likely due in part to the fact that Lot was in that city; and of course, if there were other righteous people in Sodom, he did not want them to perish with the wicked. In its primary sense righteousness is justice, and has reference to fair and honest dealings between man and man. A city has become terrible when its depravity is so great that not fifty people in it have any regard for the rights of others, but such was Sodom. Abraham's other pleas show that he feared that a much smaller number of righteous people could be found in that wicked city. Jehovah promised Abraham that he would not destroy the city if fifty righteous people could be found in it.

### **Abraham Continues to Plead for the City (Verses 27-33)**

Abraham talked to Jehovah as man talks to man. He ended his first plea with this question: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" The next statement shows great humility and reverence: "And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes." Here he recognizes the great difference between him and the Lord. He was humble; he knew his own weaknesses and shortcomings and sins; yet he argued his cause before the Lord with assurance. The Lord had agreed to comply with his first request. This encouraged him to press the matter further. You, Lord, promised to save the city if fifty righteous people could be found in it. Now suppose only forty-five righteous people can be found in the city, would you destroy it for the lack of only five people? "And he said, I will not destroy it, if I find there forty and five." Jehovah's answer to each plea gave Abraham encouragement to make another plea. Nor would Jehovah destroy the city if forty righteous people could be found in it. From fifty Abraham had dropped to forty-five and then forty, but next he decreases the number by ten. At this point it seems that Abraham thought Jehovah might become angry at his persistent pleadings for that corrupt city. "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." Then Abraham dropped to twenty and then to ten. "And he said, I will

not destroy it for the ten's sake." Ten righteous people in the city of Sodom would have saved it from destruction. "Ye are the salt of the earth," said Jesus to his disciples. How much did he mean by that statement? Certainly the disciples of Christ are the salt of the earth in that they save others by their influence and teaching; but it is also probable that the Christians living in the world save it from the fate that befell Sodom. Sodom had reached the point where they could not be influenced for the better. If the world ever reaches that degree of depravity, the Lord will have no further use for it. It may be even now that those who are fighting Christianity owe their very existence to the fact that there are Christians in the world. At least, that is a point worth meditating. And while considering this point, think of the captivity of the Jews, and also the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation.

The last word Jehovah said to Abraham on this occasion was, "I will not destroy it for the ten's sake." Abraham would ask for no more. "And Jehovah went his way, as soon as he had left off communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place." The only thing he could do now about the matter was to sit and wait to see the outcome; and it is likely that he had little doubt as to what that would be. The lesson is not really complete without the nineteenth chapter. That chapter reveals more of the deep depravity of that doomed city, and all the cities of the Plain. "And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he had stood before Jehovah: and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the Plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the land went up as the smoke of a furnace." And so perished Sodom and the cities of the Plain; and the name of Sodom became a symbol of all that was wicked and degraded. Only its name remains to us, for its exact location is not known.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

The fate of the flood victims, and of the people of Sodom, and of the nation of the Jews, should remind us of the truth that people may become so wicked and corrupt that they are fit only to be destroyed. It seems that there is no good at all in people who reach such a stage of depravity.

Lot was a righteous man, and the moral corruption of the people of Sodom vexed his soul. If he made any effort to improve their morals, his efforts were fruitless. People sometimes become so corrupt that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart is evil continually. (Gen. 6:5.) When people reach that point, there is no good in them; nothing therefore can be done for them.

An intercessory prayer is a petition for another person or persons. Abraham was praying for others on this occasion. His prayer came as near to being an unselfish prayer as could be made by man. Many times prayers are rooted in selfishness. "Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war; ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures." (James 4:2, 3.) And this does not mean that we should not pray for things we need; in fact, we are taught to do so, to even pray for our daily bread. Nor does that mean that we are to pray for bread alone, but for all the things we need. In their minds today some people have surrounded God, and shackled him, with so many laws of nature, that prayer to

them is little more than a sort of spiritual exercise. Such people may think of God as a creator, but not as a father. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever." (Eph. 3:20, 21.) God is not only able to do abundantly above all that we ask or think, but exceeding abundantly. If you think that God cannot answer prayer, how can you go through the form of praying to him without feeling silly?

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Abraham's strength and his weakness.  
 The expense and destructiveness of sin.  
 What we may learn from Old Testament examples.  
 The place and importance of prayer in the Christian life.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, place, and persons.  
 What may hinder us from getting the most out of studying Bible heroes?  
 Give some points of weakness in Abraham.  
 What do you regard as the supreme test of Abraham's faith?

#### Verses 23-26

Tell about Abraham's and Lot's separation.

What was said of Sodom?  
 Give other instances of such depravity that the Lord destroyed the people.  
 What does Peter say about Sodom and Lot?  
 Tell about Abraham's visitors.  
 Why would not Jehovah hide from Abraham what he was going to do to Sodom?  
 Discuss the first plea Abraham made for Sodom.

#### Verses 27-33

Discuss in turn the other pleas.  
 What happened to Sodom?  
 Discuss the reflections.

Lesson VII—August 16, 1942

### ISAAC PRACTICES PEACE

Gen. 28:18-31

15 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.

26 Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath his friend, and Phicol the captain of his host.

27 And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore are ye come unto me, seeing ye irate me, and have sent me away from you?

28 And they said, We saw plainly that Jehovah was with thee: and we said, Let there now be an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee,

29 That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of Jehovah

30 And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.

31 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.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God." (Matt. 5:9.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Matt. 5:38-45.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

August 10. M

August 11. T

August 12. W

August 13. T

August 14. F

August 15. S

August 16. S

Isaac Practices Peace (Gen. 26:18-25)

A Treaty of Peace (Gen. 26:26-33)

Blessings of Peace (1 Pet. 3:8-12)

Love to Enemies (Matt. 5:38-48)

Peace in the Church (Psalm 122:1-9)

Peace in the Heart (Col. 3:12-17)

Christ Our Peace (Eph. 2:11-18)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—It is impossible to determine how many years the events of this lesson cover. The time covered was probably between 1830 B.C. and 1790 B.C. 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). The events of our lesson occurred after the birth of Esau and Jacob.

*Places.*—The valley of Gerar, Beer-sheba. Gerar was near the southern boundary of the country of the Philistines, and not far from either Gaza or Beer-sheba. It had a king of its own, who also ruled the territory surrounding Gerar. Beer-sheba, the well of the oath, took its name from a 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 was later built there—the southernmost city in the land which was allotted to the children of Israel.

*Persons.*—Isaac, his herdsmen, Abimelech, and the Philistines. It seems that the name Abimelech was a title given the kings of Gerar, as Pharaoh was a title given the rulers of Egypt. The Abimelech of our lesson seems to have been a strong character, and to have had a high regard for the marriage vows, as is shown by the rebuke he delivered to Isaac. (Verses 6-11.) From various references, as well as from the map, we learn that the Philistines occupied a rather narrow strip along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and were a warlike people.

*Lesson Links.*—When Isaac was forty years old, Abraham being then a hundred and forty years old, Abraham sent his chief servant back to Mesopotamia to obtain a wife for Isaac from among his kindred. The story is one of the beautiful romances of the Bible. (Gen. 24.) 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, Esau and

Jacob. Before the events of this lesson Isaac had lived at Beer-lahai-roi, "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." Then Jehovah repeated to him the promises he had made to Abraham. (Gen. 26:1-11.) Jehovah blessed Isaac, and caused him to prosper greatly. He had enormous yields of grain; and his flocks and herds increased till it required a great household many herds-men-to care for his stock. His prosperity was so great that the Philistines envied him. They stopped up the wells which Abraham had dug. "And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we." Isaac then moved to the valley of Gerar; but if Isaac had been a poor man, they would have paid no attention to him. It was natural for Abimelech to feel uneasy at having so powerful a foreigner so near him; but Isaac was a man of peace; and had no desire to make trouble for the Philistines. But wars have been made for less causes; but Isaac desired to be at peace with all men. Besides, he did not really own the land, and moving his tents and herds was not a ruinous matter—not so ruinous as making war, in which there would have been much shedding of blood, and possibly a great loss of stock. Isaac was wise and peaceable.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Additional Strife About Wells (Verses 18-21)

In Isaac's new location there were wells which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham, but the Philistines had also stopped them after the death of Abraham. Because of Isaac's great prosperity the Philistines developed great antagonism toward him, and gave him as much trouble and inconvenience as they could "short of war"; but apparently he showed no resentment toward them. He quietly cleaned out the wells, and without any ado went on with his affairs. Not many of us have the strength of character to do as Isaac did. His servants increased their water supply by digging another well in the valley, "and found there a well of springing water." It appears to have been a flowing well. That sort of well would save much labor of drawing water for Isaac's vast flocks and herds. The herdsmen of Gerar were persistent and selfish; the rights of others did not concern them. 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 claimed it also. He named it Sitnah, which means "enmity." The envy of the Philistines had now grown into enmity and strife. Even the milder forms of wrong feelings toward others, like envy, if cherished, grows 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 for peace without loss of dignity or prestige. To keep 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 the 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 that 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, 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." We shall now prosper. Isaac knew that strife and war prevent prosperity. If all people could ever learn this lesson, if they could ever learn the horrors and the destructiveness 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 land of the Philistines—it was their land. When he was in their way, they felt no hesitancy in asking him to move on. From their standpoint, he had no rights there, save as they granted them; but they had no moral right to appropriate his wells without paying him for the labor of digging them. They disregarded his labor, and said, "The water is ours." Though Isaac was a man of peace, and surrendered personal rights for the sake of peace, he was not a perfect man. 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 strife. We are not told how long he remained at Beer-sheba; but he was still there when he had grown old and blind, for he was still there when Jacob was sent to Padan-aram to escape the rage of Esau. (Gen. 27:1; 28:10.) Later he 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." (Ger. 35:27-29.) The night of the day in which Isaac reached Beer-sheba 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." The Lord does not speak to man when there is no need of 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 moves on the part of the Philistines while he abode at the well Rehoboth, and for that reason moved on to Beer-sheba. He would get farther away from

these troublemakers. That was one way of keeping the peace. His fear of further trouble 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; the Lord was giving Isaac assurance that no harm would befall him. Abraham had several other sons, but he had selected Isaac to be in the line of patriarchs through whom the promises made to Abraham would be fulfilled. "And multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake." The promises made to Abraham were not to be fulfilled to him personally, but to his descendants. In selecting Isaac instead of one of the other sons, and in selecting Jacob instead of Esau, the Lord was not selecting them to be saved, and refusing salvation to the others. It was not a matter that had anything to do with salvation or condemnation. He was working out his plans, and only one son in a family could be used for that particular purpose. Of course the one best fitted for that position would be chosen. Isaac was elected to be the one through whom the promises made to Abraham would be fulfilled.

### **Isaac Builds an Altar (Verse 25)**

If Isaac built any altars while he was near Gerar, we do not have any account of it in the Bible. He may have failed to do so because he was on enemy soil. These altars were, of course, built for the purpose of offering sacrifices; offering sacrifices was an essential part of worship. And in this worship Isaac called upon the name of Jehovah, that is, he prayed to Jehovah. Sacrifice and prayer have always been essential parts of true worship. Of course our sacrifices are not made in the manner in which they made theirs. We feel sure Isaac made no attempt to mix with the idolaters in their worship; in worshipping Jehovah he and his family were cut off religiously from all men. But this one family kept alive the idea of the one true God.

### **A Peace Pact (Verses 26-31)**

Abimelech, accompanied by his friend Ahuzzath, and Phicol the captain of his host, made a visit to Isaac for the express purpose of making a covenant of peace with Isaac. By this time Isaac's increase in flocks and herds required a considerable company of servants. Knowing how Isaac had been pushed around by the herdsmen of Gerar, Abimelech may have feared that Isaac, having grown stronger, would retaliate for the wrongs he had suffered. It is hard to account for this late desire for a covenant of peace on any other grounds. Isaac's question shows that he considered his visitors responsible for the actions of the Philistine herdsmen: "Wherefore are ye come unto me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?" Abimelech's reply shows that his desire for a covenant grew out of a fear of Isaac—"that thou wilt do us no hurt." In view of what Isaac had suffered at the hands of the herdsmen, Abimelech's statement that they had done Isaac no hurt, and had sent him away in peace, sounds strange. Of course, they had not made actual war on Isaac, but the statement, "We have done unto thee nothing but good," does not seem to correspond with the facts. But Isaac did not create any friction by disputing anything Abimelech said; he showed his good will by making them

a feast. They spent the night with him. They rose up early in the morning, "and swore one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace." In every move Isaac made, he conducted himself in such a manner as to promote peace.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

One party can make war or a disturbance, but it takes two to sign a covenant of peace.

Forbearance is exercised toward those who make themselves unpleasant to us in a personal way. It helps to promote peace. Every Christian should be as forbearing as was Isaac.

Forbearance has to do with personal matters. We are not required to be forbearing toward false teachers or toward criminals; we are not to make any compromise with either for the sake of peace.

We are not called upon to contend for our personal rights; we should wave them for the sake of peace. But we are required to contend earnestly for the faith—to fight the good fight of faith. The one who loves the gospel will contend for it, and will never make any compromise with false doctrine for the sake of peace. There may be, and frequently should be, compromise in personal matters and preferences; but a compromised gospel is no gospel. The gospel is the only thing that will lead men in the way of righteousness and salvation, and the one who compromises it is an enemy of the gospel and of man.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The sin of envy, and its evil results.

The things that make for peace.

Peace in the home, the nation, and the church.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Verse 22

Discuss verse 22.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.

Give some dates of prominent events in the lives of Abraham and Isaac.

How came Isaac to be at Gerar?

How came he to move again?

#### Verses 23, 24

Where next did Isaac go?

Discuss what the Lord said to Isaac at this place.

#### Verse 25

Discuss their method of worship.

#### Verses 18-21

Why did Isaac move again, and to what point?

Discuss the events mentioned in verses 18-21.

What should be the Christian's conduct in personal matters?

#### Verses 26-31

Discuss the matters mentioned in verses 26-31.

Discuss the reflections.

Lesson III—August 23, 1942  
**JACOB'S VISION OF GOD**  
 Gen. 28:10-22

10 And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran.

11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep.

12 And 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.

13 And, behold, Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

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.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest." (Gen. 28:15.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Isa. 6:1-8.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

August 17. M

August 18. T

August 19. W

August 20. T

August 21. F

August 22. S

August 23. S

Jacob's Vision (Gen. 28:10-17)

Jacob's Vow (Gen. 28:18-22)

God's Omnipresence (Psalm 139:1-10)

Finding God (Acts 17:22-28)

Joy in God's Presence (Psalm 16:1-11)

Saul's Vision (Acts 9:1-9)

Vision and Service (Isa. 6:1-0)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1760 B.C.

*Place.*—Bethel; for its location, see the map. Formerly Bethel had been called Luz. Here Abraham had spent some time. When Jacob reached Shechem on his return from Padan-aram, Jehovah commanded him to go to Bethel, and there build an altar. Before going to Bethel, Jacob gathered all the idols which his company had brought with them, and buried them. They must have no idols when he built his altar at Bethel. In the historic books of the Old Testament, Bethel is mentioned often.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, the angels, and Jacob.

*Lesson Links*—Our first insight into the character and disposition of Esau and of Jacob: "And the boys grew: and Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in

tents. Now Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: and Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob boiled pottage: and Esau came in from the field, and he was faint: 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. And Jacob said, Sell me first thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am about to die; and what profit shall the birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me first; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. 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." (Gen. 25:27-34.)

When Isaac was old and blind, Rebekah and Jacob deceived him into bestowing on Jacob the blessings that rightfully belonged to the first born. This so enraged Esau that he determined to kill Jacob after the death of his father Isaac. It does not seem that Esau should have been so enraged, for he had sold his birthright to Jacob. But the low-grade trickery that had been played on him by his mother and brother may have enraged him more than anything else. Rebekah was greatly distressed at the possible results of her trickery. To avert murder she formed another plan for Jacob, but it had to be carried out through the head of the family. Esau had married two Hittite women, "and they were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah." This gave her grounds for the following statement, which was really a plea for Jacob: "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?" Isaac then charged Jacob not to marry any Canaanite, but to go to Padan-aram, and take a wife of the daughters of Laban, his mother's brother. "And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a company of peoples; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land of thy sojournings, which God gave unto Abraham."

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### A Lonely Encampment (Verses 10, 11)

It is most likely that Jacob slipped away without much preparation. If Esau learned of their plans, he might slay Jacob rather than let him escape, even if his father was still living. Whatever substance Jacob had gathered, he had to leave behind. The birthright which he had bought of Esau, and the blessings of the first born which he had obtained from Isaac by fraud, seemed now to be of no value to him, but only a source of trouble. And Rebekah, who thought she was working a smart trick for Jacob in planning that deception on Isaac, had now to be a party in the sending away of her beloved son, Jacob, with no prospects of ever seeing him again.

If the student will consult the map, and compute the distance from Beer-sheba to Bethel, he will see that Jacob must have spent at least one night somewhere along the route. It does not seem that Jacob took any servants with him, but made the journey alone—a lonely journey for a man who was not in the habit of making long journeys. Dangers from wild beasts and robbers beset every step of that long journey. "And he lighted upon a certain Place, and

tarried there all night, because the sun was set." This certain place was near Luz, or Bethel. For some reason, which is not recorded, he did not go into the city to spend the night, but slept out in the open country, with a stone for a pillow. It would not be hard for you to imagine some of the thoughts that passed through his mind before he dropped off to sleep. He was a fugitive from the wrath of his only brother. It must have occurred to him that he, prompted by his mother, had played a sorry trick on himself. But his thoughts did not keep him awake—he slept.

### **"And He Dreamed" (Verses 12-15)**

There are dreams and dreams. In some dreams—too numerous to discuss here—special revelations were made. Some outstanding dreams are those of Joseph, Pharaoh, and Nebuchadnezzar. And Jacob's dream was not just an ordinary dream. In his dream Jacob saw "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." What was the meaning of this ladder and the angels ascending and descending on it? The scene likely suggested to Jacob that there was a close connection between heaven and earth, and that heavenly beings were not so far away as to have no interest in things on the earth. Jacob doubtless went to sleep thinking that he was a lonely forsaken man. This scene would remind him that heaven was interested in him—that Jehovah had not forsaken him. Was that ladder, as some think, a type of Christ Jesus, who, in his deity and his humanity, connects heaven and earth? No one knows, for the Bible says nothing on that idea. We are safe in letting it mean to us just what it naturally meant to Jacob.

Jehovah stood above the ladder, and introduced himself, or identified himself, to Jacob as "the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac." In those days it was a common idea amongst the people that each race or nation of people had its god or gods. This may account for the way Jehovah identified himself to Jacob; he was the God of Abraham and of those who descended from him through Isaac and Jacob. And Jehovah renewed the land promise—the promise which had been made to Abraham and then to Isaac. "The land whereon thy liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed." Jehovah had said to Abraham, "All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." This land promise was to be fulfilled to their descendants, and not to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as individuals. Jehovah said to Abraham, "Unto thy seed have I given this land." (Gen. 15:18.) In this dream Jehovah also promised Jacob a numerous posterity, as he had also promised Abraham and Isaac. "And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." In commenting on this same promise as made to Abraham (Gen. 22:18), Paul says., "Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Christ Jesus was therefore, according to the flesh, of the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. Considering Jacob's loneliness and the cause of his flight from home, the following promise would be especially comforting to him: "I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." This would give Jacob full

assurance that no serious evil would befall him; to the extent that he believed Jehovah fear would be banished from his mind. Later his faith must have weakened somewhat; for he feared Laban (Gen. 31:31), and he feared to meet Esau. But even though his faith did not always show full strength, the promise would be a continued comfort to him. The promise would also give him comfort in that it assured him that he would some day be back in his native land.

### **Jacob Filled with Fear (Verses 16, 17)**

When Jacob awoke 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. Most people are more or less nervous in the presence of a high official or a man of great fame. It is not possible for a man to meet Jehovah face to face with the ease and feeling of comradeship with which one meets a familiar friend. Even the beloved John, though he had been intimately 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.) Let no one therefore think he could meet the Lord with the same calmness with which he meets a friendly neighbor. It is not to Jacob's discredit that he was afraid; any man would have been filled with awe. Jacob felt that he was in God's dwelling Place—at the very gate of heaven. The memory of how he had so recently 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 Jacob slept any more that night. He would have been too excited, and there was too much to think about, for sleep to come easily. He set up for a pillar the stone which he had used for a pillow, and poured oil on the top of it as a dedication ceremony. Using stones as memorials, or monuments, was common among the descendants of Abraham. Later, as Jacob returned from Padan-aram he and Laban made a heap of stones as a witness between them. (Gen. 31:45-52.) For another example, see Josh. 4:5-9. Jacob named the place of his dream 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 Jacob gave it that name. It is not likely that anyone knew for a long time that Jacob had given the place the name of Bethel. It would therefore continue for some time to be called 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 god, or gods, or that certain gods ruled over certain districts. With the whole world saturated with that idea, it would be remarkable if Jacob did not think of Jehovah as a local deity. His statement that the place of his dream was God's house and the very gate of heaven, 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, and the stone which 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 a rather harsh criticism of him. We must seek to understand him, not in the light of present-day knowledge, but in the light of the thought of the day. Viewed in that light, his speech is rather a remarkable speech, and his vow was all that one could reasonably expect. His proposing to give a tenth was of his own volition; he himself named the amount. And there is not a hint that Jehovah was displeased with the manner in which Jacob made that vow. The very nature of a vow made it voluntary. The law of the vow as later given through Moses makes this plain: "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.)

### SOME REFLECTIONS

It is a dangerous thing to marry a person whose influence tends to lead a person from the right. Even if Rebekah and Laban's daughters had been worshipers of idols, it would be much easier to lead them out of idolatry by removing them from their home surroundings. Even today many people are converted to the truth after they have moved a distance from their old associates.

A thing gained through deceit and fraud cannot bring contentment and happiness. That which Jacob gained from Isaac by fraud made him an exile, separated him from his parents, and caused him much worry and distress.

We get into trouble when we scheme and plan to help God in his plans. When God announced, even before Jacob and Esau were born, his purposes concerning these unborn sons, Rebekah should have realized that God would work out his own plans; but she thought she must do some scheming to help him. In doing so she lost the company of Jacob, and caused him much misery.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

What Jacob reaped from deceit.  
Whom should Christians marry?  
Vows.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

Why did Jacob have to leave home?

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, Place, and persons.  
Discuss Gen. 25:27-34.

#### Verses 10, 11

What sorrow did Rebekah's scheme bring to her?  
At what place did Jacob spend one night?



**Verses 12-15**

Tell about some special dreams mentioned in the Bible.

Let the class give a full discussion of Jacob's dream—what he saw and what Jehovah said to him.

**Verses 16, 17**

What were the feelings of Jacob when he awoke?

Show that people cannot meet a heavenly being on a familiar basis.

**Verses 18, 19**

Tell what Jacob did after he rose up. Tell about other similar uses of stones.

**Verses 20-22**

Discuss Jacob's vow.  
Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson IX—August 30, 1942

**JACOB SEEKS GOD'S HELP**

Gen. 32:2-12, 27-29

2 And Jacob said when he saw them, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the field of Edom.

4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye say unto my lord Esau: Thus saith thy servant Jacob, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed until now:

5 And I have oxen, and asses, and flocks, and men-servants, and maidservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in thy sight.

6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and moreover he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.

7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and was distressed: and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks, and the herds, and the camels, into two companies;

8 And he said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the company which is left shall escape.

9 And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, O Jehovah, who saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will do thee good:

10 I am not worthy of the least of all the lovingkindnesses, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two companies.

11 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.

12 And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

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.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 34:1-8.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

August 24. M

August 25. T

August 26. W

August 27. T

August 28. F

August 29. S

August 30. S

Jacob's Distress (Gen. 32:1-8)

Jacob's Prayer for Help (GEL. 32:9-12)

Gideon's Prayer for Help (Judges 6:36-40)

Samuel's Prayer for Help (1 Sam. 7:5-11)

Prayer and Trust (Psalm 27:1-6)

God, the Deliverer (Psalm 34:1-9)

Praise for Deliverance (Psalm 28:6-9)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—Probably about 1739 B.C.; according to Hales it was about 1895 B.C. The exact date cannot be determined.

*Place.*—Peniel, or Penuel. Peniel means face of God. "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel for, said he, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." (Gen. 32:30.) Someone translated the verse: "He called the name of the place 'face of El,' for I have seen Elohim face to face." "From the narrative it is evident that Peniel lay somewhere on the north bank of the Jabbok, and between that torrent and the fords of the Jordan at Succoth, a few miles north of the glen where the Jabbok falls into the Jordan."

*Persons.*—Jehovah, Jacob, the angels, and Esau.

*Lesson Links*—This lesson really includes three chapters—31, 32, and 33. If the student studies only the verses of our printed text, he will not get much out of the lesson. It would be even better to begin with chapter 29.

After Jacob's vision, which we studied in last lesson, he "went on his journey, and came to the land of the children of the east. And he looked, and, behold, a well in the field, and, lo, three flocks of sheep lying there by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks." Jacob said to the keepers of the sheep, "My brethren, whence are ye? And they said, Of Haran are we. And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him. And he said unto them, Is it well with him? And they said, It is well: and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep." Jacob made himself known to Rachel; and when Rachel told Laban of this meeting with Jacob, Laban invited him into his home. Laban's two daughters, Leah and Rachel, became the wives of Jacob. Finally when Jacob knew that Laban's sons envied him because of his prosperity, he left Padan-aram to go back to his native land. While he was in the land of Padan-aram eleven sons were born to him; one daughter is mentioned. From Gen. 31:55 it seems plain that there were other daughters.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Mahanaim (Verse 2)**

Verses 1 and 2 belong together: "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And Jacob said when he saw them, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim." The marginal reading has, "That is, Two hosts, or, Companies." Here a city of considerable importance grew up. It was on the east side of the Jordan, and on the north of the Jabbok, though its site is not now known. Just why these angels met Jacob is not revealed, but it is likely that they came to give him instructions concerning his future movements; for, as the name itself shows, angels were and are messengers. The same word is translated messengers in verse 3, and in that verse the messengers, or angels, were Jacob's servants—human beings. God's angels were God's messengers; they were God's servants. In no sense are they to be regarded as objects of worship. If we are to worship them, as some professed Christians do, because they have brought good to man, would not the heathen, on that ground, be justified in worshipping the sun, and the moon, and the forces of nature, and even the animals? All those things bring good to man.

### **Jacob Sends Messengers to Esau (Verses 3-5)**

The land of Seir lay to the south of the territory which was later divided among the Israelites. By consulting the map the student will see that Jacob's messengers had to travel a considerable distance to accomplish their mission. "Thus shall ye say unto my lord Esau." In that expression Jacob recognized the superiority of Esau. Before Esau and Jacob were born Jehovah said to Rebekah, "The elder shall serve the younger." (Gen. 25:23.) But that language did not apply to Jacob and Esau as individuals, but to their descendants, as is clearly seen by reading all that Jehovah said to Rebekah: "Two nations are in thy womb, and two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels: and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Though Esau and Jacob were twins, Esau, who was also called Edom, was the first born. The descendants of Jacob finally subdued the descendants of Esau. (1 Sam. 8:14.) But at the time of our lesson Jacob recognized Esau as his lord, and himself as the servant of Esau. Jacob knew how he had wronged Esau, and he also knew how furious Esau became. He now feels the need of doing something to gain Esau's favor. He knew Esau to be impulsive and thought he might gain Esau's favor by giving him some of his flocks and herds; so he told his servants to say to Esau, "I have oxen, and asses, and flocks, and men-servants, and maid-servants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in thy sight."

### **The Messengers Return and Report (Verse 6)**

The report the messengers made was not very reassuring to Jacob. It would seem that Esau was coming with evil purpose. If he had intended to meet Jacob in peace, why bring along four hundred men? Jacob's messengers must have understood that he was coming to make trouble; at least, that impression was made on Jacob. If there had been any friendliness seen in Esau, the messengers would have so informed Jacob; but Jacob's conduct shows that he had gained the impression from the report of his messengers that Esau was coming in great anger, intending to carry out his old threat.

### **Jacob Arranges to Meet Esau (Verses 7, 8)**

Jacob's past conduct showed him to be skillful in formulating and carrying out schemes. On this occasion he felt the need of using all the cunning he possessed, for he "was greatly afraid and was distressed." He certainly believed that Esau was coming with murder in his heart, and feared that his entire family might be slain. He divided his people and his livestock into two companies, so that if one company were attacked, the other might escape. This arrangement is more fully described in Gen. 33:1, 2, and 3: "And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hinder-most. And he himself passed over before them."

### **Jacob Prays for Deliverance (Verses 9-12)**

"This prayer is remarkable for its simplicity and energy; and it is a model for prayer, of which it contains the essential constituents: 1. Deep self-abasement. 2. Magnification of God's mercy.

3. Deprecation of the evil to which he was exposed. 4. Pleading the promises that God had made to him. And, 5. Taking encouragement from what God had already wrought."—Adam Clarke. Before Jacob started from Padan-aram on his return journey to the land of his nativity, Jehovah appeared to him in a dream, and said to him, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst a pillar, where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy nativity." (Gen. 31:13.) Jacob based his plea for deliverance from Esau on God's promise to be with him, and do him good. (Gen. 28:15.) Jacob had seemed at times to feel rather important; but now he feels little, weak, and helpless. He confessed his unworthiness: "I am not worthy of the least of all the lovingkindnesses, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant." Here is self-abasement, contrition, humility. How different from the prayer of the Pharisee, who, in a pretended prayer, said, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I get." The Pharisee's prayer, like Jacob's, was brief; but that is the only point of likeness. Jacob did not hesitate to confess his fear of Esau; nor was he ashamed to call on Jehovah for protection. "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." He was much concerned about the women and the children. He showed a strange mixture of fear and faith—fear of Esau, and faith in God's promise. Neither was strong enough to entirely extinguish the other. He prayed for deliverance from Esau, and yet he was not unmindful of God's promise of protection. "And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." It seems that Jacob's faith in Jehovah respecting the fulfillment of that promise had wavered somewhat; if not, why should he have been so fearful of Esau? He must have thought that God had forgotten that promise, or else, for some reason, might not see fit to make good the promise. Anyway, he reminded God that he had made that promise. But aside from any possibility of doubt on the part of Jacob, his prayer is a model of brevity and earnestness. But Jehovah had not forgotten that promise, but Jacob needed the experience through which he was about to pass. He needed to realize yet more his dependence on Jehovah.

### **The Connecting Events (Verses 13-26)**

Jacob arranged to make a valuable gift to Esau; some of the animals were very valuable—the milch camels were highly prized. It is interesting to notice how he arranged his gifts and his people for the meeting with Esau. The presents for Esau were to be driven on before his people, and the servants were told what to say to Esau. It seems that the servants were sent over Jabbok to camp on the south side. "He himself lodged that night in the company." During the night he sent his people over; "and Jacob was left alone." Evidently he would spend the rest of the night in prayer. "And there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." Of this incident Hosea says, "In his manhood he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto him." But why should the angel strain the hollow of Jacob's thigh? 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 physical strength, but by his earnest pleading; "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

### **Jacob's Name Changed to Israel (Verses 27-29)**

When Jacob told the angel his name, the angel said, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for thou hast striven with God and with men, and hast prevailed." It has been said that the word Israel means prince of God; but the marginal reading in the American Standard Version has: "That is, He who striveth with God, or God striveth." Hence the supplanter became the perseverer, or, the one who prevails with God. God-given names are descriptive. The study of God-given names is both interesting and instructive. Jacob's perseverance in accomplishing his purposes is seen all along in his history. He is spoken of as a quiet man. He was not a blustering braggart; he made his plans, and followed them through, without boasting about what he was going to do. His wrestling with the angel till he obtained the blessing he sought was a manifestation of a fixed characteristic. This trait of character commended him to God. God cannot use a man who has no persistence, a man who is ready to quit as soon as he starts. Esau was of an emotional type of men, whose conduct is determined by circumstances rather than by any definite conviction of the right or wrong of things. Men of that type are not dependable. Emotion has its proper Place, but it should not take the reins of authority in guiding our conduct. But the angel would not tell Jacob his name; speculation as to why he would not is useless.

"And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for, said he, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Isaac Leeser gives this translation: "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen an angel of God face to face, and my life hath been preserved." This agrees with Hos. 12:4.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

In that lonely night on the banks of the Jabbok Jacob came to realize that "God is not mocked." Perhaps for the first time he began to realize that the tricks he played on Esau and Laban were really sins against God. Fraud reaches out -in at least three directions. It injures the victim, it debases the character of the one who practices it, and it is directed toward God—a sin against God. Jacob needed reconciliation with God more than with Esau. In doing Esau wrong, he had sinned against God. And so, when right and wrong is involved, there can be no such thing as a purely personal matter.

There can be no forgiveness without repentance; and if a person repents of the wrongs he has done to another, he will make amends in so far as he can. Jacob's princely gift which he had set aside for Esau showed a willingness to make some amends to Esau. If it be said that the gift was to be made to save himself from the wrath of Esau, that is partly true, but not altogether; for after they met on good terms, Jacob urged Esau to accept his present, "and he took it." So Jacob made the present when he even had to urge Esau to accept it.

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

Jacob and Esau—a study in character.  
 Jacob's experience in Padan-aram.  
 His experience with Laban and the angel near Jabbok.

**QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, Place, and persons.  
 Give an outline of Jacob's movements in Padan-aram, and the return journey.

**Verse 2**

Discuss verses 1 and 2.  
 Give the meaning of the word angel.

**Verses 3-5**

Locate the land of Seir.  
 What were Jacob's messengers to say to Esau?  
 "The elder shall serve the younger"—what does this mean?

**Verse 6**

What did the messengers report, and what effect did the report have on Jacob?

**Verses 7, 8**

Tell how Jacob arranged to meet Esau.

**Verses 9-12**

Discuss Jacob's prayer.

**Verses 13-26**

Discuss Jacob's wrestling with the angel

**Verses 27-29**

Discuss these verses.  
 Discuss the reflections.

Lesson X—September 6, 1942

**THE ALCOHOL PROBLEM: PAST AND PRESENT**

Gen. 13:13; 19:23-25; Deut. 32:31-33; Amos 6:1-7

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.  
 1 Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and to them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the chief of the nations, to whom the bouse of Israel come!  
 2 Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines: are they better than these kingdoms? or is their border greater than your border?  
 3 Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near;  
 4 That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;  
 5 That sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that invent for themselves instruments of music, like David;  
 6 That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief oils; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.  
 7 Therefore shall they now go captive with the first that go captive; and the revelry of them that stretched themselves shall pass away.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"The way of the wicked shall perish." (Psalm 1:6.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 1.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

August 31. M	The Problem in Sodom (Deut. 32:30-36)
September 1. T	The Problem in Israel (Amos 6:1-8)
September 2. W	Appetite and Greed (Gen. 25:27-34)
September 3. T	Warning Against Intemperance (Isa. 28:1-7)
September 4. F	The Principle of Temperance (1 Cor. 8:1-13)
September 5. S	Christian Influence (Rom. 14:13-23)
September 6. S	Understanding God's Will (Eph. 5:15-21)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, Sodom was destroyed 1897 B.C.; the song of Moses was composed about 1451 B.C.; Amos prophesied between 810 B.C. and 778 B.C.

*Places.*—Sodom, Zoar, the land of Moab, and Bethel or Tekoa. Zoar was a small city not far from Sodom. 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. From the seventh chapter of Amos, it seems that he did most of his prophesying at Bethel, but most likely he wrote his book after he returned to his home at Tekoa.

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

*Lesson Links*—Drunkenness is a great evil, but it is not the only evil that curses the world. Notice the evils with which Paul classes drunkenness: "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.) People are too much inclined to emphasize one thing and neglect other things of equal importance, and to center their fight against one sin and say little against other, and perhaps greater, evils. Every Christian should cultivate himself to see things as God sees them—both the good things and the evil things. We should not minimize the evils of drunkenness, nor should we shut our eyes to other evils.

Alcoholic beverages have been a problem ever since men began to make them. Before governments began to try to regulate the manufacture and sale of intoxicants, the problem was social and religious; but such drinks are now a government problem. The government cannot deal with the drink evil from a purely religious standpoint; it cannot undertake to legislate people into heaven, nor can it legislate them out of hell. But it can, and should, take notice of the evil in so far as it effects economics, health, good citizenship, and the safety of both the user and the nonuser. It is the problem of all Christians, and all good citizens also to teach the evils of drunkenness, and to set a good example by self-control. Effective teaching can be done only when it is backed up by a good example. The alcohol problem is today very much what it has always been. On account of the automobile there are new dangers connected with drinking. Even a small degree of intoxication makes one a dangerous driver of an automobile.

**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 13, is found in the preceding verses. When the flocks and herds of Abraham and Lot became so great that it became necessary for them to separate, Abraham gave Lot his choice of territory. "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 selfish greed had got him and his family into, Moses tells about the wickedness of the men of Sodom. A man acts a fool, when, for the sake of gain, he moves himself and family into a place where the people are "wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceedingly." All forms of sin must have flourished in Sodom. The final doom of that city, and the destruction of all that Lot had, together with the loss of his wife, show the folly of Lot's move.

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

The people of a whole city or nation may become so wicked and depraved 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"—only evil, and that continually. There is no good in people who reach that stage of corruption. Because they were wholly given to evil the Lord destroyed them with a flood. People can become so corrupt 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.

In lesson five of this quarter we studied Abraham's plea for Sodom. It seems that Lot's influence in Sodom amounted to nothing. When the time came for the destruction of Sodom and its environs, Lot was warned to take his family and flee. At his earnest plea he 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.) Lot's haste in fleeing from Sodom would indicate that he left all his property behind. If he 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 loss, even his life, by the wickedness of others. Because these studies about Sodom are included in a lesson on "The Alcohol Problem," let no one conclude that the sum total of their wickedness consisted in drinking intoxicants. In fact, one of the most revolting and degrading sins—sodomy—gained its name from the practice of the men of Sodom. While it is not said that the men of Sodom were drinkers of alcoholic beverages, one could safely conclude that much drinking went on in that city; but their moral corruption and



their defiance of Jehovah were the main things charged against them. What is said in the next section of our lesson shows that they were heavy drinkers.

### **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 people of Israel. (Verse 44.) It is a part of his farewell speech to the people whom he had brought out of Egypt and led through the wilderness. They were now about ready to cross the Jordan into the land of promise, but Moses would not be in that crossing, for he was soon to die and be buried in the land of Moab. In this same speech, just before he began his song, Moses said to his people, "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.

The rocks of the mountains were places of refuge when a superior force invaded the country of a people. Rock therefore came to be used figuratively to represent that in which people trusted for safety when danger arose. 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; but Israel would forsake Jehovah for the gods of the heathen, and then Jehovah would say to them, "Where are their gods, the rock in which they took refuge . . . ? Let them rise up and help you, let them be your protection." (Verses 37, 38.) To remind them of the folly of trusting in other gods, Moses said, "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—they knew the superiority of Jehovah over their gods.

The term vine here, as in many other places, represents a people. In one of the most striking figures of speech found in the Bible, David represents Israel as a vine which the Lord brought out of Egypt and planted in Palestine: "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." (Psalm 80:8-13.) 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.) The song of Moses was prophetic of just such conditions as Jeremiah here mentions. The people were the vine; the fruit—the grapes—was the conduct of the people. "Their vine is of the vine of Sodom"—they had become corrupt like the people of Sodom. All the fruits of such a nation were bitter like gall. Sodom had ceased to be, long before Moses wrote these words, but this prophetic utterance shows that Israel would one day become as Sodom was. And the fruits of such a nation would be bitter like gall. Of course none of the literal wine of Sodom had been preserved, yet Moses says, "Their wine is" (not was) "the poison of serpents." It is not likely that their literal wine was more poisonous than that made by other people.

### **Woe to Zion and Samaria (Amos 6:1, 2)**

Zion is Jerusalem, the capital city of the kingdom of Judah; Samaria was the capital city of the northern kingdom. After the Hebrew kingdom divided, both resultant kingdoms grew worse, though the kingdom of Judah had occasional periods of superficial reformations. At the time Amos prophesied Uzziah was king in Jerusalem, and Jeroboam II was king in Samaria. In the main Uzziah was a good king, and the kingdom for a time enjoyed a period of great prosperity; "but when he was strong, his heart was lifted up, so that he did corruptly, and he trespassed against Jehovah his God; for he went into the temple of Jehovah to burn incense upon the altar of incense." (2 Chron. 26:16-21.) For this sin he was smitten with leprosy. The people and their king had become confident of their security—they were at ease. They felt that no harm could befall them. The same was true of the king and people of Samaria. When people feel secure and at ease, they cease to be vigilant; then they are in danger. Christians sometimes reach that point. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." "Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." To show Jerusalem and Samaria the insecurity of nations which feel too secure, Amos invites them to consider certain once-powerful city kingdoms—Calneh on the Euphrates, Hamath the great on the Orontes, and Gath of the Philistines.

### **Other Reasons for Their Coming Woes (Verses 3-7)**

In their minds they put the evil day far away. They said, "The evil shall not overtake nor meet us." (Amos 9:10.) Even after the northern kingdom had fallen, and the kingdom of Judah was near its end, Jeremiah represented the people as saying, "Neither shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine." (Jer. 5:12.) They lived in richly furnished houses, ate the fat of the land, drank their wine in bowls, and sang idle songs. Drinking intoxicants goes with such living. Their optimism, and their indifference to their moral corruption, brought the evil day—the day of vengeance nearer. Such people do not want any laws to interfere with their way of living; nor do they like those who seek to correct their way of living. "They hate him that reproveth in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly." (Amos 5:10.) Woe is also pronounced on them "that invent for themselves instruments of music, like David." Adam Clarke, commenting on this clause, says he believes "that David was not authorized by the Lord to introduce that multitude of musical instruments into the divine worship, of which we read.!" And he also said, "And I further believe that the use of such instruments of music, in the Christian church, is without sanction and against the will of God; that they are subversive of the spirit of true devotion, and that they are sinful."

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

It is folly to say that if you let alcohol alone, it will let you alone. It causes damage, and even death, and untold sorrow, to many who never drink. There is no safety to anyone on the highway when drunken people are driving: If people drank alone, there would not be so much drunkenness. Social drinking starts many on the road to drunkenness. It takes a strong character to refuse to drink when everybody else in the crowd is drinking.

But it is possible that drunkenness is not the worst evil that afflicts the world. Think of the wars, and what they do to the people of the world. And there is the increasing immoral relations between men and women; also the divorce and remarriage evil. And there is the increasing disregard for the rights of others, that leads to fraud, robbery, the disregard of the welfare, and even the lives, of others. Even the great sins are too numerous to mention; it would be impossible to pick out the worst of men's sins.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The evils of too much optimism.  
The need of recognizing present-day dangers.  
The evils of social drinking.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
Discuss matters found in *Lesson Links*

#### Verse 13

Repeat what is said of the men of Sodom.  
Gen. 19:23-25  
Why did the Lord destroy people, cities, and nations?  
What would have saved Sodom?  
How came Lot to escape?  
Discuss what Peter says about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.  
Would you conclude that the people of Sodom were given to drinking?  
Why?

#### Deut. 32:31-33

Under what circumstances did Moses utter the words of this section?  
What had he just said about their future conduct?

Discuss the significance of rock, as used in this lesson.  
Discuss the significance of vine and wine, as here used.

#### Amos 6:1, 2

How came the Hebrews to be divided into two kingdoms?  
Why were Judah and Samaria in danger?  
What may be our danger?  
How did Amos warn them not to feel so secure?

#### Verses 3-7

What did the people think and say about the evil day?  
What did Judah say as late as Jeremiah's day?  
What does Amos say about the way the people lived?  
How did their feeling of security bring the evil day nearer?  
What is the attitude of evildoers toward those who seek to correct them?  
What is said about their instruments of music?  
Discuss the reflections.

### Lesson XI—September 13, 1942 JOSEPH SOLD INTO SLAVERY Gen. 37:23-36

23 And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph of his coat, the coat of many colors that was on him;

24 And they took him, and cast him into the pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.

26 And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood?

27 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother, our flesh. And his brethren hearkened unto him.

28 And there passed by Midianites, merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they brought Joseph into Egypt.

29 And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes.

30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?

31 And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a he-goat, and dipped the coat in the blood;

32 And they sent the coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father, and said, This have we found: know now whether it is thy son's coat or not.

33 And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces.

34 And Jacob rent his garments, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.

35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down to Sheol to my son mourning. And his father wept for him.

36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Love envieth not." (1 Cor. 13:4.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 130.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

September 7.	M	Joseph Hated by His Brothers (Gen. 37:1-8)
September 8.	T	Joseph Sold into Egypt (Gen. 37:23-28)
September 9.	W	A Father's Grief (Gen. 37:29-36)
September 10.	T	Avoiding Strife (Col. 3:18 to 4:1)
September 11.	F	God's Providence with Joseph (Psalm 105:7-24)
September 12.	S	Domestic Relations (Eph. 6:1-9)
September 13.	S	Mutual Love (Rom. 12:9-21)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1728 B.C.; according to Hales, 1885 B.C.

*Place.*—Dothan, about twelve miles north of Shechem (Samaria). It seems that Jacob lived at or near Hebron at this time.

*Persons.*—Jacob and his sons, excepting Benjamin, who was too young to take part in the proceedings of this lesson.

*Lesson Links*—The history of Joseph's activities begins with the thirty-seventh chapter of Genesis. "Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and he was a lad with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought the evil report of them unto their father. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colors. 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." Such state of affairs brings no happiness to a family. It gave Joseph a feeling of importance that was not good for him. It took some bitter experiences to tone him down, so that he would be fitted for the great work the Lord had for him in Egypt. It seems that Jacob should have known that such partiality shown to Joseph would stir up ill will toward Joseph in his other sons. That ill will grew into bitter hatred, and hatred is dangerous. Joseph did not help matters any by his own attitude toward his brethren; his gloating over them made matters worse. He certainly did not tell his dreams to entertain them, nor to make them feel better toward him. Knowing their feelings toward him, he must have told them his dreams to vex them. To say that he told the dreams innocently is to say that he was devoid of understanding.

His Dreams.—It seems that only his brethren were present when he told his first dream, for they only were concerned. Notice how he introduces the matter: "Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed." Together they were binding sheaves in the field. When Joseph had dropped a sheaf, it stood up, and the sheaves of his brethren gathered about his sheaf, and did obeisance to his sheaf. The implication of that dream was as plain as day to them. Angrily they said, "Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words." The other dream concerned his father also, and he told it in his presence. "The sun and the moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me." The meaning of that dream was also plain, and Jacob did not like its implication. If Jacob thought it was a prophetic dream, it is not easy to see why he rebuked Joseph. As Rachel, Joseph's mother was dead, perhaps Leah had become a mother to him.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### **Joseph's Brethren Cast Him into a Pit (Verses 23, 24)**

If Jacob knew how bitter his other sons were toward Joseph, it is strange that he should send him alone to distant Shechem to bring him a report as to how they were getting along with the cattle. "So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem." But he did not find his brethren at Shechem, where they had been feeding the flock. A man informed him that they had gone on to Dothan, about twelve miles to the north of Shechem. "And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan." It does not seem that he himself had any idea as to how full of anger and malice his brethren were toward him. When the brethren saw Joseph coming, nine of them conspired to kill him, for it does not seem that Reuben was a party to this conspiracy. "And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh." The marginal reading informs us that the Hebrew means, master of dreams. They said that, of course, sneeringly. "Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into one of the pits, and we will say, An evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams." Envy, ill will, anger, malice, and then a desire to kill—so was their hearts poisoned. Reuben was the oldest of the sons of Jacob. He was of a milder and more reasoning temperament than the others. He said to the others, "Let us not take his life . . . Shed no blood; cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but lay no hand upon him: that he might deliver him out of their hand, to restore him to his father." When Joseph came to them, they stripped him of his coat of many colors, and likely they were not very gentle in doing so. They hated that coat, and likely tore it from him. They then cast him into a dry pit, there to let him perish. But Reuben had other plans, but Joseph could not know but that Reuben was as heartless as the rest.

### **Joseph Sold to Ishmaelites and Midianites (Verses 25-28)**

Later, when these same brethren of Joseph were about to get into what seemed to them serious trouble, "they said one to another, 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." And yet

with the picture of that distressed face in their mind, and his pleadings ringing in their ears, they sat down to eat. If that food tasted good, and they ate it with ease and pleasure, they were hardened beyond all imagination. The Ishmaelites and Midianites who came along must have been traveling together for protection against robbers. The Midianites are here called merchantmen. They were all traders. With the goods they had already purchased and the money they carried with which to make other purchases, they would be a tempting prize for any band of robbers that could overcome them. They were carrying their goods to the markets in Egypt. At this moment Reuben was not present. Perhaps he was looking after the stock; for, being the oldest, he would be the foreman, and mainly responsible for the stock. The remaining nine saw a chance to turn their hatred to Joseph to their own profit; so they drew him out of the pit, and sold him to these traders. Evidently Judah did not feel right at the idea of allowing Joseph to perish of hunger and thirst in that pit; anyway, the plan to sell him to these traders came from Judah. He did not want Joseph to perish in the pit, nor did he want to see him killed; "for he is our brother, our flesh."

### **Reuben's Distress Over Joseph's Disappearance (Verses 29, 30)**

Of course Joseph did not know that Reuben had saved him from being killed, nor that Reuben suggested his being cast into the pit, that he might secretly rescue him and send him back to his father. It was only years later Joseph learned from Reuben's own lips that Reuben had not been a party to the conspiracy against him, but Reuben did not know that he was giving Joseph that information. The brethren were talking among themselves in Joseph's presence, but they did not know Joseph and did not know that he understood them, for he had hidden that fact by communing with them through an interpreter. In that conversation Reuben said, "Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear?" When Reuben came alone to the pit into which he had contrived to have Joseph placed, he found the pit empty. "And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?" But Joseph was already on the way to Egypt. If the brethren had told him what they had done, he knew that he singlehanded could not rescue him from that caravan. If they told him what they had done, the thing had gone too far, and there were too many determined men against him for him to tell his father the truth of the matter. The others could have so planned as to accuse Reuben of being responsible for all that was done, had he told what became of Joseph. They may not have told Reuben what they had done.

### **How They Deceived Jacob (Verses 31-33)**

It is a little singular that these men said anything to Jacob about Joseph. They could have waited till Jacob got uneasy about Joseph, and made inquiry. They could then have said, "He did not come to our camp; we have seen nothing of him." But they hated that coat of many colors, and evidently wanted it to figure in the matter; so they killed a he-goat, dipped the coat in its blood, and some of them carried it to Jacob and said, "This we have found: know now whether it is thy son's coat or not." You will notice that they did not tell

Jacob that an evil beast had killed Joseph; they let Jacob draw his own conclusion. They could have torn the coat in such way as to indicate that a beast had killed Joseph; it made the impression they desired to make on their father. They had so long resented Jacob's favoritism for Joseph that they wanted to punish him, and they succeeded. It is pitiful to see an aged father treated by his own sons as was Jacob; and yet Jacob was not free from blame for what he was suffering, for his favoritism for Joseph had sowed the seeds that culminated in that whole tragic situation. However his mistake did not make it right for his other sons to do as they did. They were men, and should have outgrown feelings that led to such crimes. In the very nature of their relations they owed reverence and obedience to their father.

### **Jacob Deeply Mourns the Loss of Joseph (Verses 34, 35)**

Any father would mourn the loss of a son under any circumstances, but when a father loses a favorite son under circumstances as tragic as Jacob believed Joseph to have perished, it bows down the father with inexpressible grief. Here his daughters are said to have sought to comfort him, though only one daughter has been mentioned. That does not mean that he had only one daughter, for she is mentioned because of the tragic circumstances connected with her at Shechem. Or his sons' wives may here be called his daughters. It is taken for granted that these daughters believed, as Jacob did, that Joseph had been killed by a wild beast; but trying to comfort him must have been a hard task for his sons. It does not seem that they could think of anything to say that would not sound hollow and insincere. What they had done had been done through hatred for Joseph and a spirit of displeasure at Jacob. It likely had not occurred to them that Jacob would be so overwhelmed with grief; their whole thoughts had been centered on carrying out their plans, without taking into consideration the results of their wickedness. Now when they see his deep grief, they wanted to comfort him, but all their words were empty. "He refused to be comforted; and he said, "For I will go down to Sheol to my son mourning."

### **Joseph Sold to Potiphar in Egypt (Verse 36)**

In this account Ishmaelites and Midianites are mentioned in such a mixed way that both tribes must have shared in his ownership. They had not bought Joseph for their own slave, but for the purpose of selling him for profit. They sold him to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard. The marginal reading tells us that the Hebrew means, the chief of Pharaoh's executioners. In those days, if a man did not suit the whim of the ruler, he had him killed.

Our lesson really includes chapters 39, 40, and 41. Chapters 39 and 40 record some more of Joseph's experience, a schooling which Joseph needed to fit him for the great work the Lord had stored up for him to do. In prosperity and trials he had always with him the protecting and guiding hand of Jehovah. Apparently evil days had come to Joseph, but he played the part of a man in each unfavorable situation. All that he did in the house of Potiphar prospered, so much so that Potiphar gave him full management of his affairs. On a mean and false charge he was cast into prison, where he conducted himself in such way that he became the real manager of the prison.

Here, instead of dreaming, he became the interpreter of dreams. And because of his ability, by the help of the Lord, to interpret dreams, he was finally released from prison, that he might interpret the dreams of Pharaoh.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

At least three evil effects came from Jacob's showing such marked favoritism for Joseph over his other sons. It gave Joseph a feeling of superiority; it cultivated bitterness, hate, and a desire to kill in the hearts of the other sons; Jacob was laying the grounds for future trouble for himself.

Joseph had the qualities, if properly trained, to make him a man of great worth; the Lord knew what he needed. If a man will not humble himself, the Lord may humble him by taking him through experiences that will humble him. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." But the things Joseph suffered would have discouraged and even crushed some men. Jacob's favoritism for Joseph may have given him an exaggerated opinion of himself, but it did not make a weakling of him. He turned every situation to his own good. His whole life gives us a rare example for character study.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The life and character of Jacob.  
The evils of favoritism in the home, the school, and the church.  
How real evils sometimes work to our good.  
Making the best of circumstances.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, Place, and persons.  
How old was Joseph at the beginning of his recorded activities?  
What got him into trouble with his brothers?  
Tell about his dreams, and what they implied.

#### Verses 23, 24

On what mission did Jacob send Joseph?  
Where did he find his brethren?  
What did his brothers propose to do, and who persuaded them otherwise?

#### Verses 25-28

Who proposed to sell him, and to whom?

How did this later worry them?

#### Verses 29, 30

Discuss verses 29, 30.

#### Verses 31-33

Tell about their deceiving Jacob.  
How does the conduct of these men impress you?

#### Verses 34, 35

Tell about Jacob's mourning.  
How could his sons go about comforting him?

#### Verse 36

To whom was Joseph sold in Egypt?  
Tell about his actions up to the time he was released from prison.  
Discuss the reflections.



**Lesson XII—September 20, 1942****JUDAH: AN EXAMPLE OF SELF-SACRIFICE**

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.*—"Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—1 Pet. 2:18-25.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

September 14. M

September 15. T

September 16. W

September 17. T

September 18. F

September 19. S

September 20. S

Judah's Intercession (Gen. 44:18-29)

Judah's Self-Sacrifice (Gen. 44:30-34)

Moses' Self-Sacrifice (Ex. 32:30-35)

Jonathan's Plea for David (1 Sam. 19:1-6)

Esther's Self-Sacrificing Spirit (Esth. 4:10-17)

The Reward of Sacrificial Living (2 Tim. 4:1-8)

The Supreme Self-Sacrifice (1 Pet. 2:18-25)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1706 B.C. By adding the following dates we learn that it had been two hundred and fifteen years since Abraham came from Haran: 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). *Place.*—Egypt, in Joseph's house.

*Persons.*—Judah and Joseph. Of course the whole family of Jacob was in view. Joseph's other brethren were present.

*Lesson Links*—Joseph was brought out of prison that he might interpret two of Pharaoh's dreams. After Pharaoh related his dreams, Joseph said to him, "The dream of Pharaoh is one: what God is about to do he hath declared unto Pharaoh." The seven good kine and the seven good ears represented seven years in which there would be abundant harvest. Joseph recommended that one-fifth of the products of the land be stored up during the seven years of plenty against the seven years of famine. Joseph was appointed to manage the whole business of the collection and storing of the grain. Canaan did not escape the ravages of the famine. When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt he sent his sons down to buy grain. Benjamin remained at home. These sons had to go to Joseph to buy the grain. If we look at these matters between Joseph and his brethren in the light of what had gone before and not in the light of what followed, we will see Joseph's conduct toward his brethren in a clearer light. The brethren did not know Joseph; but Joseph knew them, though he pretended not to know them Joseph did not know but that they still hated him as they once did. He used an interpreter in conversing with them, accused them of being spies, and locked them up three days. On the third day he proposed a test by which he would know whether they were spies, though they had protested earnestly that they were not spies, but true men, sons of one man in the land of Canaan, and that they had one brother, the youngest, at home. If they hated him as they once did, it would be very unpleasant to have them make their home in Egypt, but he did want Benjamin, and began to plan to that end. He would keep one of them in prison as a pledge that they would bring Benjamin on their next trip. 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?" From this Joseph learned that Reuben had taken his part; but he had not yet learned that time had mellowed them, and changed their feelings toward their brother whom they once hated and sold into slavery.

Joseph was human. He remembered his dreams; he was now the sheaf standing upright, and his brethren were the sheaves bowing down before him. Because he had learned that Reuben, the oldest, was less guilty than the others, he bound Simeon, the next oldest. It would be useless for them to come for more grain unless they brought Benjamin. When they returned with Benjamin, Joseph contrived a scheme to keep Benjamin, and let the others return home.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### **Judah's Plea for a Hearing (Verse 18)**

Before studying Judah's speech, try to form in your mind a vivid picture of the whole scene. Joseph's brethren had returned with Benjamin. Simeon was released from prison, and the steward had been ordered to make a feast for them. When Joseph came in, still

pretending that he regarded them as strange men from a foreign country, he spoke to them of their father, and 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 cup. He had their sacks filled with grain, and then commanded his steward to put everyone's money into his sack's mouth, and to put his silver cup into 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. To show their honesty they reminded him that they had brought back all the money that they found in their sacks as they returned home on their former trip to buy food. As additional proof of their innocence they made this proposition: "With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen." He agreed, saying, "Let it be according unto your words: . . . and ye shall be blameless." To keep matters from looking like a frame-up, "he searched, and began at the eldest, and left off at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack." They had been caught in their own proposition, and it was more than they could stand. "They rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city." "And they fell before him on the ground." This was a striking fulfillment of Joseph's dream. When Joseph accused them Judah spoke for all. His reply is pitiful in its expression of helplessness. They were being paid for their iniquity. They could not know but that Benjamin was guilty, but they were willing to share bondage with him. How different they are now from what they were when they hated Joseph, plotted to kill him, and then sold him into slavery. But Joseph was very stern with them. "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. Evidently Joseph's plan was not working out as he had expected.

Joseph had not expected such a change in his brethren. By agreement on the part of all, or by mere chance, Judah became the spokesman for all. Throughout his speech, not the selfish interest of him and his brethren, but the welfare and happiness 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. (Gen. 41:40, 44.) He had already delivered his judgment, as recorded in verse 17. It must have been a difficult and embarrassing matter to deliver a plea, or defense, after judgment had been pronounced. It was fitting that Judah should make the plea, for he had pledged Benjamin's safe return to his father. (Gen. 43:1-15.) The opening sentence of Judah's plea brings to mind 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 Judah's speech make the scene and its background as real in your imagination as you possibly can.

**Judah Recounts the Reasons for Bringing Benjamin (Verses 19-26)**

Judah gives more of the conversation between Joseph and his brethren at their former visit than is found in the narrative. (See Gen. 42:1-25.) Someone has said concerning verse 20: "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 simple and full of pathos. No man of taste or sensibility can read and ponder it without great emotion. Read it again, slowly, thoughtfully. 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, not related to the pleaders, and Benjamin proved guilty, such an address must have struck him with impelling force; with what feelings then must Joseph have heard it! Had we been present, and heard that speech, so full of earnest appeal that his father be spared of additional sorrow in his old age, it would have banished from us any grudge we might have held against Judah; and would readily have joined his father in saying, "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 ground that the absence of Benjamin would result in his father's death; but Joseph had demanded that they bring Benjamin, otherwise he would not sell them 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. There is not in Judah's entire speech any hint as to whether he thought Benjamin was guilty or innocent. Jacob had not agreed for Benjamin to come with them, until he learned it was useless for them to come without Benjamin.

**Judah Recites Jacob's Words (Verses 27-29)**

Rachel, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, was the real object of Jacob's love; Leah had been forced on him by trickery. So Jacob had spoken of Rachel as his real wife. "My wife bare me two sons." Because he loved the mother of Joseph and Benjamin more than he loved his other wives, it was natural for him to love them more than he loved his other sons. She was dead, and to him Joseph was dead also; only Benjamin remained of the fruit of his real love. The other sons had now become old enough and experienced enough to realize the situation, and not to resent his loving Benjamin so devotedly. But it must have been painful to Judah to recite the words of his father, knowing that the very words he was uttering were made necessary by the crime he and his brethren had committed against Joseph and their deception of their father. They had carried that crime on their consciences a long time. One wonders how often they had discussed it among themselves. It must have grown painful to them to think of it—it was now much more painful to Judah to make it the basis of a plea for mercy in behalf of his aged father. 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 mourned him as dead. He now knew why his father had not followed up the caravan with sufficient force to rescue him. Joseph had great self-control, or he could not have

stood any more, especially after Judah repeated these words of Jacob's: "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 30, 31)**

Jacob was growing old; he had had much sorrow. His life was now bound up in the life of Benjamin. If they returned without Benjamin, Judah felt sure that the shock would kill him. He was laying all these things before the lord of the land in the hope that such possibilities would move him to release Benjamin. And if their father should die from shock, they felt that they would be the cause of his 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)**

For the sake of his father, Judah pleads that he be allowed to take Benjamin's place as bondman. That offer was an unselfish offer; 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 anyway if he should be the cause of his father's death. The substitution would not be any loss to this lord of the land, for he could serve as well as Benjamin. It looked like a fair offer. 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." It does not seem that a more effective speech could have been made.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

It is interesting and encouraging to note the transformation and development of character. When Judah hated Joseph, was a party to plotting his death, and then selling him into slavery, sharing with the others the money from that heartless transaction, he seemed then to be hopelessly hardened in sin. But in this speech to Joseph there is revealed a character 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 neglect of his father till he had tried to forget all about them. He had named his first son Manasseh, "making to forget," saying, "God hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house." Till now he did not realize the marvelous change in his brethren, nor that his father did not know that he had been sold to a caravan headed for Egypt.

It has been said that God works in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform. This is especially true with respect to his overruling providence in working out his plans. At the first it did not occur to Joseph that God overruled the hatred of his brethren in working out future good. This had become clear to Joseph, as is seen in what he said to his brethren. (Gen. 45:5-8.) God makes the wrath of man to praise him.

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

How Joseph's character was transformed.  
 The transformation of the character of his brethren.  
 God's providence in the affairs of men.

**QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

Give what occurred before Judah made his speech.  
 Discuss verse 18.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, Place, and persons.  
 How compute the time from Abraham's leaving Haran to the time of this lesson?  
 How came Joseph to be delivered from prison?  
 Tell about Pharaoh's dreams and Joseph's interpretation.  
 Tell about the first visit of Joseph's brethren.  
 How came Joseph to learn that Reuben had no part in selling him into slavery?  
 How did he contrive to get Benjamin down in Egypt?

**Verses 19-26**

Read and discuss these verses.

**Verses 27-29**

Read and discuss these verses.

**Verses 30, 31**

Discuss verses 30, 31.

**Verses 32-34**

What shows Judah's unselfishness?  
 What shows his tender feeling for his father?  
 Discuss the reflections.

**Verse 18**

Tell about their second visit to Egypt.

Lesson XIII—September 27, 1942

**JOSEPH: AN EXAMPLE OF FORGIVENESS**

Gen. 45:1-15; 47:11, 12

1 Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

2 And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians heard, and the house of Pharaoh heard.

3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5 And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

6 For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and there are yet five years, in which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest.

7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance.

8 So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

9 Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not;

10 And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

11 And there will I nourish thee; for there are yet five years of famine; lest thou come to poverty, thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast.

12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.

13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen: and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

14 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.  
15 And he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

11 And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.

12 And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.

*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.*—1 John 4:7-11.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

September 21.	M	Joseph Forgives His Brothers (Gen. 45:1-8)
September 22.	T	Joseph Provides for His Family (Gen. 45:9-15)
September 23.	W	Esau Forgives His Brother (Gen. 33:1-8)
September 24.	T	The Standard of Forgiveness (Matt. 18:21-35)
September 25.	F	A Forgiving Spirit (Col. 3:12-17)
September 26.	S	God's Forgiveness (Psalm 103:1-8)
September 27.	S	"God Is Love" (1 John 4:7-11)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—According to Usher, 1706 B.C. See last lesson.

*Places.*—Joseph's house and the land of Rameses, in Egypt.

*Persons.*—Joseph, his brethren, his father Jacob, and the entire household of Jacob.

*Lesson Links*—To forgive a person is to cease to hold resentment against him for wrongs—it is to regard the person as no longer guilty of the wrongs he had formerly been guilty of. You cannot hold a person as not guilty so long as he cherishes the wrong in his heart. Only when a guilty person repents can he be forgiven. There is no hint that Joseph so much as thought of forgiving his brethren till he saw that they had undergone a complete change of feelings. You may ignore certain minor injuries or insults, even though there is no repentance; but if a person's attitude toward you is so hostile or injurious that you cannot ignore him and his conduct, you cannot really forgive him till he repents. You cannot regard a person as not guilty, when you know he is guilty. God does not forgive the impenitent sinner; though a sin may be ignored, it cannot be forgiven without repentance. And Joseph could forgive the wrong deeds of his brethren in so far as they affected him, but he could not take the place of God and blot out their sins. In the eyes of God they were guilty of a serious crime, and he alone could remove guilt from them. Every wrong done to a man is a sin against God. Any difficulty therefore between two men is not a mere personal matter; the one who is in the wrong sins against God as well as his fellow man.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### Joseph Makes Himself Known to His Brethren (Verses 1-4)

The things Judah said in his plea was a revelation to Joseph. He saw things in a new light. His brethren were not as they once were; a remarkable change for the better had taken place in them. Now they had a very tender feeling for their father. They did not resent

his devotion to Benjamin. From Judah's speech Joseph had also learned that Jacob had all these years thought Joseph dead. His emotions overcame him—his cup of joy was full and overflowing. He did not want the Egyptians to witness what he was about to do; "and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me." This sudden outburst must have startled his brethren, and caused them to wonder what was his next move; they had not yet learned that he was Joseph. Benjamin had been arrested, and brought back on a charge of theft. The last thing the man, the lord of the land, had said was that he would keep Benjamin and that the others should go back to their father. Judah had made his plea. Now this sudden command by this lord of the land—what was back of it? The next statement this lord of the land made so amazed the brethren that they could say nothing. They were likely expecting him to reaffirm his determination to keep Benjamin a prisoner, and send them on a sad journey home; they were not prepared to hear him say, "I am Joseph." Nothing that Joseph could have said would have been more surprising to them. "Doth my father yet live?" He must have been beside himself with joy to ask that question, for Judah's speech had been a plea for the release of Benjamin on account of his father. "And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence." They did not know but that they were all in for trouble; they still carried a guilty conscience. They also knew that Joseph had not forgotten their treatment of him; and now that he was lord of the land, he could do with them as he pleased. It is not surprising that they were troubled. All bitterness had been banished from Joseph's heart by Judah's speech, but the brethren could not yet know his purposes concerning them.

#### **Joseph Speaks Kindly to His Brethren (Verse 4)**

These brethren did not know what Joseph might say next; they knew only that they would have to do what he said, for they were completely in his power. But all disposition to use harsh speech had vanished. It was bound to be humiliating to him to find now that his brethren were manifesting a better spirit than he had done. He had cherished bitterness; they had overcome such feelings. Having seen all this, Joseph spoke kindly to them. "Come near to me, I pray you." After the Egyptian fashion, he had not come into close contact with them. Now he wants them close to him; "and they came near." If there was still any doubt in their minds as to his identity, he would remove that doubt by reminding them that he was the one whom they had sold into Egypt. He could give them details that no others could know.

#### **Joseph Sees God's Hand in the Matter (Verses 5-8)**

When these brethren sold Joseph into Egypt, any fair-minded person would have pronounced their deed both foolish and criminal; yet they thought they were doing a smart thing. They meant harm; their deed grew out of deep hatred. Now they see themselves in that transaction in their true light, and must for years have been vexed at themselves for such an unnatural crime; but Joseph would relieve their feelings by showing matters in their true light. "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 has frequently



overruled the evil deeds of men to make them serve his own purposes, and such men were not aware that God's hand was in the matter. While they were bent on working out their own purposes, God was using them to work out his own purposes. In this way God punished his own people for their corruption and their many sins. "Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation! I will send him against a profane nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few." (Isa. 10:5-7.) Even wicked men and heathen men are used in God's plans. Because Nebuchadnezzar, a heathen king, was used in carrying out God's plans, God calls him "my servant." (Jer. 27:6.) Either by revelation or by observing the course of events, Joseph had learned this important lesson. "God did send me before you to preserve life." Egypt and the surrounding lands had been in the grip of famine for two years at the time of this visit; "and there are yet five years, in which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest." During a time like that, there would be an untold amount of suffering, and many deaths by starvation. "And God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance." Because Joseph had stored food in Egypt, even Jacob's family was preserved. In all this God was working out his own plans; and yet, when Joseph's brethren did not kill him, as they planned, but sold him into Egypt instead, no one then could have seen the hand of God in what was being done; but it was all now plain to Joseph. God had overruled their actions as well as the results of what they did. "So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God."

After Joseph had interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, Pharaoh said to him, "Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou: 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." And because Joseph had managed things so wisely, he had become a father to Pharaoh. Pharaoh recognized that Joseph was wiser and a better governor than he. He was the real ruler of all the land of Egypt.

### **Joseph Orders Them to Bring Jacob to Egypt (Verses 9-11)**

Now that all things were cleared up in Joseph's mind, he was anxious to have his father come down at the earliest possible date. "Haste ye, and go up to my father." He would have them emphasize the fact that he recognized the hand of God in all that had been done to him. "Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not." They would dwell in the land of Goshen, a country along the Nile River below Cairo, where they would find abundant pasturage for their flocks and herds. Here they would not be far from Joseph, so that he might see them often, and look after their needs. "And there will I nourish thee." He would see that they had food in plenty. He would have Jacob know that there were yet five years of famine; that information might make him more willing to come to Egypt, "lest thou come to poverty, thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast."

**Repentance and Forgiveness Acted (Verses 12-15)**

Joseph's brethren had not said that they had repented of what they had done to him and their father, but their speech and actions showed Joseph that they had repented. Joseph did not demand any apology for the wrongs they had done him, as some professed Christians do today. Neither did Joseph say in so many words, "I forgive you." Both repentance and forgiveness were acted instead of spoken. The brethren had already shown their repentance; now Joseph shows his forgiveness. But first he reaffirms that he is Joseph, and calls them to witness that it is he who speaks to them. To reassure Jacob he begs that they tell Jacob about all his glory in Egypt. Then he first fell on Benjamin's neck, and wept. And to show the others his complete forgiveness for their wrongs to him, he kissed all of them, and wept upon them. Up to this point his brethren had been so troubled at his presence that they were unable to say anything. They had not known what he would do to them; but now they feel free to speak—Joseph had shown that he now had no ill will toward them—"and after that his brethren talked with him." Instead of keeping Benjamin and letting the others go back home, a way had been opened up by which he could have with him, not only Benjamin, but the whole family. It was a happy solution of an unpleasant situation.

**Jacob and Sons Located in Egypt (Gen. 47:11, 12)**

The report that Joseph's brethren had come reached Pharaoh; "and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye: lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan; and take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land. Now thou art commanded, this do ye: take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come." Abundant supplies were furnished them for the long journey to Canaan and return. "And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan, unto Jacob their father. And they told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt. And his heart fainted, for he believed them not. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: and Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die." And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to show the way before him unto Goshen. When they arrived Joseph presented five of his brethren to Pharaoh, and then his father. When Pharaoh asked his age, Jacob made a quaint little speech: "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." Jacob and his sons were then placed in the best of the land, "in the land of Rameses." Yet they were to have their dwelling in the land of Goshen. Hence, the land of Goshen and the land of Rameses were one and the same, or else Rameses was a district in the land of Goshen. And Joseph was diligent in seeing that their wants were supplied. Here is further evidence of his complete forgiveness of all that had been done to him.

**SOME REFLECTIONS**

There are spiritual influences overruling the actions of men, influences that no one understands; but no one is made better by such influences. God caused Joseph to dream two prophetic dreams; the same was true of the dreams of two of Joseph's fellow prisoners. Pharaoh's dreams were prophetic. Said Joseph, "What God is about to do he hath declared unto Pharaoh." And the dream of Nebuchadnezzar is another case to the point. (Dan. 2.) God caused Nebuchadnezzar to dream that dream, just as he caused the other dreams mentioned. In the land of Canaan the children were surrounded by enemies, and yet all men were required to go to Jerusalem three times a year, thus leaving their borders exposed to their enemies. For such a time God gave Israel this assurance: "Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou goest up to appear before Jehovah thy God three times in the year." (Ex. 34:24.) Of course these heathen nations did not know that their desires were held in abeyance by the God of Israel; neither were they benefitted in character by such spiritual influences. Men are led to a better life by obeying the word of God, and not by these mysterious spiritual influences.

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

Repentance and forgiveness.  
The life and character of Jacob.  
Mysterious spiritual operations.

**QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.  
Discuss forgiveness.

**Verses 1-4**

Why did Joseph make himself known to his brethren?  
What effect did his announcement have on his brethren?  
Why were they so troubled at his announcement?

**Verse 4**

Discuss verse 4.

**Verses 5-8**

Why might they be angry with themselves?  
Who had sent Joseph into Egypt, and how had he done it?

Give some instances in which God used sinners without their knowing it.

Could anyone without revelation have seen the hand of God in what Nebuchadnezzar did to the Hebrews?

What authority had Pharaoh conferred on Joseph?

**Verses 9-11**

What did he tell his brethren to do, and what to say to his father?

**Verses 12-15**

How did Joseph know that his brethren had repented?  
How did he manifest his forgiveness?

**Gen. 47:11, 12**

Discuss the incidents mentioned in the comments.  
Discuss the reflections.

**MAP LINK**

**CLICK ICON FOR MAP**



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**FOURTH QUARTER  
STUDIES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**

*AIM: To help the learner achieve more effective Christian living in personal experience, in family relationships, and in and through the church.*

Lesson 1—October 4, 1942

**FAITH IN CHRIST AS OUR PERSONAL SAVIOR**

Acts 16:13-15; Rom. 5:1-11

13 And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together.

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us. saying. If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord. come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

1 Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;

2 Through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh stedfastness:

4 And stedfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope:

5 And hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us.

6 For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him.

10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life;

11 And not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Eph. 1:15-23.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

September 28. M

September 29. T

September 30. W

October 1. T

October 2. F

October 3. S

October 4. S

"Christ Died for Us" (Rom. 5:1-11)

A Businesswoman's Faith (Acts 16:11-15)

"What Must I Do to Be Saved?" (Acts 16:25-34)

"Lord, I Believe" (John 9:24-38)

"That Ye May Believe" (John 20:26-31)

"Whosoever Believeth" (Rom. 10:8-13)

Faith Is the Victory (Rev. 3:1-6)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—For Acts 16:13-15, according to Hales, A.D. 49; according to Calmer, A.D. 52. For Romans 5:1-11, about A.D. 58.

*Places.*—Philippi. The letter to the Roman brethren was written at Corinth. Paul and his company made their first converts in Europe at Philippi.

*Persons.*—At Philippi, Paul and his company, Lydia and her household. Paul's company included Luke, Silas, and Timothy. (Compare the lesson text with the rest of the chapter and also Acts 17:15.) Romans was written by Paul to the saints in Rome.

*Lesson Links*—The Jews thought the prophets foretold the coming of a national redeemer—a redeemer for the Jewish nation. They expected the redeemer, or Messiah, to establish a world empire with them as its citizens and all others as subject nations. Because Jesus would not do what they expected the Messiah to do, they crucified him. Jesus always emphasized the individual, not the nation. He made salvation a personal matter, not a national affair, and offered this salvation to all men. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on his should not perish, but have eternal life." "He that believeth on me." "Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." "And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "Whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life." "Or is God the God of Jews only? is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also." "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek."

Salvation is a personal—individual—matter. Everyone must do his own believing and deciding. "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." Hence, in addition to believing that God is, we must believe in his power and willingness to fulfill his promises to those who seek after him. That means that we must place our confidence, our trust, in him. Abraham "waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what he had promised, he was able also to perform." We "must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." If we do not believe that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him, or if we believe that he is a rewarder of them that do not seek after him, our faith is defective.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Paul Preaches to a Group of Women Worshipers (Verse 13)**

Paul was on his second preaching tour out of Antioch of Syria. On his first tour from Antioch, he had Barnabas as his companion; this time he started out with Silas; but at Lystra he found a young disciple of good report, who became his most constant and faithful companion in all his travels and trials. At Troas Paul saw a vision, a man of Macedonia, saying, "Come over . . . and help us." Here Luke joined the company, as Luke's use of the pronoun we shows. Paul, Silas, Luke, and Timothy lost no time in reaching Philippi, "which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony; and we were in this city tarrying certain days." They reached Philippi some days before the Sabbath day, and perhaps

spent the intervening time in finding out what they could about the situation. From what they learned they supposed there was a place of prayer out by the riverside, where those who were devoted to the law of Moses met for prayer. There was no synagogue in Philippi. Here Paul and his company found on the Sabbath day a group of women. As there were no men present, it shows that there were no Jewish men in that city.

### **Lydia and Her Household Baptized (Verses 14, 15)**

Lydia must have been a woman of means, for she was dealing in costly material. It is thought that she was a seller of clothes dyed with the costly purple dye rather than the dye itself. It is probable that she had not become a permanent resident of Philippi, as it is said that she was of Thyatira. "Dyeing apparently formed an important part of the industrial activity of Thyatira." Lydia was one of the group of women gathered at the riverside for worship. As she is described as "one that worshipped God," it is understood that she was a Gentile converted to the Jew's religion; for had she been a Jewess, such descriptive terms would not have been used. Luke (verse 13) says, "We sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together." Lydia "heard us"—was hearing us, as the tense of the Greek verb indicates. She was giving attention to what was being said, and they were preaching the gospel of Christ. A heart is said to be closed, when, because of prejudice or rebellion, one refuses to hear, or to obey. By the power of the gospel Lydia's heart was opened so that she gave heed—obeyed—what was preached; that is the power by which the Lord opens hearts, and by which he leads people into obedience to him.

Lydia and her household were baptized. Her household were likely her helpers in her business of selling her goods. Nothing is said of a husband. If Lydia had had a husband, it would have been his place to invite Paul and his company into their home; but Lydia uses the term "my house." The manner in which she invited Paul and his company to be her guests shows that she felt a delicacy in doing so: "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there." There is therefore no indication that she had either a husband or children. This household baptism furnishes not the least support to infant baptism.

### **Justification by Faith and Its Consequence (Rom. 5:1-5)**

"Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God." Or, literally, "having been justified by faith, we have peace with God." To justify a person is to pronounce him free of guilt or blame. When a man through faith puts sin out of his heart and life, and submits to the will of God, he is forgiven of his sins. No guilt then attaches to him; he is justified. But the phrase, "justified by faith," does not warrant the conclusion that we are justified by faith only; the Bible use of the term "by faith" is against such a conclusion. A few examples from the eleventh chapter of Hebrews will illustrate, or show, the meaning attached to that phrase in the Bible. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." Every move Abel made in preparing the altar and the sacrifice is included in the phrase "by faith." "By faith Noah, . . . prepared an ark." That was a huge task, requiring many days of hard labor; but all the

labor and toil expended in building that ark is included in the phrase "by faith." "By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land." "By faith" spans the channel of the Red Sea from shore to shore, and includes all that was done in the passing. In that passing they were baptized. But in none of these examples can the phrase "by faith" be made to mean faith only. These examples show that real faith is taking God at his word and doing what he says. Peace with God is a result of justification. All difference between God and the sinner has been settled—all sin is gone. The justified person is at peace with God, and all this comes through the Lord Jesus Christ. This grace, or favor, in which the justified person stands comes through Christ. This favor and God's promises bring joy to the heart. Such hope enables us to rejoice even in our tribulations, which, if endured for Christ, develops steadfastness of character; and this steadfastness brings God's approval, and that increases our hope. Without God's approval we could have no hope. Hope toward God does not put to shame; God does not shame us by failing to fulfill his promises; "because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us." Love is a personal matter, and one person's love cannot be literally transferred to another's heart; but it can be so demonstrated, as was God's love, that our hearts are filled with the knowledge of God's love.

### **God Commends His Love to Us (Verses 6-8)**

"For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly." This does not mean what we usually now mean by the weakness of the flesh. It refers to a weakness that prevailed before Christ died for us; it refers to man's helplessness without the death of Christ. Men were condemned sinners, with no means of escape from sin and condemnation. Man was unable to make a plan of escape; he was weak, helpless. In due time that weakness was remedied by the death of Christ; he did for man what man could not do for himself; he removed this weakness by opening up a way of escape. Christ died in due time—at the time which God in his wisdom had selected. "But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son." Verse 7 is somewhat puzzling to some: "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die." In the strict sense of righteous, as Paul here uses the term, a righteous man is one who acts on the cold principle of justice. He neither gives nor takes; he gives neither short measure nor over measure. He is the proverbial man that splits a grain of wheat that he and the man with whom he deals may each have his exact portion, regardless of the needs of the man with whom he deals. We may admire the strict honesty of such a man, but we do not feel very warm toward him. But the good man does more than absolute justice requires; he is kind, amiable, and generous. He is devoted to the welfare and happiness of others; he goes out of his way to do a favor, and is prompt to give to those who need help. Such a man stirs our emotions, and gets hold of the deep affections of our heart. For such a man some might dare to die, but that would be unusual, a bare possibility.

"But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Here Paul shows the great-



ness of God's love by comparing it with man's love. But Jesus died for sinners—died for his enemies; he died even for those who killed him. To die for those who hate, abuse, and even kill us is love supreme—love so great that it passes human understanding; but Christ manifested that high degree of love. We should strive to attain to that same degree of love. "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

### **Our Greater Assurance (Verses 9-11)**

And as divine love prompted Jesus to die for us while we were sinners, this conclusion follows: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him." As he died to make our justification possible, and by justification making us his friends, much more shall we as his friends be saved from future wrath. "For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." This is really a restatement of what was said in verses 8 and 9. We were enemies, but were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. His death for us opened up a way through which we could be reconciled to God; and his sufferings for us, and his promises to us, so touched our hearts that we wanted to be reconciled to God. We laid down our enmity and surrendered to him. If he did so much for us when he seemed to be so weak that his enemies put him to death, much more, that he now lives to intercede for us and to rule our hearts and our lives, shall we be eternally saved. We rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have received this reconciliation, and because of this reconciliation. We rejoice that God is our God and that Jesus Christ is our King and Savior. We rejoice that we are now the children of God, and also we rejoice because of the prospects of the glories yet to come.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

In this lesson the whole scheme of human redemption is touched upon. Once we were lost and helpless, too weak to do anything for ourselves; and worse, we were enemies of God. In God's own good time—"in due season"—God sent his Son to die for us, and thus open up a way of life.' A way was opened up whereby all could be saved, and yet not all are saved. And just here comes in human responsibility. When the plan of salvation was prepared, and through the apostles made known to man, the next move was his. Man could not have done anything toward his salvation until he was told what to do. The second chapter of Acts gives us a brief, yet a complete, summary of the whole plan. Peter preached that Christ had been crucified, buried, raised again, and exalted at the right hand of God. Many of his hearers, convinced of the truth of what he preached, inquired what to do. The thirty-eighth verse gives Peter's answer. The next move was theirs, and Peter exhorted them to make that move.

### **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

Paul and his company at Philippi.  
 Examples illustrating the meaning of the phrase "by faith."  
 Reconciliation.  
 The condition of the world before Christ died.

## QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.  
Why did the Jews reject and crucify Christ?  
Show that being saved is an individual matter,  
and not national.

**Verse 13**

From what point did Paul start on this journey  
which led him to Philippi?  
Who were with him?  
Where was Philippi?  
Tell about the first group to which they preached  
in Philippi.

**Verses 14, 15**

Tell about Lydia—her home city and her  
business.  
How was Lydia's heart opened so that she  
obeyed what was preached?  
Who were baptized?  
What seems to prove that Lydia had no  
husband?

**Rom. 5:1-5**

Repeat verse 1.  
When does a person have peace with God?  
Discuss the meaning and use of the phrase "by  
faith."  
Mention some of the results of justification.  
How does tribulation develop steadfastness?  
Discuss hope.

**Verses 6-8**

What is the meaning of the expression, "while  
we were yet weak"?  
In what sense were we weak before Christ died?  
What is the significance of the phrase, "in due  
season"?  
Discuss verse 7.  
In what special way did God commend his love  
to us?

**Verses 9-11**

Discuss the significance of verses 9 and 10.  
In what do we now rejoice?  
Discuss reconciliation.  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson II—October 11, 1942

**LOYALTY TO CHRIST**

Mark 2:14-17; John 6:66-69; Phil. 3:7-11

14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the place of toll, and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.

15 And it came to pass, that he was sitting at meat in his house, and many publicans and sinners sat down with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

16 And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans, said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

17 And when Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

66 Upon this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

67 Jesus said therefore unto the twelve, Would ye also go away?

68 Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

69 And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God.

7 Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death;

11 If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"What things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ." (Phil. 3:7.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Eph. 3:14-21.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

October 5.	M	Counting the Cost (Luke 14:25-33)
October 6.	T	A Businessman's Loyalty (Mark 2:13-17)
October 7.	W	The Test of the Twelve (John 6:66-69)
October 8.	T	The Demand for Loyalty (Matt. 19:21-30)
October 9.	F	Gaining All by Gaining Christ (Phil. 3:7-11)
October 10.	S	Contending for the Faith (Jude 3, 4)
October 11.	S	I "Would Do Good" (Rom. 7:14-25)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—For Mark 2:14-17, probably A.D. 29; for John 6:66-69, probably A.D. 29; for Phil. 3:7-11, probably A.D. 61. Philippians was written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome.

*Places.*—Capernaum and a prison at Rome.

*Persons.*—Jesus, his disciples, sinners and publicans, scribes and Pharisees, the multitudes, Paul and the brethren at Philippi.

*Lesson Links*—Before we can have any clear conceptions as to what loyalty to Christ really comprehends, we must have some conceptions as to who he is, and what are his relations to us. Here we can give but a brief outline of these matters.

The Bible clearly sets forth the idea that all things were created by him. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made." "He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world knew him not." (John 1:1-3, 10.) This gives him pre-eminence over all created things. (Col. 1:16-18.) This Word became flesh, that is, he took upon himself the form of man, and set us an example by the life that he lived. He died for our sins, and was raised for our justification. When he ascended to heaven, he entered into new relationships with man. He is now more than our creator, more than our example, and even more than a sacrifice for our sins; he is the Christ, the Messiah, God's Anointed. God anointed him prophet, priest, and king. As prophet, he is God's spokesman, for a prophet is one who speaks for another. "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." (Read Deut. 18:15-19 and Acts 7:37.) "Hear ye him." If we inject our own ideas into our religion, or adopt the ideas of uninspired men, we are not loyal to Christ as our prophet. Christ is also our priest; through him we approach God. He is not only the sinner's way to God, but the Christian's also. "No one cometh unto the Father, but by me." As prophet, he is God's medium of approach to man; as priest, he is man's medium of approach to God. He is the mediator between God and man. He is also God's anointed king. After making an argument to show that Christ was raised up to sit on David's throne, Peter delivers the following both as a conclusion and exhortation: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified." (Acts 2:36.) If a person does not believe that he is now the reigning king, he cannot be loyal to him as king. To set aside his law is disloyalty.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Matthew Called (Verse 14)**

Levi, who also bore the name Matthew, was a publican—a collector of taxes for the Roman government. A Jew who would collect taxes from his fellow Jews for the hated Roman government was regarded by the Jews as a traitor to his race. Matthew, here called Levi, was sitting at the place of toll, the collector's office, when Jesus called him to be his follower. We would not understand that he left the office to follow Jesus the very moment Jesus called him. He had a responsible position, and would certainly arrange for someone to take his Place; he would also have to give proper account of the affairs of his office. Common honesty would require that these things be done; but his decision to follow Jesus was prompt and final. We can be sure that he lost no time in setting things in order so that he could follow Jesus. When Matthew first became a disciple of Jesus we are not told; but Jesus was no stranger to him at this time, else he would not have so readily forsaken his office to follow Jesus. A man fit to become an apostle would not have followed a man of whom he knew nothing, nor would Jesus have had him do so.

**Levi Makes a Feast for Jesus (Verses 15-17)**

In Luke 5:27-29 we read, "And after these things he went forth, and beheld a publican, named Levi, sitting at the place of toll, and said unto him, Follow me. And he forsook all, and rose up and followed him. And Levi made him a great feast in his house; and there was a great multitude of publicans and of others that were sitting at meat with them." Concerning this feast Matthew says, "And it came to pass, as he sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples." It would require much food and many helpers to feed such a multitude as that. Levi, or Matthew, made that feast in honor of Jesus. Perhaps his object in inviting the publicans and sinners to his feast was twofold. They were his associates, and he naturally wanted to entertain them in his home; and being now devoted to Jesus, he wanted his associates to become better acquainted with Jesus and to hear more of his teaching. But who were these sinners? With the Jews, if a man was a member of a synagogue, he was not classed as a sinner; and a sinner was not necessarily a wicked man. If a man for any cause, such, for instance, as a failure to keep the tradition of the elders, was turned out of the synagogue, he was counted a sinner. Such a man was a religious outcast. To be a religious outcast among the Jews was also to be a social outcast. The scribes and the Pharisees would not eat at the same table with such a man; to do so, or even to touch him, would render them unclean. They were therefore profoundly shocked when they saw Jesus sitting at meat with these sinners, these social outcasts. Especially would they be shocked at his eating with publicans, who, in their estimation, had become so low as to collect taxes from their own people to support the hated Roman government. Of course these scribes and Pharisees were merely hanging around the door, for they would not so much as enter the house of such a man as Matthew.

These scribes and Pharisees did not voice their protests to Jesus, but asked his disciples for an explanation of his conduct. "When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." Jesus did not mean that his critics were sound spiritually so as not to need him, nor that they were righteous; but for the purpose of meeting their criticism he took them at their own valuation. Jesus came to heal the morally sick, and to call sinners to repentance. He could not accomplish anything with them by holding himself aloof from them as did the Pharisees. He could not accomplish anything with the Pharisees, for they did not feel their need of him; in fact, they felt themselves vastly superior to him. He did not come to call such people; yet no people needed him more than they did. No other class of people were so severely denounced by Jesus as were these scribes and Pharisees. Those who imagine that Jesus was always mild and persuasive in speech should read the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, and such other passages as John 8:39-47, 55.

### **"Thou Hast the Words of Eternal Life" (John 6:66-69)**

To get the force of this section of our lesson the student should read the entire chapter. When Jesus had miraculously so enlarged a small amount of food as to feed a great multitude, they wanted to make him king by force. They felt that with such a leader feeding an army would be no problem, but Jesus did not come to be such a king as they wanted. He quietly slipped away from them. The next day the multitude found him at Capernaum. He told them that they had followed him because they ate of the loaves, and were filled. He then delivered them a discourse on the bread of life; he was the bread that came down from heaven. Because of what he said along this line, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" It was more than many of them were prepared to stand, and so they "went back, and walked no more with him." To test their mettle, Jesus gave the twelve an opportunity to act on their own volition without any feeling of pressure from him, saying to them, "Would ye also go away?" There is a touch of sadness in that question. Peter's reply expressed a truth of far more importance than he could have at that moment realized: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." It is hardly possible that Peter then realized that the words of Christ were the only way to eternal life—that the words of Christ would abrogate and super-cede the law of Moses; but that was even so. Ponder the words of Peter, and see if the average religious person of today has grasped their significance. There is no one to whom we can turn—"thou hast the words of eternal life." Some of the teaching of Christ was later made known through his chosen apostles; if we are loyal to Christ we will accept their words as the authoritative expression of the will of Christ just the same as the words which Christ spoke in person. "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me." (Luke 10:16.) Peter added this: "And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God." According to this statement, one may believe and know both at the same time—faith does not end where knowledge begins, at least, not in all cases.

**Paul Sacrificed All Gainful Things for Christ (Phil. 3:7)**

Whatever had been a gain to Paul as a Jew, he gave up for Christ. He made this statement as a part of his reply to the Judaizing teachers. The gospel was for all men regardless of their fleshly relationships; but certain Jews who claimed to be Christians taught Gentiles that they must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses or they could not be saved. Paul opposed them, and they sought to discredit him as an apostle. These Judaizers gloried in their flesh—gloried in the fact that they were Jews, but Paul had no confidence in the flesh. He uses the word "flesh" in this connection in the sense of race. He then shows that he had more grounds for confidence in the flesh than his accusers. He had enjoyed much worldly gain because of his high standing as a Jew; but he gave up all these advantages when he became a Christian—"these have I counted loss for Christ."

**He Suffered the Loss of All Things for Christ (Verses 8, 9)**

Paul's remarks here show that, when he became a Christian, the leaders of the Jews confiscated all his possessions. Other Jews suffered likewise; and, like Paul, they suffered that loss joyfully. (Heb. 10:34.) But in comparison with what Paul gained in Christ, he counted all that he lost as but refuse. While his critics gloried in the flesh, he gloried in Christ. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." "But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. 6:14.) The knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord is the knowledge he has made known to us, that is, the gospel of Christ. Paul counted all things to be loss for the excellency of the gospel. With him, to glory in Christ was to glory in the gospel of Christ. No man can be loyal to Christ without being loyal to his gospel with all its appointments, commands, and promises. The gospel is God's way of making men righteous. Before Paul became a Christian, measured by the law of Moses, he was blameless—measured by the law he was righteous. And yet he was a sinner. But the righteousness which was of the law did not now interest Paul. He was now interested in the righteousness of God which is attained by faith in Christ. When a man obeys the gospel of Christ, his sins are forgiven—blotted out. For the time being he is as free from sin as if he had never sinned; he is righteous. It is referred to as the righteousness from God because God has forgiven him, thus making him righteous. That is the only righteousness that any sinner can ever hope to have. The polluted sinner must be carried through a process of cleansing that makes him clean, and that process is obedience to the gospel of Christ. Hence, Paul refers to this process of cleansing as "the gospel of the glory of Christ," and as "the knowledge of the glory of God." (2 Cor. 4:4, 6.)

**What Paul Was Striving to Attain (Verses 10, 11)**

"That I may know him." And yet to Timothy Paul says, "I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day." (2 Tim. 1:12.) But a person may know another, and yet come to know him better. That is what the prophet had in mind when he said, "And let us know, let us follow on to know Jehovah." (Hos.

6:3.) Paul earnestly desired to know Christ fully. When the gospel of Christ was fully revealed, then Paul would know Christ as fully as it is possible to know him in this life. "But then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known." (1 Cor. 13:12.) By the resurrection of Christ he was proved to be the Son of God; the power of that resurrection gave the disciples new hope; it gave us additional hope of our own resurrection. But even so, none of us yet fully knows the power of his resurrection. Paul knew something of the fellowship of his sufferings, yet he desired to know more of such fellowship. "Being conformed unto his death," being brought fully into harmony with his death. But as' all men, the good and the bad, are to be raised from the dead, what does Paul mean by saying, "If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead"? In the original Greek the work for resurrection is an intensive word, and implies a resurrection that is a real resurrection, a resurrection to life evermore. The wicked will be raised to condemnation, which will not be much of a resurrection to them. In verses 12-14 Paul shows that he had not yet fully attained to the things for which he was striving—he was not yet made perfect; but he was forgetting all his denials and persecutions, and pressing on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; that was the one thing he was doing.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Jesus was interested in sinners, not because of what they were, but because of what he could lead them to be.

Many of the disciples of Jesus complained that Jesus spoke things too hard to accept, and they quit him. They would listen to no such preaching as that. That must have been a shock to the twelve. Being human, they most likely discussed the incident among themselves, and thought, as many brethren do today, that the preaching was too hard, that such preaching drives people away. But Jesus had said nothing hard about these disciples; he had only preached a truth that seemed to them to be too hard to accept.

In many places in the Bible the word flesh refers to race, and not' to one's own physical body. See such passages as John 8:15; 1 Cor. 10:18; 2 Cor. 5:16; 11:18. The New Testament plainly teaches that no promise is held out to any man on account of his flesh, or race; God now makes no distinction between Jew and Gentile. Paul had no confidence in the flesh, or race. It is a pity that some now teach the Jew that there are yet glories for him that no Gentile can attain.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Why the scribes and Pharisees criticized and rejected Jesus.

What Jesus said to them; example, Matthew 23.

What Paul gave up for Christ.

Are there any future blessings promised to Jews, not available to Gentiles?

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.

Discuss the matters in Lesson Links.

**Verses 14-17**

Discuss this entire incident.

In what did the Jews glory?  
What did Paul give up for Christ?

**John 6:66-69**

Discuss the incidents mentioned in John 6.  
Why did Jesus say, "Would ye also go away"?  
Discuss Peter's reply.

**Verses 8, 9**

In whom did Paul glory?  
Why not in the flesh?  
Show how the gospel makes men righteous.

**Phil. 3:7**

Who were certain troublemakers, and what was Paul's answer?

**Verses 10, 11**

Discuss the things Paul was striving for.  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson III—October 18, 1942

**GROWTH IN CHRIST**

Luke 2:40, 52; 2 Pet. 1:1-8

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

52 And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

1 Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and the Saviour Jesus Christ:

2 Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

3 Seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue;

4 Whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust.

5 Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge;

6 And in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control patience; and in your patience godliness;

7 And in your godliness brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness love.

8 For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle .nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 3:18.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Eph. 4:11-16.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

October	12.	M	"The Child Grew" (Luke 2:40, 52)
October	13.	T	Milk and Meat (Heb. 5:11-14)
October	14.	W	Faithful and Fruitful (2 Pet. 1:1-8)
October	15.	T	Strength in the Grace of Christ (2 Tim. 2:1-10)
October	16.	F	The Stature of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16)
October	17.	S	Christian Growth (2 Pet. 3:14-18)
October	18.	S	"Be Strong and of Good Courage" (Josh. 1:1-9)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—Luke 2:40, 52 covers the years of the childhood and boyhood of Jesus. The Second Epistle of Peter was written about A.D. 65. It was written a short time before his death. (2 Pet. 1:14.)

*Places.*—Nazareth, where Jesus grew to manhood. The place where Peter was when he wrote his second epistle is not known.



*Persons.*—Jesus, Peter, and the brethren to whom he wrote.

*Lesson Links*—How deity united with humanity in the person of Jesus is beyond our comprehension; yet it is a fact plainly taught in the New Testament. The Word who was in the beginning with God, and who also bears the name God, became flesh, and dwelt among men. (John 1:1-3, 14.) This truth we must believe, even though we cannot fully grasp it. Peter stated it in these words: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. 16:16.) Yet he began his life on earth as a babe, the son of a virgin.

### **The Childhood and Boyhood Days of Jesus (Verses 40, 52)**

From infancy Jesus grew as other children grow, and it is not likely that the neighbors noticed any more than the ordinary difference between him and other children, excepting that he was healthy—grew strong, and showed a marked degree of wisdom; but even those things are occasionally seen in certain children. God's favor rested upon him.

The next thing mentioned concerning him was his visit to Jerusalem with Joseph and Mary. Vast throngs attended the Feast of the Passover. When they started on the return journey, Jesus became separated from his people. When they found him, he returned with them to Nazareth; "and he was subject unto them." He advanced in wisdom and stature—he grew in both body and mind. His good behavior brought him the good favor of both God and man. Men learned that he was dependable. That is an asset to any boy.

## **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON**

### **The Salutation of Peter's Second Epistle (2 Pet. 1:1, 2)**

Peter was Simon's surname. "And Simon he surnamed Peter." (Mark 3:16.) In New Testament times, and for a long time thereafter, surnames were not family names, but were added because of certain traits of character or deeds performed. "Servant"—Greek, bond servant—"and apostle of Jesus Christ." If you study the significance of the word servant, or bond servant, you can see how completely Peter, or any Christian, belonged to the Lord. But Peter was more than just a servant; he was a special kind of servant—an apostle. The letter was addressed "to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us"—an equally precious faith. It seems that the letter was written to Gentile Christians, and Peter was assuring them that their faith was as precious as that of the Jewish Christians, or even that of the apostles. The phrase, "the knowledge of God," does not mean what God knows, but the knowledge that has been made known about him—the knowledge he has revealed to us, the gospel of Christ: This is also plainly seen by what Peter says in chapter 3, verse 18: "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." We may grow in the knowledge that is revealed by him and about him, but we cannot grow in what he knows.

### **"All Things That Pertain Unto Life and Godliness" (Verses 3, 4)**

It is frequently said that God has given to us all things essential to salvation, but Peter's statement goes beyond that, and affirms that God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

And this, he says, has been given us through the knowledge of him that called us—that is, through the knowledge revealed from him, the gospel. Hence, in the gospel of Christ we have all things that in any way belong to this salvation; nothing that we can add pertains to life and godliness. And in these "all things that pertain unto life and godliness .... he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises." The two promises, that he will be a Father to us, and that we will be his sons and daughters, just about include all the other promises to the Christian. Through the promises we become partakers of the divine nature; but how do God's promises make us any better? The mere fact that God has made promises does not make anyone better, for some are as wicked as if God had never made a promise. Promises ignored, or unsought, never made anyone better. An unconditional promise would make no one better. But God intends that his promises shall contribute to the end of making people partakers of the divine nature, for that reason he suspends his promises on conditions the performance of which makes us better. God teaches us to quit our sins, and obey him, if we would receive his promises. Disregarding the chapter division, read carefully this scripture: "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. 6:17, 18; 7:1.) Here are the commands, the promises, with an exhortation to cleanse ourselves of all defilement that we may receive the promises, thus perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

#### **The Elements of the Divine Nature, or God's Formula for the Divine Nature (Verses 5-7)**

"Yea, and for this very cause"—to accomplish this very end, namely, to become partakers of the divine nature—"adding on your part," etc. The divine nature possesses certain characteristics. These must be supplied that we may become partakers of the divine nature. To represent these elements as so many steps in a stairway or a ladder upon which we may climb into the eternal kingdom misses the point. We do not leave each one behind as we add another, as we do in climbing a stairway or ladder. These graces are cumulative—each is to be added till we reach the sum total of all. These verses give us God's formula for the divine nature. It is as if the apostle had said, "If you would be a partaker of the divine nature, here is the formula; compound the elements diligently." Faith is the base; the other elements must be added with all diligence. Being a faithful Christian is not an accident. If the formula is diligently followed, the result is certain and definite, just as it is no accident when a chemist gets definite results by diligently compounding elements according to a given formula.

Virtue.—"In your faith supply virtue." With the Greeks, virtue was manliness, courage, the disposition to stand for what one espoused. Faith is worthless if one has not the courage to stand up for it and to live it, even in the face of threats and danger. It does not mean that we shut our eyes to danger—that is foolhardiness. No more courageous Christian ever lived than Paul, yet he

said, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." (1 Cor. 2:3.) To realize one's danger and yet stand at the post of duty is courage. Any weakling can stand his ground when he has no fear, but it takes a brave man to stay with his duty when he is scared!

Knowledge.—Of course a person must have some knowledge, just as he must have some courage, to become a Christian, but he needs to advance in both. Without knowledge courage may cause a person to do things hurtful both to himself and the church. Few Christians seem to realize that God requires them to add this fundamental element of Christian growth. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee." (Hos. 4:6.) Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." "For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God." (Heb. 5:12.) God demands that you so learn as to be able to teach others.

Temperance.—Temperance is self-control. The fight against strong drink adopted the word "temperance" and narrowed its meaning to abstinence from intoxicating liquors, but its New Testament meaning is not so limited. A person does not control himself when he flies into a rage, nor when he indulges in excesses or in anything that is hurtful to him. Temperance is moderate indulgences in those things that are good for us, and total abstinence from hurtful things.

Patience.—Too often patience is thought to be a nonresisting, quiet disposition, that, without complaint or protest, submits to any sort of conditions or circumstances; that sort of spirit is often the result of indifference to what is going on. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job," says James. And so you have. Have you ever considered that quality in him? He had lost all his flocks and herds, his children and servants, and had become sorely afflicted with boils. Crushed in spirit, heartsore and full of grief, he sat down among the ashes. His friends came to comfort him; but as they believed that all of a man's sufferings was the result of his own sins, they could say nothing comforting to him. Seven days they sat in silence. Finally Job's long pent-up feelings burst forth in a tirade against his day. His friends then argued with him, presenting their theory that all his afflictions were the result of his own sins. The following words of Job do not fit the ideas of some as to what patience is: "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you." "But ye are forgers of lies; ye are all physicians of no value. Oh that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it would be your wisdom." "Miserable comforters are ye all." But his patience is seen in his holding on to the Lord in spite of all that came upon him; he would not quit. There is great need of patience; too many Christians are too ready to quit when things are not pleasant. Patience is the quality of holding on under adverse conditions.

Godliness.—The Greek word translated godliness is thus defined by Thayer: "Reverence, respect; in the Bible everywhere piety toward God, godliness." It does not mean godlikeness. It grows out of a feeling of dependence on God, and a deep regard for his majesty and glory; it is also manifested in a proper regard for that which pertains to God or belongs to him. We show a lack of reverence when we speak God's name lightly, use his word in jokes and jests, speak disrespectfully of the blood-bought bride of Christ. The

cultivation of reverence should begin in the home; children should be taught to revere parents; if not, they are not likely to learn it later.

Brotherly kindness.—This is the love which Christians cherish for each other as brethren. The highest degree of brotherly kindness is manifested in doing what we can to help our brother reach heaven, and is manifested in different ways. Parents through the long hours of the night will tenderly watch over the sick child, or will tenderly bind up his wounded toes and fingers, and will sympathize with him in his griefs and disappointments; but that same love will also be stern when necessary, and will inflict punishment when the need arises. Parental kindness requires these things, just as it also requires the painful removing of a splinter from the child's foot. And so brotherly kindness requires that we do good to our brother—help him when he is in need, comfort him in his sorrows, and tenderly nourish the downcast and brokenhearted; and if he falls into wrong, seek to reclaim him, even rebuking him sharply if that is needed.

Love.—To this special love of the brethren we must add love for all men. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son; we must so love man that we will give the best that is in us to serve man's best interest. Love transforms duty into opportunity, and makes sacrifice satisfying and pleasurable service.

### **Not Idle or Unfruitful (Verse 8)**

Let not the foregoing elements of the divine nature be scantily supplied. There would be no diligence in such indifferent effort. "If these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

Faith is the base to which all these elements must be added, but faith must be active that these elements may be added. Faith that exists only in the heart or mind requires no courage, but active faith does require courage. But courage needs the guidance of knowledge; otherwise it is mere foolhardiness. But knowledge is worthless if we give sway to all our appetites and passions; hence, we must add temperance, or self-control. But this effort to add self-control, this battle against passion, lust, and selfishness, is a fierce conflict, and requires sustained effort; hence, the need of patience, or steadfastness. But we must not allow our knowledge, or our victories over self, or our steadfastness of character to develop a feeling of self-sufficiency, so as not to feel our dependence on God. There must still be godliness—piety, or reverence. Nor must we forget 'our brethren; we must do them good. In our love of the brethren, let us not become clannish, and forget the great mass of unconverted sinners. Lead them to Christ for their own sakes, not that you may flatter your pride by building up a big church.

### **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

Why our faith is precious.

The part promises are intended to play in character building.

Discuss the three verses—9, 10, and 11—that follow our lesson.

## QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

Quote and discuss verse 3.  
How do promises make us better?

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.

**Verses 5-7**

Give the significance of the phrase, "for this very cause."

**Verses 40, 52**

Discuss these verses.

What is wrong with the ladder illustration ?

Why add the graces mentioned?

**2 Pet. 1:1, 2**

What was the ancient significance of surnames?

What was an apostle?

What is meant by "knowledge of God"?

Let the students discuss in rotation each item to be supplied or added.

**Verse 8**

Quote and discuss verse 8.

Discuss the reflections.

**Verses 3, 4**

Lesson IV—October 25, 1942

**STEPS TOWARD SOLUTION OF THE ALCOHOL PROBLEM**

Eccles. 10:17; Amos 5:21-24; Rom. 14:19-21; 2 Cor. 6:17; 1 Pet. 4:1-5

17 Happy art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!

21 I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

22 Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts.

23 Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear, the melody of thy viols.

24 But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

20 Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God. All things indeed are clean: howbeit it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth.

17 Wherefore

Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate,

saith the Lord,

And touch no unclean thing;

And I will receive you.

1 Forasmuch then as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm ye yourselves also with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That ye no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3 For the time past may suffice to have wrought the desire of the Gentiles, and to have walked in lasciviousness, lusts, winebibbings, revellings, carousings, and abominable idolatries:

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the living and the dead.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."  
(Amos 5:24.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Isa. 1:16-20.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—*

October 19.	M	Daniel's Solution of the Liquor Problem (Dan. 1:8-16)
October 20.	T	The Body Under Control (1 Cor. 9:24-27)
October 21.	W	Eating for Efficiency (Eccles. 10:12-17)
October 22.	T	Justice and Righteousness (Amos 5:21-24)
October 23.	F	Serving Others by Denying Self (Rom. 14:19-21)
October 24.	S	Keeping God's Temple Clean (2 Cor. 6:14-18)
October 25.	S	Living to the Will of God (1 Pet. 4:1-5)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—For Eccles. 10:17, sometime during the reign of Solomon—between the years 1014 and 975 B.C.; for Amos 5:21-24, probably about 790 or 785 B.C.; for Rom. 14:9-21, about A.D. 58; for 2 Cor. 6:17, about A.D. 57; for 1 Pet. 4:1-5, probably A.D. 65. *Places.*—Jerusalem, Tekoa, Corinth, Philippi.

*Persons.*—Solomon, Amos, Paul, Peter, and the people to whom they wrote, and for whom they wrote.

*Lesson Links*—Sin has been in the world ever since Adam and Eve sinned. The only remedy for sin is the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the only way anyone can solve the problem of sin is to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior and king. Drunkenness is only one of the multitudinous forms of sins, and we have remedy for all forms of sin. We may lead men out of sin, but we cannot force them out. The right kind of laws, properly enforced, can make it more difficult for people to obtain intoxicants, and by that means somewhat reduce drunkenness, but that does not solve the alcohol problem. Alcohol has been a problem ever since the days of Noah, and perhaps before his day; it will likely continue to be a problem so long as people live in the flesh. If we could bring about a universal abstinence from intoxicating liquors, a voluntary abstinence, the alcohol problem would be solved. If that cannot be done, the alcoholic problem will continue with us. Christianity is God's remedy for all forms of sin, including drunkenness. Let us not become so presumptuous as to think we can devise a better remedy. About all any government has been able to do about this problem is to make it a little harder for people to obtain intoxicants; but when a government authorizes the manufacture and sale of intoxicants it thereby virtually issues an invitation to people to drink. A license to sell is an invitation to drink.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Eating for Strength (Verse 17)**

This is the Jewish translation of this verse: "Happy art thou, O land, when thy king is noble-spirited, and thy princes eat in proper time, for strengthening, and not for gluttony!" Any government official, whether king, president, governor, or justice of the peace, who has low, selfish, or perverted ideals, is not fit to serve in any office. Convivial feasts, with drinking, lowers the ability to serve, and turns one's thoughts into wrong channels. When high officials indulge in such things, they lose the respect and confidence of the best citizens, and set a bad example for the less sturdy. They must eat, but let them eat in proper time, for strengthening, and not for gluttony." It is also a fine example, for those in high positions to abstain from intoxicants.

**Pretended Worship of Evil Men Not Accepted (Amos 5:21, 22)**

If the heart is not right toward God, nothing we do is right in his sight. Even a prayer may be an abomination to him. "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination." (Prov. 28:9.) "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind!" The people of Israel in Amos' day had so thoroughly given themselves over to sin that they hated him who reproved them, and abhorred him who spoke uprightly. (Amos 5:10.) Because they had become so wicked, the Lord said to them, "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies." The feasts here mentioned were, of course, their religious feasts. God does hate some things, and so must we. "Hate the evil, and love the good." (Verse 15.) The truth is, if a man does not hate the evil, he does not love the good. If a man is for the right, he is against the wrong; if he is for the wrong, he is against the right. Because Israel stood for the wrong against the right, Jehovah would accept none of their offerings.

**An Exhortation to Righteousness (Verses 23, 24)**

Because of their unrighteousness, their songs of worship were a mere noise to Jehovah. Their music was unbearable. Even when they pretended to worship and praise him, they were full of wickedness and injustice. Amos calls for abundance of voluntary justice and righteousness. Jehovah did not want forced justice and righteousness, but desired that justice and righteousness flow among them as naturally as water rolls down a hill, or as it is for a mighty stream to flow in its natural channel. These people were living under a law in which God said, "Thou shalt not have in thy bag diverse weights, a great and a small. Thou shalt not have in thy house diverse measures, a great and a small. A perfect and just weight shalt thou have; a perfect and just measure shalt thou have." (Deut. 25:13-15.) Through Amos Jehovah says, "Forasmuch therefore as ye trample upon the poor, and take exactions from him of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink the wine thereof. For I know how manifold are your transgressions, and how mighty are your sins—ye that afflict the just, that take a bribe, and that turn aside the needy in the gate from their right." (Verses 11, 12.) The Christian must do right; he must do good to all men; he must live soberly, righteously, and godly.

**The Christian Should Edify Other Christians (Rom. 14:19-21)**

It is not surprising that the early Christians were sometimes disturbed about eating meat. The law of Moses made some animals legally unclean; the Gentiles had been used to honoring certain idols by eating meat that had been dedicated to them. The Jewish Christian would still have a prejudice against any Christian's eating such meat; the Gentile Christian would be afraid of honoring an idol if he ate meat bought in the market, fearing that it had been

dedicated to an idol Others realized that none of these things mattered. "One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs." Neither had a right to condemn the other. A state of affairs like that was a good start toward confusion and strife. Hence this admonition: "So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another." A Christian should not push his own personal feelings, preferences, and prejudices to the disturbance of the peace of the church; neither should he sacrifice the truth of God for peace. Even when others are wrong we may lead them out of the wrong by forbearance and teaching. To edify a Christian is to build him up in faith, knowledge, and the practice of right living. Some need encouragement. "And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all." (1 Thess. 5:14.) This scripture, together with the following scriptures, shows that a variety of remedies are needed: "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching." (2 Tim. 4:2.)

"Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God." The church, as well as a Christian, is a work of God. If a Christian does an unnecessary thing that tends to stir up confusion in the church, he is in a fair way to destroy that church; but it seems that Paul here had special reference to the Christian as the work of God. In verse 15 we have this: "Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died." If by our conduct we lead him astray, we destroy him. If you ate meat that had been devoted to an idol, someone, lately converted from idolatry, might think you were eating it in honor of the idol, and might thereby be led to eat it in honor of the idol. It would be better to refrain from eating meat rather than, by your liberty, destroy a brother. "Wherefore, if meat causeth my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I cause not my brother to stumble." (1 Cor. 8:13.) "All things indeed are clean," that is, they are legally clean; "howbeit it is evil for that man who eateth with offence," that is, if his eating leads another to commit an offense. The conclusion is plain and emphatic: "It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth." Even if wine is used for medicinal purposes, do not use it in such a way as to lead someone into the drink habit.

#### **"Come . . . and I Will Receive You" (2 Cor. 6:17)**

Paul had just been warning the Corinthian brethren against being mixed up in any idolatrous connections. In a series of questions, which amount to affirmations, Paul reminds the Corinthian brethren that there is no fellowship between righteousness and iniquity, light has no communion with darkness, Christ has no concord with Belial, a believer has no portion with an unbeliever, and the temple of God has no agreement with idols. The church is the temple in which God dwells. The church must therefore have no part or connection with the evils mentioned. Hence the exhortation: "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate." All the things mentioned are the unclean things which Christians are commanded not to touch. On condition that they keep themselves free from such uncleanness, the Lord promises, "I will receive you,



and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters." If we would enjoy the promise, we must fulfill the conditions.

### **Obligations Based on Christ's Suffering for Us (1 Pet. 4:1, 2)**

In chapter three Peter had spoken of Christ's suffering for sins, the just suffered for the unjust. Because Christ suffered in the flesh for us, "arm ye yourselves also with the same mind." Have the same determination to do what should be done regardless of the suffering such a course may bring. Such a determination makes for endurance. There was not much morality among the Gentiles; neither their religion nor their philosophy restrained them. Now that these to whom Peter wrote had become followers of Christ, life had a new meaning and a new purpose. Now they should not live in the lust of the flesh, but their desire should now be to do the will of God. Imitate Paul: "This one thing I do."

### **Evil Men Speak Evil of the Righteous (Verses 3, 4)**

There appears to be a touch of irony in what Peter says in verse 3. The Gentiles had been living after their own wisdom, and naturally they felt that their appetites and passions were to be indulged for their own satisfaction and pleasure. If you Gentile Christians still think these desires were given to be indulged in at pleasure, do you not think that such indulgence during the time you were not Christians is sufficient for such unbridled indulgence? Notice the sins in which they lived before they became Christians; they walked in these things—that was their daily way of living. "Lasciviousness" is defined, "Wantonness, lewdness, lustfulness." It is lusts turned loose without restraint. Webster defines "winebibber" as one who drinks wine to excess. Thayer defines the Greek word Peter here uses with the single word drunkenness. Sourer defines it sottishness. Wine drinking most likely occupied a prominent place in the revellings of the heathen. On the next word, carousings, which is sometimes translated banquetings, Macknight has this note: "Banquetings, according to Estius, were those meetings in which the heathens strove with each other who should continue longest to drink; consequently the original word might be translated drinking matches." Idolatry is abominable at best; but when the worship of idols consisted in part in immoral practices, it was abominable indeed. These Gentile Christians formerly indulged in these things. And their former fellow worshipers and associates thought it strange that any man would turn away from such practices. They could not understand why these Christians did not still run with them in the same excess of riot. Because they did not understand the Christians, they spoke evil of them. It is even so now.

### **All Shall Give Account to the Judge (Verse 5)**

Physical ills follow excesses in all fleshly indulgences, but that is not the end of the matter. "For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God." "And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment." Those who speak evil of Christians, and for a time seem to triumph over them, will one day have to stand before the judge. At that time the dead will be raised, and, together with those who are still alive, will be judged.

Then every knee will bow to the authority of Christ. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries." Human beings have never been able to devise any means by which they can escape death and the judgment.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

The word solution has many meanings, but the meaning best suited to the word as used in our lesson is, "act or process of solving a problem, question, etc., or state of its being solved; explanation." No government has ever been able to solve the alcohol problem completely. If everybody could be converted into fully determined servants of Christ, the problem would be solved, and every Christian should do what he can toward that end.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Alcohol, its uses and abuses.  
 What should be done about the drunken driver of cars?  
 What about 1 Tim. 5:23?

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
 Discuss Lesson Links.

#### Verse 17

What should be the character and qualifications of a government official?  
 What should guide a person in eating?

#### Amos 5:21, 22

What renders worship unacceptable?  
 What was the condition of Israel when Amos prophesied?  
 What was the Lord's attitude toward their offerings and feasts?  
 Discuss verse 14.

#### Verses 23, 24

Discuss verses 23, 24.  
 What was the law about weights and measures?

#### Rom. 14:19-21

What was Paul discussing in Rom. 14?

Discuss verse 19.  
 How may we edify others?  
 How may we overthrow the work of God?

#### 2 Cor. 6:17

Discuss Paul's warnings against idolatrous connections.  
 Discuss the meaning and force of verse 17.

#### 1 Pet. 4:1, 2

What is meant by, "arm ye yourselves also with the same mind"?  
 Discuss verse 2.

#### Verses 3, 4

Before becoming Christians, how had these brethren lived?  
 Discuss the different forms of sin mentioned in this verse.  
 What is the attitude of sinners toward Christians as revealed in verse 4?

#### Verse 5

Repeat verse 5.  
 Discuss the judgment that is to come.  
 Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson V—November 1, 1942

**THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MARRIAGE**

Gen. 2:13-24; Matt. 19:3-6; John 2:1-5

18 And Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.

19 And out of the ground Jehovah God formed every beast of the field, and every bird of the heavens; and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them: and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

20 And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the heavens, and to every beast of the field; but for man there was not found a help meet for him.

21 And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof:

22 And the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

3 And there came unto him Pharisees, trying him, and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said, Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female,

5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh?

6 So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder..

1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

2 And Jesus also was bidden, and his disciples, to the marriage.

3 And when the wine failed, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

4 And Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Let marriage be had in honor among all." (Heb. 13:4.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Psalm 128.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

October	26.	M	The Crown of Creation (Gen. 1:24-28)
October	27.	T	Adam and Even in Eden (Gen. 2:18-24)
October	28.	W	Isaac and Rebekah (Gen. 24:61-67)
October	29.	T	Jacob and Rachel (Gen. 29:13-20)
October	30.	F	Builders of Happy Homes (Jer. 29:4-6)
October	31.	S	What "God Hath Joined Together" (Matt. 19:3-6)
November	1.	S	Jesus at a Wedding (John 2:1-5)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—For Gen. 2:18-24; according to Usher, 4004 B.C.; according to Hales, 5411 B.C.; for Matt. 19:3-6, about A.D. 30; for John 2:1-5, the first year of the public ministry of Jesus.

*Places.*—The Garden of Eden, Perea, Cana of Galilee.

*Persons.*—Jehovah, Adam and Eve, Jesus, and the Pharisees. Lesson Links.—In the first chapter of Genesis Moses gives a general view of the creation of all things, including the creation of the man and the woman. "And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he

them." This chapter does not tell us how God created the male and the female, nor of what he made them, but simply that he made them, and blessed them. Chapter one also tells us that he commanded them to multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it. In the second chapter Moses begins a brief account of God's dealings with man. He therefore gives more of the particulars of the actual making of the man and the woman. "And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And Jehovah God planted a garden eastward, in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." And then in verses 21 and 22 Moses tells how God made the woman.

The two chapters do not give accounts of two creations, but two accounts of the same creation. And in these accounts we have the only reliable account of the origin of the human race. Here we have something solid on which to stand. Theories based upon guesses and suppositions constitute shaky foundations.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### Adam Named All Living Things (Verses 18-20)

In the garden where Jehovah put the man, Adam had employment. He was required to dress the garden and Keep it. That must have kept him fairly busy, for "out of the ground made Jehovah God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food." And while he attended to his task he could eat of the life-giving energy of the fruit of the tree of life. But with all these delights he was not complete. "And Jehovah God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him"—a help suited to him or answering to him. That which Jehovah would make was to be man's counterpart. Verse 19 does not mean that God made the beasts and birds after he made Adam, for these were created before Adam was created; but their creation is here mentioned as a starting point for what is said in the rest of the verse. All the living things were paraded before Adam that he might name them. Of course all know that Adam did not speak the English language, for it was not in existence for many centuries after that time. But in all that parade of animals there was not found a help suited to Adam's needs. Here the theory of theistic evolution breaks down. Those who advocate that theory claim that evolution was God's way of creating things—God's way of creating man, and that the theory does not contradict the Bible; but all theories of evolution, including theistic evolution, have the male and the female developed along together, and that at each stage of development each exactly suits the other. But here we have a full-grown man with no answering female; man did not arrive at the point of being a man with a female counterpart along with him. Such a one had yet to be made.

### The Woman Made (Verses 21, 22)

"And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof." The first surgical operation ever performed was performed on the man after he had been put under a deep sleep. Centuries passed before men learned how to do that same thing. This rib was made into a woman, and thus the woman is really a part of

man. And here again it is impossible to make any theory of evolution fit the record, for man was a complete human being, as matured physically as if he had grown to manhood, when the woman was made.

### **The Two Become Husband and Wife (Verses 23, 24)**

When the woman was brought before Adam, he said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." Of course, God could have made the woman out of the dust or the ground as he did Adam. We may not know why he did not do so; but we can clearly see, that, had he done so, husband and wife would not have been of one blood. Neither could Paul later have said, "And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." (Acts 17:26.) Neither could Adam have said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." She was a part of Adam, and that established a nearness of feeling that could not have been brought about in any other way. "She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." We cannot look into God's mind and see why he made the woman in the way he did, but we can see the happy results of his way of creating the woman. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." There was therefore to be a closer union between husband and wife than between either of them and their parents. Many a marriage "goes on the rocks" because this high and holy principle does not prevail. Parents sometimes cause trouble by trying to meddle in the affairs of the newly married couple. We sometimes forget that a newly married couple constitute a new unit, a new family, which must work out its own problems, and live its own life.. Leaving the parents is not so much a physical separation as it is an entrance into a new relationship, a new life, separate and distinct from the life lived as son or daughter.

### **The Pharisees Question Jesus About Divorce (Matt. 19:3)**

It seems that the Pharisees delighted in arguing questions. They were skilled in debate. The numerous questions they asked Jesus shows that one of their favorite methods of debate was to ask an opponent a question that might embarrass him either way he answered. When they asked a question, they were not seeking information. They had the opportunity to ask the Son of God for helpful information, but they asked him questions with no other thought than to embarrass him. "And there came unto him Pharisees, trying him." These Pharisees were a persistent set; as many times as they had tried to put him in an embarrassing position, and had themselves been embarrassed by his answers, it seems that they would have given up; but every time they could think up a new question they presented it. "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? What made our Lord's situation at present so critical in respect to this question was: At this time there were two famous divinity and philosophical schools among the Jews, that of Shammai, and that of Hillel. On the question of divorces, the school of Shammai maintained that a man could not legally put away his wife, except for whoredom. The school of Hillel taught that a man might put away his wife for a multitude of other causes—as, when she did not find grace in his sight, that is,

when he saw another woman that pleased him better."—Adam Clarke. The Pharisees fancied that he could not answer their question without turning one school or the other against him. And then there was Herod Antipas, whose adulterous connection with his brother Philip's wife resulted in the death of John the Baptist. His answer might stir up Herod.

### **Jesus Answers the Pharisees (Verses 4-6)**

Instead of giving the Pharisees what they would have regarded as his own individual opinion, Jesus refers them back to the first law of marriage as set forth when Adam and Eve were created. As they professed to believe the inspired record, they could find no flaw in his answer. Neither the Shammai nor the Hillel school of interpreters could find any room in that answer for opposition to him. They must have felt the sting in the question Jesus asked them: "Have ye not read?" Do you never read the Bible? Do you not know what the Creator said on this matter? Are you so ignorant as that? The Creator made them a male and a female—the translation preferred by some authorities. He made two, each for the other. Jesus did not say that he so made them at the beginning, but "from the beginning," thus indicating that one female for one male was to be the rule down the ages. From the record in Genesis it seems that Moses said, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Here Jesus represents God as saying these words. It is plain, therefore, that Moses was inspired that God was speaking through him. Certainly no school of interpreters could find fault with Jesus for referring them to what God said. "So that they are no more two, but one flesh." They are two individuals merged into one unit. In speaking of the love that Christ has for the church, Paul says, "Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself: for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church .... Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she fear her husband." (Eph. 5:28-33.) Regardless of what any man's view of marriage may be, God has a law of marriage that is as old as the human family—as old as the race of man. Man's highest happiness is found in faithful adherence to that law. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." He who disregards that law rebels against the highest wisdom and his own good. The disregarding of that law on the part of so many has been the source of much corruption.

### **The Marriage in Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-5)**

"The third day." The connection leads us to understand that this marriage in Cana was on the third day after the events mentioned in the latter part of chapter one. If that is the correct conclusion, the intervening time had been spent in the journey from Judea to Cana. The mother of Jesus was there; Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. Cana of Galilee was but a short distance north of Nazareth. Evidently the marriage was among close friends or relatives of Mary and Jesus. It seems that Mary took a leading part in the affair. "When the wine failed." That would be

very embarrassing to those who made the feast. Perhaps there were more guests than had been expected. Mary's statement does not show that she expected Jesus to do anything about it. It was most likely spoken in a spirit of sympathy for the host and hostess. The translation makes the language of Jesus sound rather harsh. A literal word for word rendering is, "What to me and to thee, woman?" Clarke renders it, "O, woman, what is this to thee and me?" Clarke adds, "Our Lord's answer to his mother, if properly translated, is far from being disrespectful." "Mine hour is not yet come." It is not likely that the guests knew yet that the wine had failed. Jesus would wait till all the guests knew that the wine had failed before he made a new supply, so that all would know that a great miracle had been performed. His statement that his hour had not yet come caused his mother to understand that he had some plan in mind; so she said to the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." But this part of the lesson is not complete; the student should read on through the eleventh verse, where it is said, "This beginning of his signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed on him." It was a sign that God was with him—a sign really that he was what John the Baptist had said he was—the Messiah, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. This increased their faith in him.

The first miracle Jesus performed was at a wedding feast. God created the first pair and brought them together as husband and wife. Marriage is therefore divine in its origin; it is still a divine institution when the marriage is prompted by right motives. Jesus gave his sanction to marriage in a personal way by attending this marriage.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Marriage can be a continued happy experience, if husband and wife both try to make it so; or they can make it a veritable hell on earth. Beecher made this remark: "Dante, in his vision, never saw anything worse than that which exists in some married lives." This from D. L. Moody: "I do not believe a Christian man has right to marry any unconverted woman. I do not believe any Christian woman has a right to marry an unconverted man. I imagine you will laugh about it and ridicule the whole idea, but here is the word of God for it. 'Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.' 'Wherefore Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate.' Now I never knew anyone to go against the Bible that did not suffer for it."

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Should Christians marry unbelievers, or people of other religions?  
The divorce evil.  
The feasts of Bible times.  
Why so many marriages end in separation.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

second chapter account that we do not learn from the first chapter?

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
What do we learn about the creation in the

#### Verses 18-20

What was Adam's employment in the garden?

What use did the tree of life serve? Why did God make the woman?

**Verses 21, 22**

Tell how God made the woman.

**Verses 23, 24**

Discuss what Adam said.

Why do some marriages prove to be failures?

**Matt. 19:3**

Discuss the Pharisees' reasons for their questions.

**Verses 4-6**

Discuss the reply Jesus made.

**John 2:1-5**

Discuss the incidents of this marriage. Discuss the reflections.

Lesson VI—November 8, 1942

**CHRISTIAN NURTURE IN THE FAMILY**

Deut. 6:4-9, 20-25; 2 Tim. 3:14, 15

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.  
 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, stoll be upon thy heart;  
 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk 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.  
 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes.  
 9 And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.  
 20 When thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which Jehovah our God hath commanded you?  
 21 Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt: and Jehovah brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand;  
 22 And Jehovah showed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his house, before our eyes;  
 23 And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers.  
 24 And Jehovah commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Jehovah our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as at this day.  
 25 And it shall be righteousness unto us, if we observe to do all this commandment before Jehovah our God, as he hath commanded us.  
 14 But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;  
 15 And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

*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.*—Prov. 4:1-9.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

November 2. M	God's Word in the Home (Deut. 6:4-9)
November 3. T	A Father Explains Scripture to His Son (Deut. 6:20-25)
November 4. W	A Mother Dedicates Her Child to God (1 Sam. 1:21-28)
November 5. T	Job's Family Altar (Job 1:1-5)
November 6. F	Knowing the Bible from Childhood (2 Tim. 3:14-17)
November 7. S	Bringing the Children to Jesus (Matt. 19:13-15)
November 8. S	The Family Bible Today and Tomorrow (Psalm 78:1-8)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—For Deut. 6:4-9, 20-25, probably about 1451 B.C.; for 2 Tim. 3:14, 15, probably A.D. 61.

*Places.*—"Beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab"; the Roman prison.



*Persons.*—Moses and the children of Israel, Paul and Timothy. *Lesson Links.*—In all of our study of the things found in the Old Testament, we should remember that there is a difference between the Old Testament and the New, and that the New Testament is the revelation of Christianity. And yet it is true that the fundamental principles of obedience to God are eternal. Under the old dispensation people were required to obey all the things written in the law of Moses, and parents were required to teach their children to obey that law. Anyone who knows anything at all about the Bible knows that many things were required then that would now be disobedience. A thing taught in the law, but not taught in the gospel of Christ, is no part of Christianity. To teach such things to anybody is therefore not Christian nurture in the home or elsewhere. But it is just as necessary now to teach children obedience to God as it was for the Jews to do so. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope." (Rom. 15:4.) Paul would not have the brethren ignorant of God's dealings with the Jews. (1 Cor. 10:1-12.) "Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come." If we fail to acquaint ourselves with the Old Testament, we fall short of what God demands of us.

The fundamental principles for the proper rearing and training of children have always been the same. Human nature has not changed, nor has its real needs. Physical needs are the same as always. The principles of physical growth and development have not changed. The spiritual and the moral nature have the same needs. We too often want things that we do not need; too often we want things that are hurtful to us. God knows every need of the human being from childhood to the grave. It is well for us therefore, though we do not live under the law of Moses, to study in the law some of the requirements God revealed to parents in that law.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### "Thou Shalt Love Jehovah Thy God" (Verses 4, 5)

"Hear, O Israel." There is no way for us to know the mind of God except by hearing his word. Look into your concordance, and see how often God called on people to hear him. Some of these calls to hear him pertain to things of perpetual obligation. Too often not enough emphasis is placed on hearing what God says; too much dependence on one's own judgment or on what some think is an inner light, or some supposed direct imparting of information by the Holy Spirit. All such theories deny the need of hearing God at all as he speaks to us in his word. The ears of all who hold such ideas are dull of hearing; there is no substitute for hearing the word of God. When Jehovah our God speaks, let all the earth hear, for he does not speak idle words. And this is what Jesus in Matt. 22:37, 38 calls the "great and first commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." And this means that we must devote all our powers to his service—to the doing of his will. The test of love is obedience: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me .... 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. He that loveth me not keepeth not my words." (John 14:21-24.) The father and mother who do not know the command-merits of God, and therefore make no effort to do them, are not in a position to give proper training to their children.

### **Parents Required to Teach Their Children (Verses 6, 7)**

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart." The parents must not only know the commandments of God, but these words of God must be upon their heart. The word of God must be respected, and there must be cherished in the heart a lively sense of its importance; there must be a feeling of obligation to do what God commands. The word of God is not a thing about which to joke, nor should it be quoted in a light frivolous manner. Hold it sacred.

One of the tragedies of the present time is the almost total breaking down of family life. It is hard to get the whole family together with any regularity, or for many minutes at a time. There is an urge to "be on the go." Such conditions make it hard to do any effective teaching in the family. The gathering of the family around the fireside to spend an evening together is one of the fine things that has been almost, if not entirely, lost. And yet the obligation of the parents to their children still rests upon them; but conditions make it harder to discharge these obligations than ever before. And yet all the attractions and allurements of these times make the need of teaching the word of God more urgent than ever. People live out in their lives the ideas and ideals they cherish in their heart; and nothing else is so civilizing, so ennobling, so refining, as the word of God loved and cherished. It is impossible for a person to live a clean upright life if his ideas and ideals are low and degrading; and it is impossible for him to live a corrupt life, if his heart is full of pure ideas and lofty ideals. These are the things that determine character. And the most uplifting and purifying thoughts are those set forth in God's word. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8, 9.) People live out in their lives the thoughts of their heart. Deeds are the fruits of the thoughts in the heart. Divine thoughts produce divine fruit. This shows how important it is to teach the child the word of God—to fill his mind full of God's thoughts. It is the only kind of education that promotes honest and clean living. There is no regenerating power in the ordinary branches of education, and some of them lower the feeling of moral responsibility. Such education needs to be dominated and overshadowed by the word of God—let the teaching of the word of God be of primary importance.

### **Further Admonitions (Verses 8, 9)**

In verses 7-9 Scott has this to say: "The Israelites were commanded to take every method of making the knowledge of the divine law familiar to them and their families; that every object which they beheld might serve as a memorial of it. Some think, that the subsequent directions should be considered only figurative language, strongly enforcing the grand principle: but several of them at least seem to have been intended literally, according to the cir-

cumstances of those times; though the Jews in later ages have run into a most frivolous superstition, by resting in the outward observance." Where copies of the law were scarce, portions of the law written in conspicuous places about the house could be made to serve a useful purpose; but the small phylacteries which the Jews later wore on their foreheads and left arms could not have enough of the law written on them to be of any special value. The Pharisees in Jesus' day wore them to advertise their piety; they were hypocritical in so doing. They also wore them as amulets, charms, to keep evil away. From available information, Hastings' Bible Dictionary, in the article on phylacteries, draws this conclusion: "We may, therefore, with some confidence assign the introduction of the phylacteries to the period of the domination of the Pharisees in the reign of John Hyrcanus (135-105 B.C.)." When people become formal in their religion, they feel the need of some way of advertising their professed piety. Jesus gave this admonition: "Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 6:1.) Concerning the Pharisees Jesus said, "But all their works they do to be seen of men: for they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the chief place at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues." (Matt. 23:5, 6.) And so, instead of having the commands of God always in their mind and on their hearts, as the Lord clearly intended that they should do, they took advantage of that command to make a display of their religion.

### **Historic Facts to Be Retold (Verses 20-23)**

Perhaps all races and nations have had certain great experiences that they cherish and like to pass on to their children. One of the outstanding events in the history of Israel was their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. It is well for any people or nation to keep in mind the great events that helped to make them what they are. As the Jews were such an exclusive people and thought themselves to be the only worthy people in the world, they would delight in their deliverance from a people whom they considered no people. Their children were to be told about this deliverance from Egyptian bondage—the mighty wonders and signs, "great and sore," which God wrought upon the Egyptians. This historic deliverance was to be repeated to their children after God had brought them into the promised land.

### **They Were to Obey for Their Good (Verses 24, 25)**

God had done so much for them that they should have felt under great obligation to do his will; and especially as it was for their good to do so. No other nation had such advantages; no other nation had so wise a lawgiver, and no other nation was under the care and protection of the creator of all things. All of them could have felt as secure as David did when he wrote the Twenty-Third Psalm. Aside from what God said to them, their experience should have early taught them that they were prosperous and happy so long as they obeyed God, and that famines, pestilences, and wars came upon them when they disobeyed God. But it is hard for people to learn, even from the word of God and their own experiences, that they attain

to the highest degree of happiness and good by the most faithful adherence to God's way of life. To further impress their children the parents were to say to them, "And Jehovah commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Jehovah our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as at this day." And they were further to impress upon them that doing the will of God would be righteousness unto them, "if we observe to do all this commandment before Jehovah our God, as he hath commanded us." By commands and by punishing disobedience God was constantly teaching them that his will was their law, and not their own notions and opinions. "What thing soever I command you, that shall ye observe to do: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." (Deut. 12:32.)

### **Timothy Had Early Teaching (2 Tim. 3:14, 15)**

From early manhood Timothy had been Paul's companion and helper in preaching the gospel, and in suffering the hardships and persecutions that they met with almost everywhere. When Paul was old and facing death in a Roman prison, he prayed unceasingly for Timothy, and longed to see him; "having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee; which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and, I am persuaded, in thee also." (2 Tim. 1:3-5.) The faithfulness of his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice accounts for his having known the sacred writings from a babe. These sacred writings were, of course, the Old Testament scriptures, for it is not possible that any of the New Testament had been written when Timothy was a babe. The Old Testament made him wise unto salvation by leading him to believe in Christ—do not overlook the expression, "through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Many of the people of Berea searched these same Old Testament scriptures to see if what Paul preached was true; and, as a result of that searching, many believed. This searching the Old Testament made them wise unto salvation in that it led them to believe in Jesus Christ.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

What we parents need today, what the young people need today, is not more fun and entertainment, but real homes, Christian homes, not simply places at which to stop occasionally to eat, or to change clothing, or to sleep, or to plan where to go next.

Children need direction and training. The absurd notion that every child should be allowed self-expression without restraint has made more criminals, perhaps, than any other foolish notion. Parents owe it to their children to teach them reverence and obedience.

### **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

Practical love to God.

The deliverance of Israel from Egypt.

God is not tyrannical, but his commands are for our good.

The need of Bible teaching.

### **QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.

Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### **Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.

Discuss Lesson Links.

**Verses 4, 5**

Name some things that depend on our hearing God.  
Repeat verses 4 and 5.  
To what does love for God lead?

State the requirements of these verses.  
In what way did the Pharisees seek to carry that requirement out?  
What did the Savior say of them?

**Verses 6, 7**

What is it to have the words of God upon the heart?  
Discuss verse 7.  
Name some hindrances to teaching the Bible in the family.  
Discuss the need of pure thoughts and high ideals.  
What benefits in having our minds full of God's thoughts?

**Verses 20-23**  
Give contents of these verses, and discuss them.

**Verses 24, 25**

Discuss these verses.

**2 Tim. 3:14, 15**

Give facts about Timothy.  
How did the sacred writings make him wise unto salvation?  
Discuss the reflections.

**Verses 8, 9**

Lesson VII—November 15, 1942

**THINGS THAT MAR FAMILY LIFE**

Gen. 27:30-35; Matt. 5:31, 32; Luke 12:13-15

30 And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

31 And he also made savory food, and brought it unto his father; and he said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

32 And Isaac his father said unto him Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy first-born. Esau.

33 And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who then is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.

34 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.

35 And he said, Thy brother came with guile, and hath taken away thy blessing.

31 It was said also, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

32 But I say unto you, that every one that putterh away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress, and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery.

13 And one out of the multitude said unto him, Teacher, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me.

14 But he said unto him Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? 15 And he said unto them, Take heed and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Col. 3:18 to 4:1.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

November 9. M  
November 10. T  
November 11. W  
November 12. T  
November 13. F  
November 14. S  
November 15. S

Murder in the First Family (Gen 4:8-12)  
Strife Between the First Twins (Gen 27:30 35)  
Evasion of Parental Duty (1 Sam. 3:10-14)  
Evasion of Filial Duty (Mark 7:10-12)  
Quarrels Over Property (Luke 12:13-15)  
Christ s Law of Divorce (Matt. 5:31, 32)  
God Speaks to a Broken Home (Mal. 2:13-16)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—For Gen. 27:30-35, according to Usher, 1760 B.C.; according to Hales, 1916 B.C.; for Matt. 5:31, 32, probably A.D. 27; for Luke 12:13-15, probably A.D. 30.

*Places.*—Beer-sheba, a mountain in Galilee, and Judea.

*Persons.*—Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Esau, Jesus, his disciples, and the multitudes.

*Lesson Links*—The passages of scriptures used as the printed text of the present lesson are not supposed to cover all the things that sometimes mar family life. There are so many things that may come up in a family to make things unpleasant, that one could not name all of them. A hard, selfish, overbearing husband and father can make life miserable for the wife and children. It is true that someone must be the head of the family, and God has laid that obligation on the husband. But the right to rule does not give him the right to abuse and terrify the members of his family. He should maintain his God-given place as head of his family, but he should do so as a Christian gentleman. But no man can make a family what it should be without the cooperation of a Christian wife. A nagging, spiteful, or hysterical wife can greatly mar, or even destroy, family life. A married couple is sometimes merely two people living under the same roof; such is not family life. There is an intangible quality about real family life—a quality that cannot be fully grasped or explained. It defies analysis, though it can be sensed. It is fairly comprehended in Paul's injunction: "Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it." (Eph. 5:22-25.) "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6:1-4.) If these requirements are met by all the members of a family, peace and happiness will prevail. It helps in the home as well as elsewhere to heed this admonition: "Be not righteous overmuch; neither make thyself overwise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?" (Eccles. 7:16.) Family life is marred when one member assumes to be better and wiser than the others.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Esau Makes Savory Food for His Father Isaac (Verses 30, 31)**

To Isaac and Rebekah were born two sons—twins. "Now Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: and Rebekah loved Jacob." And that was the starting point for trouble in that family. When parents show partiality toward one child, especially when parents are arrayed against each other in their partialities, family life cannot be what it should be. In an atmosphere like that, too many occasions for friction come up to mar the peace and contentment that should prevail in a home.

Apparently Esau was a pleasure-loving, easygoing young man; Jacob was cool and calculating, ready to drive a bargain at every

opportunity. He would even take advantage of occasion to profit off his brother. Such an opportunity presented itself when Esau came in one day from the hunt, exhausted and hungry; and "for one mess of meat sold his own birthright." When Esau saw and smelled Jacob's fresh-cooked food, nothing else mattered. Jacob took advantage of that weakness in Esau, and traded one mess of meat for his birthright. Later Esau would not feel right toward Jacob; he would feel that Jacob had cheated him, though he was a willing victim in the trade. Good feelings cannot prevail in a family in which one member is always ready to take advantage of another member for profit.

Though Jacob and Esau were twins, Esau was the first born, and the birthright was his. As he grew older he likely grew more and more bitter about the trade he made with Jacob, till it reached a climax in the incidents recorded in Gen. 27. Isaac was growing old; he wanted to pronounce the blessing of the first born upon Esau before he died, not knowing, of course, that Esau had sold his birthright. In this case the birthright included the inheritance of the promises made to Abraham. Isaac's eyesight had failed him, and this gave Rebekah and Jacob an opportunity to practice a fraud on both Isaac and Esau. The whole scheme was suggested and planned by Rebekah. The student should read the whole chapter. Rebekah's plan worked. That she conceived the plan to deceive her blind husband does not speak well for Rebekah. And both Esau and Jacob were her sons; why should she be so unnatural in her affections that she schemed for the one against the other? She and Isaac were good people, but they were not ideal parents.

### **Esau Was Rejected (Verses 32-35)**

When Rebekah and Jacob had deceived Isaac and secured for Jacob the blessing Isaac intended to bestow upon the first born, and Jacob had scarcely departed from Isaac, Esau came in to claim the promised blessing. In earlier life he despised and sold his birthright for one mess of meat; now he greatly desired the blessing of the first born. "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." (Read Heb. 12:14-17.) Isaac announced to Esau that he had blessed Jacob—nothing more could be done about it. Isaac himself had been greatly disturbed when he learned that he had been so heartlessly deceived—"Isaac trembled very exceedingly." "Thy brother came with guile, and hath taken away thy blessing." Rebekah gained her point, but it resulted in her losing the association of the only person she loved in that family, for Jacob had to flee for his life from the wrath of Esau. It is possible that Rebekah died before Jacob returned from Padan-aram, and therefore never saw him again. And so we have an example of what partiality and selfishness can do for a family. And we see, too, how a young man may do a thing that he bitterly regrets later on. There was good reason for Esau to feel bitter toward himself, but not toward Jacob; for he had sold his birthright to Jacob. He might justly have berated himself for such folly, but he had no grounds for hating Jacob for seeking to come into possession of what he had bought. It may be that the trickery Jacob employed stirred up as much hatred as anything else. That family had become more a wreck than a unit, and they had brought it all on themselves.

### **Divorce and Remarriage (Matt. 5:31, 32)**

Beginning with verse 21 of the fifth chapter Jesus gives a series of contrasts between what the Jews had been taught and what he taught. He was not so much contradicting the law of Moses as giving it a wider and deeper significance. He did not teach people to disregard the law; he himself kept the law. He also had just said, verses 17-19, "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

"It was said also, whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement." Moses had said, "When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house." (Deut. 24:1.) On another occasion, when Jesus had answered a question propounded to him by the Pharisees, they asked, "Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so." (Matt. 19:3-8.) It was a measure for the protection of the wife whose husband was not pleased with her, and was therefore harsh in his attitude toward her; but under the influence of the teaching of Christ men are supposed to become gentler and more considerate. This statement at first glance sounds a little peculiar: "But I say unto you, that every one that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress." This implies that her being put away would be the cause of her marrying another man, thus becoming an adulteress; and the man that married her would by so doing commit adultery.

Some young people who marry have never developed any feeling of personal responsibility. Their parents failed to teach them the fundamental principles of right living, failed to teach them to regard the rights of others, and failed to allow them to learn how to live by letting them work out their own problems. Life has been easy for them; they do not know how to meet on their own responsibility the hard realities of life. To such a couple married life soon turns out to be disappointing, they grow irritable and quarrelsome; the next thing is a separation and a divorce. When they marry again, they enter into an adulterous life; perhaps they are then no better satisfied with their new companions than they were with each other. It seemingly does not occur to many people that marriage is a divine institution and that people cannot lightly regard the marriage vows without sin.

### **A Family Disturbance Over Property (Luke 12:13, 14)**

At the time of this section of our lesson many thousands were gathered about Jesus, "insomuch that they trod one upon another." (Verse 1.) While Jesus was teaching this multitude, especially his



disciples, one of the multitude, with his mind on his own affairs, and not on what Jesus was teaching, broke in with this request: "Teacher, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me." The parents, of course were dead, and the two sons had fallen heir to the property. The first born received a double portion, the other children shared equally. It may be that the first born in this case was appropriating the most, or all, of the property. But why should the younger come to Jesus about the matter? He certainly knew that Jesus was not a civil magistrate. Perhaps he had seen the miracles of Jesus, and fancied that he might use such power as to force a settlement. "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" Jesus, of course, could have told him what was right, but he had no official powers to enforce an honest settlement. Besides, that was not his mission; he was teaching people what was right, so that they might voluntarily do right. To force a man to do right would not improve the character of the man; Jesus was not forcing men to do right. He was not conducting a civil government.

### **"Keep Yourself from All Covetousness" (Verse 15)**

Perhaps the lesson Jesus taught on covetousness applied directly to the case in hand, but it is also of the widest application. Jesus was teaching under the law which said, "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." (Ex. 20:17.) Paul classes the covetous person with a long list of the worst sort of characters. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10.) There should be no covetousness among Christians. (Eph. 5:3.) Paul also tells us that a covetous person is an idolater. (Verse 5.) Such a person has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Besides keeping people out of the kingdom of God, it is the cause of much trouble in families. It leads to stealing and robbery, and to all sorts of dishonest dealings. Two brothers who should have had a deep interest in the welfare of each other were against each other because of covetousness.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

The mother instinct is much more highly developed in some women than in others. Some of these, when they marry, try to mother their husbands, till children come to the home; then husband does not amount to much—the wife's love and care go to the child or children. That seriously mars family life. Rebekah seems to have been of this type; her love and care all went to Jacob. She could not have schemed to deceive her blind husband for the benefit of Jacob, had she loved Isaac as a wife should love her husband. There are other women who cease to be real wives when they become mothers. It does not seem that much can be done about it, for they are just built that way and do not realize it.

### **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

The evils of favoritism in the family.  
 The evils of covetousness.  
 Flattery as a tool of covetousness.  
 How husband or wife may mar family life.  
 How children may mar family life.

## QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, places, and persons.  
Name some of the things, not mentioned in the text of our lesson, that mar family life.

**Verses 30, 31**

Give some account of the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah, and the birth of their two sons.  
What led to trouble in that family?  
Discuss Esau's selling his birthright.  
When Isaac would bless Esau, what did Rebekah and Jacob do?

**Verses 32-35**

Tell what occurred when Esau returned for the blessing of Isaac.

Why should Esau become so bitter toward Jacob?  
What was the final result of the deception?

**Matt. 5:31, 32**

Name some contrasts Jesus gave between the law and his teaching.  
What was the law of divorce among the Jews?  
What did Jesus teach on marriage and divorce?  
Why do so many marriages fail?

**Luke 12:13, 14**

Discuss the man's request, and why Jesus did not grant it.

**Verse 15**

Give a discussion of covetousness.  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson VIII—November 22, 1942

**MOTIVES THAT STRENGTHEN FAMILY LIFE**

Ex. 2:1-4; Josh. 24:14, 15; Eph. 5:28-31; 6:1-4

1 And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi.  
2 And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.

3 And when she could not longer bide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch; and she put the child therein, and laid it in the flags by the river's brink.

4 And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him.

14 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.

15 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.

23 Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself:

29 For no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church;

30 Because we are members of his body.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

2 Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise),

3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Love never faileth." (1 Cor. 13:8.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Job 1:1-5.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—*

November 16. M	A Good Man (Prov. 4:10-18)
November 17. T	A Worthy Woman (Prov. 31:28-31)
November 18. W	Husband and Wife (Eph. 5:28-33)
November 19. T	"A Goodly Child" (Ex. 2:1-4)
November 20. F	Children and Parents (Eph. 6:1-4)
November 21. S	Home and Temple (Luke 2:41-51)
November 22. S	"We Will Serve Jehovah" (Josh. 24:14-18)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—For Ex. 2:1-4, according to Usher, 1571 B.C.; according to Hales, 1688 B.C.; for Josh. 24:14, 15, according to Usher, 1443 B.C.; according to Hales, 1595 B.C.; for Eph. 5:22-33 and 6:1-4, probably A.D. 61.

*Places.*—Egypt, Shechem, and a prison in Rome.

*Persons.*—The parents of Moses, the child Moses, his sister, Joshua, the people of Israel, Paul, and the brethren at Ephesus.

*Lesson Links*—At the urgent request of Joseph and at the invitation of Pharaoh, the famine being sore in Canaan, Jacob gathered all his people and possessions, and started on the long journey to Egypt. At Beer-sheba he "offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. 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: 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." (Gen. 46:1-4.) When Jacob and his family reached Egypt and had gone through the necessary ceremonies, they were assigned territory in the land of Goshen. Here they prospered, and multiplied greatly. "And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them." A new king, a new dynasty, gained the reins of government. The new king had no regard for what Joseph had done for Egypt; he regarded the children of Israel as foreigners to be feared. "And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: 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." He adopted measures, that he thought would keep them from multiplying so rapidly. He reduced them to slavery, put taskmasters over them; he made their lives bitter with hard service in all sorts of work, "wherein they made them serve with rigor." But hard work did not keep them from multiplying; the king should have known that labor would cause them to multiply more rapidly. He ordered the midwives to kill every son; but the midwives refused to do so, for they feared God. Because the midwives would not carry out Pharaoh's murderous order, "Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive." When any country has such cruel and heartless rulers, it is in a bad way. Such a king will commit any sort of crime to maintain himself in power.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****The Birth of Moses (Verses 1, 2)**

The man and woman mentioned in verse 1 were Amram and Jochebed. "And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife." (Ex. 6:20.) "And the name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt: and she bare unto Amram Aaron and Moses, and Miriam their sister." (Num. 26:59.) As nothing is said about any effort being made to shield the life of the babe Aaron, the conclusion is that he was born before the king's cruel decree was issued. When Moses was born his mother saw that he was a goodly child; "and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months." The way that statement is made causes one to wonder what she might have done, had he not been such a promising child. Stephen tells us that he "was exceeding fair." Our lesson text says that his mother hid him three months, but she did not take him away from home to do so. "And he was nourished three months in his father's house." (Acts 7:20.) "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months by his parents, because they saw he was a goodly child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." (Heb. 11:23.) They did not fear for their own lives as a result of defying the command of the king; but they did fear for the life of the child, as is shown by their hiding him. No, they were not afraid to shield the child from the king's decree. As they hid him by faith it shows that they were following directions revealed to them. Jehovah had a hand in shielding the life of that child, for he had a use for him in the future. Sometimes the providence of God overrules the actions of people when they have no idea that it is being done.

**The Ark of Bulrushes (Verses 3, 4)**

Here again God must have been controlling the actions of Amram and Jochebed, for it does not seem that they would have thought of such a plan. It looked as much like a plan to feed the child to the crocodiles as anything else. They must have known that God would take care of that child. "And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him." This sister was Miriam, for Aaron and Moses had no other sister. She would not create any suspicion that the child meant anything to her, or that she even knew that it was in the ark among the flags. Apparently unconcerned, she stood afar off. But she, as well as her parents, was greatly concerned about the child. Had the parents remained to watch, their presence would have created suspicion that they were the parents. Hence, they left the young girl to watch; if she did not show any concern, no one would suspect that the child meant anything to her. The results show that they must have deliberately placed the child near the place where Pharaoh's daughter was accustomed to take her baths; at least, it all worked out as if every move had been deliberately planned. When Pharaoh's daughter saw the weeping child, her motherly feeling prompted her to take him as her own. Watchful Miriam now had her opportunity. She came, and proposed to get a nurse for the child. The Bible student knows the result.

**"We Will Serve Jehovah" (Josh. 24:14, 15)**

Joshua had been the leader in subduing the land of Canaan. Each tribe had been allotted its territory. When he was old, the end of his life being near, "Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God." He then delivered his final appeal to all Israel to be faithful to Jehovah, and never to go after the gods of the nations. This section of our lesson is a part of that speech.

"Now therefore fear Jehovah." Job is described as a man that was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and turned away from evil. "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom." (Psalm 111:10.) The fear of Jehovah promotes happiness and contentment in the family more than does great wealth. "Better is little, with the fear of Jehovah, than great treasure and trouble therewith." (Prov. 15:16.) "Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king." (1 Pet. 2:17.) "Serve him in sincerity and in truth." Not to be sincere is to be hypocritical. If a person is not sincere in his pretended service to God, he is not likely to be sincere in his family relations. If he is not sincere in his service to God, he will not be interested in serving him in truth. A hypocritical pretense at serving God will rot the character of anyone.

"The River" was the Euphrates. Joshua's language shows that their fathers came from beyond that river. In that country their fathers were worshipers of idols. Now he calls upon the people to make a definite decision as to whom they would serve, whether idols of other nations or Jehovah; "but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah." He had already made his decision. During a long life he had served Jehovah, and he would continue to do so, he and his house.

**How Husbands Should Love Their Wives (Eph. 5:28-30)**

From verse 23 it seems that Paul was using the relation of husband and wife to illustrate the relation of Christ and the church; in doing so he gave some admonitions to husbands and wives. Christ so loved the church that he gave himself up for it. Husbands are exhorted to love their wives as Christ also loved the church, which is his body. "Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies." Love your wife as much as you love your own body. A man cares for his body; he shields it from harm and unnecessary exposure. So ought a husband to care for his wife. "He that loveth his own wife loveth himself," for she is really a part of him. When two people marry, each becomes a real part of the other's life. The happiness of each is greatly in the keeping of the other; either can destroy the home. As it is the duty of the husband to love his wife, it is the corresponding duty of the wife to make it possible for the husband to love her. Besides the natural duty of husband and wife to make things as pleasant for each other as possible, they must, if they are Christians, conduct themselves as members of the body of Christ should; "because we are members of his body." An earnest desire to live as the Lord would have us live is the greatest possible motive for right conduct in any relationship of life; and to keep faithfully the commandments

of the Lord is the highest achievement in the reach of anyone; and that is possible to all. "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.) A genuine Christian home, a home in which God and Christ are welcome and abiding guests, is a home of respect, love, and happiness. Such a goal for a young married couple will save them from many pitfalls and guide their feet over many rough places. But where each is determined to have his way, and neither of them has any regard for the word of God, they will more than likely make a wreck of their marriage.

### **Children's Duty to Parents (Eph. 6:1-3)**

Paul's admonition here is meant primarily for children who were and are Christians, for the letter was addressed to the saints. (Eph. 1:1.) To obey in the Lord is to obey as Christians. "For this is right." Obedience to parents is right in the very nature of things; it is a requirement that has always been binding, and cannot be avoided. The children here addressed, being Christians, were old enough to be responsible for their own conduct. And yet obedience is a thing that must be learned—"though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered." (Heb. 5:8.) Parents owe it to their children to teach them obedience, for that is one of the necessary qualities all through life. A lack of that quality makes criminals. But just mere obedience to parents falls short of what children should do. "Honor thy father and mother." Hold them in high esteem, and care for them in their declining days. Children who will not do their best to supply the needs of their parents in their more or less helpless days, but allow them to become objects of public charity, or the inmates of some state-supported institution, utterly fail in their Christian duties. Such children are not honoring father and mother, and will not be held guiltless.

### **"Fathers, Provoke Not Your Children to Wrath" (Verse 4)**

It is here taken for granted that parents will, in so far as they can, provide for the physical needs of their children; but they are not always as tactful with them as they should be. It is bad for a child for parents to compare him in an unfavorable light with other children, or to disparage him in any way. Do not talk to your child in a fretful or spiteful way. Make no accusations against him on mere suspicion. A wrong accusation leaves a scar on the heart of the child, and lowers a child's estimate of the fairness and justice of his parents. If it appears that the child needs correction, be sure you know; then use whatever corrective measures may be necessary. And always be sure to nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord. This includes teaching and training them—leading them to understand and appreciate the chastening and admonitions of the Lord.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

No action, whether in the family or out, is what it should be, unless it is prompted by clean and pure motives. And no other motive is so high and holy as an earnest desire to be and do what is pleasing to God our Savior.

What is written in the Old Testament serves as examples to us; the things written in the Old Testament enlarge our understanding along many lines. Its study should not be neglected; but all the relations in which a person is now called on to act are covered in the teaching of the New Testament. There is no place or relation in which it is right for a Christian to be, that he cannot learn from the New Testament how to conduct himself. Husband and wife are told in plain terms their duties and obligations as husband and wife; children are told how to conduct themselves in the family; parents are told how to teach and to train their children.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

How parents may fail in their duties.  
How children may bring trouble into the family.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
Tell how the children of Israel came to be in Egypt.  
What promise did God make Jacob at Beer-sheba?  
How came Israel to be reduced to bondage in Egypt?  
Tell about their hardships as bondsmen.

#### Verses 1, 2

Name the parents of Moses.  
Why did they hide him, and for how long?

#### Verses 3, 4

Tell about the ark of bulrushes, and how Moses came to be found.

#### Josh. 24:14, 15

Give some facts about Joshua.  
Why did he gather the people at Shechem?  
Give some discussion on the fear of Jehovah.  
What did Joshua call on Israel to do, and what would he do?

#### Eph. 5:28-30

What is the main thing in keeping up right relations in the home?  
Discuss verse by verse this section of our lesson.

#### Eph. 6:1-3

What is genuine obedience?  
Why should parents teach their children obedience?

#### Verse 4

Discuss verse 4.  
Discuss the reflections.

Lesson IX—November 29, 1942

### THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

Matt. 18:15-17; Acts 1:8; 2:42; 6:1-4; 11:27-30; 13:1-3; 1 John 1:3

15 And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established.

17 And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church: and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican.

8 But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

1 Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations.

2 And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables.

3 Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word.

27 Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.

28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius.

29 And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judaea:

30 Which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

1 Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers, Barnabas, and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul,

2 And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

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.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." (John 20:21.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Gal. 6:1-10.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

November 23. M

November 24. T

November 25. W

November 26. T

November 27. F

November 28. S

November 29. S

Brotherhood (Matt. 18:15-17)

Witnessing Power (Acts 1:6-11)

Winning to Christ and the Church (Acts 2:37-42)

Sharing with the Needy (Acts 6:1-6)

Famine Relief (Acts 11:27-30)

Missions at Home and Abroad (Acts 13:1-3)

Fellowship (1 John 1:1-4)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—For Matt. 18:15-17, probably A.D. 29 or 30; for Acts 1:8 and 2:42, A.D. 30 or 31; for Acts 6:1-4, A.D. 34 or 35; for Acts 11:27-30, A.D. 43 or 44; for Acts 13:1-3, probably A.D. 44; for 1 John 1:3, date cannot be determined.

*Places.*—Capernaum, Jerusalem, Antioch in Syria. The place where John wrote his first epistle is not known.

*Persons.*—Jesus and the disciples about him, the apostles, the saints in Jerusalem and in Antioch of Syria, and the people to whom John wrote. It does not seem that John's first epistle was written to any certain person or church.

*Lesson Links.*—The church was first conceived in the mind of God: "to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. 3:10, 11.) As it originated in the eternal purpose of God, it is neither the result of an afterthought, nor is it a makeshift to tide over with till the thing planned can be inaugurated. The church itself is that which was planned. To make known the manifold wisdom of God through the church



includes more than preaching the gospel; that is only one part of the way God's wisdom is made known through the church. The wisdom of the inventor and builder of a machine is seen in the practical operation of his machine—is seen in its doing efficiently the work it was designed to do. It is true that a bunglesome operator may make poor use of a fine machine, or some enemy may injure it so that it cannot do good work; but such things are no reflection on the inventor and maker of the machine. God knew exactly what the human family needed, and his wisdom enabled him to give us a perfect machine to accomplish his purpose. But that machine falls into the hands of bunglesome operators, and therefore it does not do its best work; sometimes also designing men wreck it. Herein is the folly of man seen. But the church is perfect, and perfectly adapted to the work God designed for it. The church grew out of God's eternal purpose, and is the product of his love, wisdom, and power. It is impossible to think that anything better could have been made; and one who reveres God—his goodness, power, and wisdom—will not even think that something better could have been put in operation. In giving himself up for the church Christ designed that it be "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." In view of all these things, let us speak of the church with respect—even reverence.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### **When One Brother Sins Against Another (Verses 15-17)**

"If thy brother sin against thee." Of course, when one brother sins against another, he also sins against God; but some sins against God are not personal wrongs against a fellow Christian. The directions here given concern sins against a brother, and not sins in general. Jesus here points out what the offended brother should do in case of a personal offense against him. If the offending brother does not repent, he is lost. The offended brother should go to him alone, and show him his fault; he should do this in order to save the sinning brother. Wisdom should be exercised in the manner and the place of approach; the effort may be made in such a way as to be a real insult. But if you do your best to show the offender his fault, and he refuses to hear you, then take one or two others, and go to him again. The one or two may be able to convince the offender of his wrongs; if not, they will be available as witnesses against the offender. "And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church." McGarvey says, "Only when both of the preceding steps shall have been taken and found ineffectual, is the sin to be reported to the church. Then, as is implied in the words 'if he shall neglect to hear the church, the church is to speak. But the church can speak only through her spokesmen, her officials appointed for the purpose; consequently the actions of the church's disciplinary officers is here implied. This rule of procedure is given only for cases of personal offense, where one individual has sinned against another. We are to learn from other portions of the New Testament how to deal with offenses of other kinds." "If he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican." Cease to think of him as being in fellowship with you. This, of course, implies that he is to be cut off from the fellowship of the church.

**Jesus Promises the Apostles Power (Acts 1:8)**

The language of this verse was spoken shortly before Jesus ascended. He had chosen the apostles to be his special witnesses. Before his crucifixion he had promised them the inspirational powers of the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 10:19, 20; John 14:25, 26; 16:7-14.) Such powers were never promised to all Christians, but to the apostles only, "to whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God: and, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence." (Acts 1:3-5.) This baptism of the Holy Spirit was to give them the power necessary to be apostles. When they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, they were then to be his witnesses in "Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." If a man now were to receive this baptism in the Holy Spirit, he would be equal in power to any of the apostles. The power mentioned in verse eight was not promised to all members of the church. But the church can take the testimony given by the apostles and carry it to the nations of the earth.

**What the Jerusalem Church Did (Acts 2:42)**

The apostles were to be witnesses of Christ when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. That baptism of the Holy Spirit came upon them on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ; they began at once to give their testimony. Inquirers were told to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins. About three thousand were added on that day. These new converts were Jews, but they did not know how to conduct themselves as Christians. So they continued to be taught by the apostles. The language does not mean that they continued to do what the apostles taught, and something else. They continued under the instructions of the apostles, and to do what they were taught to do. "Fellowship"—partnership. That is a word of wide application. Each member should feel that he is a partner in all the activities of the church. "The breaking of bread." They all continued in the breaking of bread; that is, they all regularly ate the Lord's Supper. It should be so done today; no one should deliberately stay away from the Lord's-day worship. These brethren were being taught by the apostles, and were putting the teaching into practice. "And the prayers." Prayer is an important part of the life of a Christian. In those days they did not have so many theories about prayer and the laws of nature; they prayed, believing that God could answer prayers.

**Seven Appointed to Serve Tables (Acts 6:1-4)**

By the time of the incidents of this section of our lesson, there must have been many thousand disciples in Jerusalem, and the number was still multiplying. Some of these were Grecian Jews, that is, Jews who had grown up in countries where the Greek language was spoken; that was the language they had learned to speak. They complained that their widows were being neglected in the daily

ministrations. The church was active in looking after the needy. Evidently those who had been appointed to this work were native Jews, who could not speak Greek, and therefore could not so easily look after the needs of the Grecian Jews. It is a mistake to think that the apostles themselves had been attending to this matter in person. Said they, "It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables." "But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word." They proposed to continue to do as they had been doing, and not forsake the word of God to serve tables. The brethren were told to look out from among themselves "seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business"—the business of looking after the needs of the neglected Grecian widows. The men to be selected were to be genuine Christians, and full of wisdom. To help the needy without destroying their self-respect or wounding their feelings requires more wisdom than many people have. The men selected had Grecian names; these would minister to the needy Grecian Jews. Evidently no change was made in those who had been ministering to the Hebrew needy. These men who spoke the Greek language would have the same difficulty in seeing after those who did not understand Greek as the Hebrews had in seeing after those who did not understand Hebrew. It is a mistake therefore to conclude that these seven were appointed to see after any but the needy Grecian Jews. But one point to be emphasized is the Jerusalem church looked after the needs of its members. This was a good church; they had the inspired apostles for teachers, they worshiped as the apostles directed, they converted many to Christ, and they cared for their needy.

### **The Liberality of the Antioch Disciples (Acts 11:27-30)**

When the church at Jerusalem was scattered by persecution, some of the disciples went as far as Antioch in Syria, preaching the word. This resulted in a great church. Antioch was a prosperous city. Here Barnabas and Saul labored for a time, "and taught much people." Prophets came down from Jerusalem, and informed them that there was coming on the world a great famine. It is more than likely that, when the disciples were driven out of Jerusalem, their property was confiscated. Those who dared to return would have nothing. Perhaps many did return after the rage under the leadership of Saul of Tarsus ended. In a famine there would be great suffering among people who had been robbed of their property. So the disciples at Antioch, "every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judaea." They sent this relief by the hands of Barnabas and Saul—the same Saul who had helped to make some of these Judean saints poor. Here again we see a manifestation of the benevolent spirit of the early Christians, a demonstration of what a church can do in helping the needy. The gospel of Christ puts that sort of spirit into all who come under its influence. Every church of God is therefore a benevolent society, and Christians need no other society in which to do such work.

### **Antioch a Gospel Radiating Center (Acts 13:1-3)**

Five of the men in the Antioch church are here mentioned as prophets and teachers, whose names Luke records. They were actively engaged in preaching to sinners and in edifying the church.

This church at Antioch in Syria had grown to be a great church, full of faith and zeal. While these prophets and teachers were engaged in active service, the Holy Spirit said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." The Holy Spirit was about to send them out on an extensive preaching tour, but it was good for the church to have a part in that work. It will be noticed that on this occasion the Holy Spirit selected the men to be sent, and mentioned them by name. The next verse shows that the church had a hand in sending them; at least, that the prophets and teachers took part in the sending. Of course, the whole church was interested in the matter, and furnished them money for necessary expenses. When they returned to Antioch from this extensive preaching tour, they made their report to the whole church. (Acts 14:26, 27.)

### What the Apostles Declared to Others (1 John 1:3)

The apostles had been with Jesus, they had seen his miracles, and had heard his teaching. They were so empowered by the Holy Spirit as to be infallible in their teaching. They were sent out to declare to the whole world what they had seen and heard. They had fellowship with the Father and with Christ Jesus in this great work, and were seeking to bring others into this fellowship. Even members of the church sometimes fail to have fellowship in this great work. John was seeking to stir them up to have fellowship in the work. No Christian should neglect that fellowship.

### SOME REFLECTIONS

An active church of God in a community is the greatest thing in that community. Unless we count the Lord's-day worship a separate and distinct activity of the church, all its activities may be summed up under three heads:

1. Preaching the gospel as God's power to save. Apparently that is the first and outstanding work of the church, and the duty rests upon each individual member.
2. Edifying the saints—developing Christian character.
3. Helping the needy—the work of benevolence. Has the church any other mission than these?

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

The church's duty in preaching the gospel.  
 The church edifying itself—building Christian character.  
 The church's duty toward the needy.  
 Our guide in all these activities.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
 When did God purpose the church, and why?  
 How is God's wisdom made known in the church?  
 What hinders the church in its work?  
 Why did Jesus give himself up for the church?

#### Verses 15-17

Repeat the directions Jesus gives in reference to personal offenses.  
 In what spirit should all this be done.  
 Show that the directions apply to personal offenses, and not to all sins.

#### Acts 1:8

What powers had Jesus promised the apostles?  
 Show that verse 8 cannot apply to all Christians.

**Acts 2:42**

Repeat verse 42.

When did the promised power come upon the apostles?

What did they then do, and with what results?

Why did the new converts continue in the apostles' instruction?

Discuss the items mentioned in verse 42.

**Acts 6:1-4**

What dissatisfaction arose in the Jerusalem church?

Why would the widows of the Grecian Jews be neglected?

How were matters arranged satisfactorily?

**Acts 11:27-30**

How was the church at Antioch brought into existence?

Who informed that church of an approaching famine?

What did the brethren do about it?

**Acts 13:1-3**

Name the prophets and teachers in the Antioch church.

What were they told to do?

What part did the church have in sending Barnabas and Saul?

**1 John 1:3**

Give a discussion of this verse.

Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson X—December 6, 1942

**THE MEANING OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

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, Syntian, 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.**—"Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof." (1 Cor. 12:27.)

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Rom. 12:3-13.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

November	30.	M
December	1.	T
December	2.	W
December	3.	T
December	4.	F
December	5.	S
December	6.	S

Uniting with the Church	(Acts 10:44-48)
Courageous Testimony	(Acts 4:5-13)
Many Members in One Body	(1 Cor. 12:26-31)
Christ Our Life	(Col. 3:1-4)
New Life in Christ	(Col. 3:5-11)
Christian Behavior	(Col. 3:12-17)
Peace and Prosperity	(Psalm 122:1-9)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—A.D. 62 or 63.

*Place.*—Most likely the letter was written while Paul was a prisoner in Rome, though some have thought that he wrote it in Caesarea before he was taken to Rome.

*Persons.*—Paul and the brethren at Colosse. Paul directed that the letter be read also to the church in Laodicea. (Col. 4:16.)

*Lesson Links*—The meaning of church membership gains in significance along as we learn more and more what the church is, and what its place is in God's economy of things. The word used by the Lord and his apostles means, the called out. As used by the Greeks it applied to any body of people called together for any purpose. As applied to God's people, it means that they have been called out of sin into the service of God. "But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Pet. 2:9.) "Whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. 2:14.) This body of called out people is the church. Hence, those who have been called out of darkness into light by the gospel constitute the church. This church is the body of Christ. "And he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22, 23.) "And he is the head of the body, the church." (Col. 1:18.) The church is God's family. "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:14, 15.) The house of God is the family of God just as the house of Onesiphorus was the family of Onesiphorus. (2 Tim. 1:16; 4:19.) The children of God therefore compose the family, the house, of God; and all who are born again, born of water and the Spirit, are children of God. By obedience to the gospel men become children 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.) We become children of God, through faith, when our faith leads us to be baptized into Christ. We are then in the family of God—in his church. In this broad sense the church of God includes all of the saved, all the children of God, in all the earth. But the word church sometimes refers to a local congregation, and sometimes to the saved in a given territory.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON****Seek the Things That Are Above (Verses 1, 2)**

The "if" here does not mean that Paul had any doubt as to the conversion of these brethren, but as a basis for exhortations and admonitions. He had just said that they had been buried with Christ in baptism, and raised with him. They had died to sin—died to the world, else they could not have been buried with Christ and raised with him. Now, since you were raised together with Christ, "seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God." "In scripture, seeking denotes the constant employment of one's thoughts and endeavors for obtaining the object

of one's desires, Matt. 6:33. Wherefore, in this passage, the apostle exhorted the Colossians earnestly to pursue the joys of heaven."—Macknight. We must seek God's approval by earnestly doing his will. To make the Christian life more delightful "set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth." If you set your mind on a thing, your movements naturally tend in that direction. When you were learning to ride a bicycle, you soon learned to look where you wanted to go, and not at the rock you wished to miss.

### **"For Ye Died" (Verses 3, 4)**

It is repeatedly said in the New Testament, that a person dies to sin, dies to the world, in becoming a Christian. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" (Rom. 6:1, 2.) The Christian is both dead and alive—dead to sin, but alive to God. "Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 6:11.) Study the following high ideal set forth by Paul: "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.) Saul, the enemy of Christ, died; Paul, the friend of Christ, lived. Or, rather, Christ lived in him. Verse 3 of our lesson expresses the same truth: "For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God." To induce right living great reward is offered. "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory." Jesus has gone to prepare a place for his servants. "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."

### **Things to Be Put Away from Us (Verses 5-8)**

In Rom. 6:6 Paul speaks of the body of sin, and in this section of our lesson he speaks of the members of that body. These members are to be put to death—the body of sin must be destroyed; "knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin." We are to put away all immoral practices, all practices that are morally unclean, and all evil desires. Covetousness is severely condemned throughout the Bible. Paul here calls it idolatry. Idolatry is the worship of anything, not God, or putting our trust in that which is not God. Paul here calls covetousness idolatry; this, perhaps, because people trust property for comfort and security. There is nothing wrong with a reasonable desire for the necessary things of life; but when the desire for property becomes stronger than our desire to please God, it is running dangerously near to dishonesty and idolatry. "For which things' sake"—more accurately, on account of which (things) "cometh the wrath of God." People cannot therefore practice such things as Paul had just mentioned, and escape the wrath of God. If they practice such things on the supposition that God's goodness will spare them, they are treasuring up for themselves wrath in the day of wrath and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. The sins just mentioned grow more out of the appetites and passions; now Paul mentions others that

also must be put away from us—"anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth." These are the things that we are likely to allow to spring up when things do not go to suit us, or when someone insults us or does us a wrong. Anger may be of temporary duration, and may not show any outward sign of its presence. Wrath is violent anger; malice is deep-seated anger, with a malignant design to do harm to its object. However malice may go no farther than insolent and abusive talk, "shameful speaking out of your mouth." The connection in which this expression occurs shows that the "shameful speaking" in this verse is the abusive and intemperate language people use in anger and malice. All such things must be put away; to say that you are hot tempered is no excuse. The Lord demands self-control, and he does not demand that which is impossible.

### **"Christ Is All, and in All" (Verses 9-11)**

"Lie not one to another." Be sincere in all your speech. Much lying is done these days in the form of flattery; not infrequently it is done to gain an advantage in buying and selling. It is sure to be indulged in when factions spring up in the church. Be truthful at any cost. The Christian has put off the old man, the former manner of life. When he was baptized he put on Christ—the pledge then made must be continuously renewed; the new man, the Christian profession, must be renewed day by day. The ideal toward which we must strive is the Lord himself. This cannot be done without renewing and increasing our knowledge of his character and his will. In this new relationship there can be no distinction, either racial or artificial. So far as the blessings of the gospel are concerned, no race and no class has any advantage over another. We are all one in Christ; and he is all, and in all. It was quite a blow to Jewish pride to learn that in gospel teaching he was on a level even with the barbarous Scythians.

### **Love, the Bond of Perfectness (Verses 12-14)**

Paul had told them to put off certain immoral practices and ill tempers, as one would put off worn-out or filthy clothing; now he tells them what to put on. These are traits or graces that adorn the Christian, and make the Christian useful among his fellows. Compassion, as generally used, is sorrow or pity for the distress or suffering of another; it lends a helping hand. Kindness is a broader term, and should be in all our association with others. Kindness sometimes requires us to do an unpleasant thing. Lowliness is the opposite of haughtiness; meekness is gentleness, and especially is it submissive to the will of God. To bear injuries or provocation without resentment is to be long-suffering. Forbearance is close akin to long-suffering. The Christian must forgive his brother at the first showing of repentance, even as Christ forgives us. Love is a sort of bond that unites all other graces into a well-rounded Christian character. Without it all the others would be a mere formality, a pretense. It perfects all the other traits; it puts heart and soul into all that we do.



**Some Further Admonitions (Verses 15-17)**

The peace of Christ is the peace of which he is the author. Jesus said to his apostles, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." (John 14:27.) Yet Christ is not the author of that peace which comes through compromise with error and sin. His peace does not rule in the heart of those who make peace with his enemies. We were called to peace in one body, the church, and it is his will that peace should rule in that body.

A person might memorize the whole New Testament, and yet the word of Christ might not dwell in him richly. He must love and cherish that word, and allow it to have full sway in his heart. It requires wisdom to teach people at any time; and especially does it require wisdom to teach and admonish people with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. The leader should know enough to be able to select songs that are scriptural, and he should be wise enough to select songs suited to the occasion. And yet how numerous are the occasions in which no attention is paid to the selection of songs to fit the occasion. And if we teach in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, the congregation, especially the leader, should pronounce the words distinctly, so that people may understand the words; otherwise how can any teaching and admonishing be done? So many sing as if the music was the main thing, and no effort is made to teach and admonish with our songs. "Singing with grace in your hearts unto God." The heart should be in the singing; there should be in the heart the spirit of praise and thanksgiving. The parallel passage (Eph. 5:19) has, "making melody with your heart to the Lord." The spirit of the song should, so to speak, pluck the chords of our heart. It is another way of saying that the heart should be touched with the sentiment of the song. We must sing—psallo—in the heart, and you cannot play a mechanical instrument in the heart. And as Christ is now both our priest and king, whatever we do should be done in his name. There is no other name in which we can perform religious services, or perform any act of worship. As he is our high priest, we approach God in prayer in his name, that is, we worship God through him. As he is our king, we must perform all our acts of service in his name, or by his authority. But we give thanks to God the Father through him, or in his name, as our high priest.

**SOME REFLECTIONS**

What does church membership mean to you in the way of benefits and blessings? Think of the things you have in actual possession and also in promise, and what you are, by virtue of being in the church, the family of God. It is the most exalted family in all the world—more highly exalted than any earthly royal family ever was, or ever could be. As a member of God's family, you are an heir of God, a joint heir with the Lord Jesus Christ. You are a child of him who is all-wise and all-powerful, and who owns all things. You are in a position to be a real uplifting force in the world. You have the purifying and uplifting power of the gospel, and the prospects of eternal life—eternal happiness—in the world to come. You are a partner in the carrying out of God's great scheme of human redemption. It is ours to preach the glorious gospel of Christ, and to lead men and women to become children of God. Such a state of blessedness passes all understanding, and will never be fully appreciated till we stand with the redeemed in the land of bliss!

**TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

When the church was established.  
 How people become members of the church.  
 How I can help the church to grow.  
 Christ the head of the church.

**QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text. and give reference.

**Comments on the Lesson**

The best plan of recitation for this lesson is to take a section at a time, and discuss it in the light of the comments. Try it.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, Place, and persons.  
 Give a discussion of what the church is.

Lesson XI—December 13, 1942

**THE VALUE OF THE CHURCH TO THE SOCIAL ORDER**

Matt. 5:13-16; Mark 12:13-17; 1 Pet. 2:13-17

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand: and it shineth unto all that are in the house.

16 Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

13 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, that they might catch him in talk.

14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Teacher, we know that thou art true, and carest not for any one; for thou regardest not the person of men, but of a truth teachest the way of God: Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why make ye trial of me? bring me a denarius, that I may see it.

16 And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's. And they marvelled greatly at him.

13 Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether to the king, as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evil-doers and for praise to them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

16 As free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bondservants of God.

17 Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Ye are the salt of the earth . . . Ye are the light of the world." (Matt. 5:13, 14.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Phil. 4:4-9.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

December 7. M

December 8. T

December 9. W

Salt and Light (Matt. 5:13-16)

Good Citizenship (Mark 12:13-17)

The Golden Rule (Luke 6:27-31)

December 10. T  
 December 11. F  
 December 12. S  
 December 13. S

Community Uplift (Acts 8:4-8)  
 Patriotism and Piety (Rom. 13:1-7)  
 The Law of Love (Rom. 13:8-10)  
 The Love of Law (Psalm 119:97-104)

### LESSON SETTINGS

*Time.*—For Matt. 5:13-16, probably A.D. 29; for Mark 12:13-17, A.D. 30 or 31; for 1 Pet. 2:13-17, probably between A.D. 63 and 67, though the date cannot be fixed with certainty.

*Places.*—A mountain in Galilee, Jerusalem, Babylon. The identity of the Babylon mentioned is a disputed point.

*Persons.*—Jesus, his disciples, the Pharisees and Herodians, Peter and the disciples to whom he wrote.

*Lesson Links*—The church is not a worldly institution; though it is in the world, it is not of the world. It is a spiritual institution, and was meant from the beginning to be an instrument under God to save men and women. Material developments and social betterment are mainly the by-products of the operations of the church.

In our thinking we cannot separate from one another the gospel, the church, the kingdom, and what we usually think of as Christianity. The church could not exist without the gospel, and the gospel depends on the church for its propagation, and the term kingdom describes the kind of government the church is under, and Christianity is a convenient term to apply to the whole scheme. Therefore in speaking of the value of the church to the social order, it is permissible to use either of the foregoing terms.

Christianity cleanses the mind and the heart of filthy and unclean thoughts and motives; it elevates our thoughts and desires to higher ideals. This reacts in such a way as to cause people to desire cleaner physical conditions and surroundings in which to live. Its benevolent teaching has made people more sympathetic toward human suffering; and, as a result, we have so many thousand benevolent institutions and agencies. These things are outstanding by-products of gospel teaching by the church. While the teaching of the gospel by the church created the sentiment that brought into existence these benevolent institutions and agencies, they have done much to rob the church by turning people's efforts to them, and away from the church. In various ways Christian teaching has elevated human thinking, and therefore has raised the standard of living. It has planted in the minds of people a higher conception of the value of human life. Where Christianity has no influence, human life is cheap.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### "Ye Are the Salt of the Earth" (Verse 13)

Salt is one of the indispensable things. "Salt is good: but if the salt have lost its saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace one with another." (Mark 9:50.) Nothing will take the place of salt; its uses are many, some of which are:

1. It serves as a seasoning; many foods, taste better, when salted. "Have salt in yourselves." Without the flavor of genuine Christian character, your profession of Christianity is repulsive to anyone of spiritual discernment. If your claims to being a Christian are repulsive to others, you need this gospel salt.

2. Salt is a purifier, a disinfectant. A genuine Christian character has a purifying influence on others.
3. Salt has preserving—saving—power. Real Christians are God's means of saving 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.)

The crude salt used in those days contained minerals which would not dissolve when placed on meat. Such residue was good for nothing—it was cast away. In this expression Jesus emphasizes the fact that a disciple may so lose his influence as to be good for nothing.

### **"Ye Are the Light of the World" (Verses 14-16)**

Men have a very different idea as to who are the real lights in the world. They would have pointed to the great generals and statesmen of Rome, the philosophers of Greece, or the rabbis of the Jews, as the real lights of the world; but Jesus passed by all these, and said to a group of obscure Galileans, "Ye are the light of the world." But in and of themselves they were incapable of generating any spiritual light for themselves or for others. Jesus is the source of spiritual light. "I am the light of the world." "When I am in the world, I am the light of the world." "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me may not abide in the darkness." (John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46.)

A Christian may give light by preaching and teaching the word of God. The apostles received the light by revelation. "Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4:6.) Without light from above a human being is in darkness. The apostles were in darkness till God shined in their hearts by inspiration to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, and through them this knowledge was revealed to us; in this way that light shines to us. We can be the light of the world by holding forth this light—"among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." (Phil. 2:15, 16.) A church is a candlestick, and a candlestick supports that which gives the light.

Also by living as the Lord directs, the Christian reflects the light. If a reflector gives off any light, it must be clean, it must be in its proper Place, and there must be nothing between it and the source of the light it is meant to reflect. Some professed Christians are not clean enough to reflect light, some are rarely where they should be, and often too many things come between them and the Lord, the source of light. What a Christian should do is plain; if he lives as he should live, his light will shine. The Lord did not say, shine your light, but, "Let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." If a Christian lives as he should live, his light can no more be hidden from view than can a city set on a hill.

### **Pharisees and Herodians Seek to Entrap Jesus (Mark 12:13, 14)**

The Pharisees had been enemies of Jesus from the beginning of his ministry; that hatred had so grown that they were now determined on his death. They had repeatedly tried to entrap him with

carefully thought-out questions. "And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, that they might catch him in talk." Matthew tells us that the Pharisees held a council, and sent to him their disciples with the Herodians. Their disciples were young men whom they had in training. They must have thought that Jesus would not be suspicious of the young men, and would talk to them more freely than to these old seasoned enemies. Luke says, "They watched him, and sent forth spies, who feigned themselves to be righteous, that they might take hold of his speech, so as to deliver him up to the rule and to the authority of the governor." If they could catch him in some treasonable talk, they would report him to the governor, and let the governor dispose of him as an enemy of the government; and they would not have to worry about him any more. But little is known about the Herodians, but it appears that they were more of a political party than a religious sect. It is said that they were partisans of the Herods, and wanted to get the Herod line of kings back in power, but subject to the Roman government as formerly, so that they would be under the direct rule of a Herod, instead of under a foreign governor appointed by the emperor. The Pharisees and Herodians had no love for one another, but men of dark designs can easily bury enmity to carry out a vicious scheme. They did not ask Jesus questions, that they might learn some useful lesson. On this occasion these enemies of Jesus tried new tactics. Instead of coming to him bristling for a fight, they pretend to be righteous and very desirous of having him settle a disputed question. They prefaced their question with flattery. "Teacher, we know that thou art true, and carest not for any one." They meant that he did not care for the rank or class of anyone, for they added, "For thou regardest not the person of men." On their hypocritical lips that great truth was a lie, for they meant not a word they said. By flattery, they thought to get him to speak freely. "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" They meant, is it according to the law of Moses? Many of the Jews had never become reconciled to paying tribute to Caesar; the Herodians favored paying the tribute. If Jesus answered, "It is not lawful," then he would be charged with treasonable utterances against Caesar. If he answered that such tribute was lawful, he would turn many of his friends against him. In their minds they had him in a dilemma from which there was no escape. They had never concocted a shrewder scheme to get Jesus into trouble.

### **Jesus Easily Escapes Their Dilemma (Verses 15-17)**

Matthew reports Jesus as replying, "Why make ye trial of me, ye hypocrites?" These crafty enemies saw at once that they had not deceived Jesus with their flattery. "Bring me a denarius, that I may see it." The denarius was a Roman coin worth about seventeen cents. Matthew reports these words: "Show me the tribute money." The denarius bore the image of the emperor under whose reign it was coined, together with his title in abbreviated words. Having examined the coin, Jesus asked, "Whose is this image and superscription?" Who issued this coin? Whose coin is it? He would have them commit themselves; they replied, "Caesar's." Without knowing it, they had got themselves into a dilemma. They had Caesar's money, and were using it in their business transactions; would they return it when Caesar called for it? Jesus so advised:

"Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." They used Caesar's money; they also had Caesar's protection from murder and robbery and other forms of lawlessness, and they used the roads which Caesar made. To accept the services of Caesar, and not bear their part of the expense, would be dishonest. The man today who evades paying his taxes is dishonest. Will a Christian practice such dishonesty? "And unto God the things that are God's." As the coin bore the image of Caesar, so we bear the image of God. If we are Christians, we bear his name also; and so the Christian bears both the image of God and his superscription. Give Caesar his coin; give God yourselves. To the Jew who opposed paying tribute money to Caesar, the question was, shall we obey God or Caesar? Jesus showed them that there was no such difficulty—no such alternative. It was not, obey God or Caesar; but, obey God and Caesar.

### **Obedience to Civil Authorities Enjoined (1 Pet. 2:13-17)**

The Christian owes first of all allegiance to God; in fact, God is his only master, and God's laws are his only guide. And yet he is here in the world, and the government under which he lives requires obedience to its laws. It is natural for a Christian to love the country in which he lives; and he must obey its laws, not simply because it is his patriotic duty to do so, but because it is his Christian duty—must obey his government because the Lord demands that he do so. Some unbelievers charged the Christians with treason against Rome because they preached that Christ was king. That charge was based on ignorance of the nature of Christ's kingdom. (Acts 17:6-8.) By punctual obedience to the laws of the land, the Christian would show the falsity of the charge. "For so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." The Christian should be more law-abiding than others. "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 should not conclude that his freedom in Christ releases him from obedience to the laws of the land; he must not use his freedom as an excuse for lawlessness. He must treat his fellow man with due respect. "Love the brotherhood," the church. We must manifest the spirit of him who gave himself up for the church. It seems natural that we love that of which we are a part. "Fear God." Be afraid to disobey him. "Honor the king"—honor those in authority. We honor a government by obeying its laws.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

A Christian's first duty is to God. Hence, if the government should require him to deny Christ, or do anything that is wrong, he must refuse. When the authorities in Jerusalem demanded that the apostles cease preaching and teaching in the name of Christ, the apostles with courage replied, "We must obey God rather than men." So must we.

We may sometimes feel that a certain law is useless, or too severe, or unnecessarily restrictive; but that is no excuse for our disobeying it. We must not take matters in our own hands, and undertake to be a law unto ourselves. To obey only those laws that we approve altogether, is not obedience at all. If it is the law, it is the law, and must be obeyed so long as it does not make demands that are sinful.

### TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

Why civil governments are needed.  
 Why governments should enforce their laws.  
 The Christian's duty to civil governments.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
 Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
 Discuss matters mentioned in Lesson Links.

#### Verse 13

What are the uses of salt?  
 In what way are Christians the salt of the earth?

#### Verses 14-16

Whom does the world consider the great lights?  
 Show who is the source of spiritual light.  
 Name and discuss the ways in which Christians give light.  
 Why do some professed Christians give no light?  
 Discuss the difference between trying to shine your light and letting your light shine.

#### Mark 12:13, 14

Who were the Pharisees, and who were the Herodians?  
 Discuss their plan to entrap Jesus in talk.  
 What was their intention?  
 How did they preface their question?  
 What was their question?

#### Verses 15-17

What did Jesus say to them?  
 Tell how he silenced them.  
 What about our paying taxes?

#### 1 Pet. 2:13-17

How reconcile the idea of obedience to both God and the government?  
 What gave the ignorant people the notion that Christians were against the government?  
 How could Christians silence that charge?  
 What laws of a government should a Christian disobey?  
 Discuss the reflections.

Lesson XII—December 20, 1942

### 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.*—"Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Isa. 11:1-9.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

December 14. M	Gabriel's Announcement to Mary (Luke 1:26-33, 33)
December 15. T	The Birth in Bethlehem (Luke 2; 1-7)
December 16. W	The Angels and the Shepherds (Luke 2:8-14)
December 17. T	The Shepherds and the Child (Luke 2:15-20)
December 18. F	The Word Was God (John 1:1-13)
December 19. S	The Word Made Flesh (John 1:14-13)
December 20. S	Song of the Virgin Mother (Luke 1:46-55)

### 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 it 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."—*Bible Encyclopedia*.

*Places.*—Bethlehem and some point in the hill country of the Bethlehem section. Bethlehem was, or is, a city about five miles south of Jerusalem.

*Persons.*—Joseph, Mary, the child Jesus, the angels, and the shepherds.

*Lesson Links*—When God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, he promised him that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. This promise was repeated when Abraham offered up Isaac; it was also made to Isaac and to Jacob. (Gen. 22:15-18; 26:1-4; 28:13, 14.) From Paul we learn that this promised seed was Jesus the Christ. (Gal. 3:16.) To Moses, Jehovah 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.) Other prophecies, too numerous to mention here, foretold his coming. Jesus came into the world at God's own appointed time; but the Jews, having built up a theory of their own as to the



meaning of the prophecies, rejected him as the Messiah because he did not fit their theory. Their miserable failure to form a correct theory from their study of prophecy should make us cautious. With their intense interest in the coining of the promised Messiah it is likely that they had memorized every prophecy that they thought referred to him; yet they did not know the prophecies. "For they that dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him." (Acts 13:27.) Their theory as to how the prophecies would be fulfilled so blinded them that they did not know that they themselves were fulfilling them.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

### **The Shepherds (Verse 8)**

These shepherds were, of course, natives of Bethlehem, for they had not come from some other city to be enrolled. A decree had gone out from Caesar that all the world should be enrolled. "And all went to enrol themselves, every one to his own city." Although Joseph lived in Nazareth, "he was of the house and family of David"; he therefore went to Bethlehem, his wife Mary with him, to be enrolled. When they arrived in Bethlehem all rooms in the inn were occupied—there was no room for them. "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." Let us not seek to make it appear that the innkeeper refused them room, because of any feeling against them or their unborn child, that he gave them no lodging in the inn; he simply had no vacant room. As the shepherds were watching their flocks by night out in the open country, it is almost certain that it was not wintertime. Adam Clarke says, "It was customary 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." They took turns in guarding their sheep from animals and thieves. No informed person now claims that Jesus was born on December 25. But it is interesting to think of these shepherds as watching their flocks on the same hills where David had watched his father's sheep, and to think that these shepherds might have been descendants of Jesse the father of David.

### **Shepherds Visited by Angels (Verses 9-14)**

Jesus came into the world to be the Savior of men, and to be King of kings and Lord of lords; and yet he was born of the poorest of parents and under the humblest of surroundings, and his birth was first announced to humble shepherds. These shepherds must have brought their flocks together for the night, so that they would be company to one another and could alternate in watching their flocks. For aught we know they might have been talking about the prophecies concerning the expected deliverer, when "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 calm and composed in the presence of a heavenly being. In the presence of a heavenly visitor, men feel helpless

and insignificant, and it is not to their discredit that they do. It certainly would be to their discredit, if, in the presence of a heavenly being, they felt calm and self-possessed, as they do in the presence of their equals. The glory of the Lord 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. What the angel said was of great importance to all nations—to all peoples. "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people." That message of great joy was delivered in these simple words: "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." The term "city of David" is not here used as a name for Bethlehem, but simply because Bethlehem was the native city of David. When city of David is used as a name, it applies to a section of Jerusalem. (See 2 Sam. 5:7-9, and numerous other places.) Notice the descriptive titles the angel applied to this newborn babe—Savior, Christ, Lord. But the salvation Jesus would bring was not the salvation the Jews were looking for. They expected salvation from Roman rule, and they expected their Messiah to sit on his throne in Jerusalem, and rule the whole earth. Such a prospect flattered their pride, and that may have had something to do with their interpretation of the prophecies. It is easy for people to fix up a theory that flatters their pride and suits what they want. It had not occurred to them that the Messiah would be a Savior for all people. The angel gave no hint that the Christ would save the Jews from Roman dominion; he was to save people from their sins. "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. 1:15.) He is to save people from sin here, and from the eternal consequences of sin in the world to come. This babe was the Christ, the expected Messiah. Messiah is Hebrew, and Christ is the corresponding Greek word for anointed. He is our anointed prophet, priest, and king. As prophet, he is God's spokesman; through him God speaks to us. (John 12:49, 50; Heb. 1:1, 2.) As priest, he is our avenue of approach to God. As Messiah, or Christ, he is also king—an absolute monarch.

The angel gave them a sign, so that they would know for certain when they found the right babe. "And this is the sign unto you; Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger." Then suddenly a multitude of the heavenly host was with the angel praising God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased." In verse 15 these are also called angels. In praising God they ascribed to him glory in the highest degree. There is peace between God and those in whom he is well pleased. There is also peace between those in whom God is well pleased. If there is a lack of peace between two men, one or both is at variance with God. There is no division, no strife, no fighting among men in whom God is well pleased. All wars, all strife in churches, all community broils, all family fusses are due to the fact that someone is not conducting himself in a way that is well-pleasing to God. Because Jesus makes peace between God and man, and sets forth principles upon which men can live at peace with one another, he is the Prince of peace.

### **The Shepherds Visited the Babe (Verses 15-19)**

When the angel delivered his message, and the heavenly host had sung their song of praise, the angels returned into heaven. The whole occurrence was very unlike man's way of doing things. Men would have made the announcement to the great men of Jerusalem in great pomp and splendor; but God chose lonely shepherds, watching their flocks away from the crowds, and made the announcement to them in language both simple and sublime. It is wonderful that these obscure men heard such a message and heard such singing, as no other mortals had ever heard.

What the angels said to these shepherds was in effect a command for them to go and seek out the child. Joyfully they made haste to do as the angel said. The statement, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem," shows that they were some distance from that city. When they found things as the angel said they would, they had no doubt that they had found the babe they were seeking; they then made known what the angel had said to them. Imagine how these shepherds delighted in making their announcement; people like to tell great things, and to relate wonderful experiences. "And all that heard it wondered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shepherds." They had cause for wonder. The circumstances were such that no one could doubt that angels had visited the shepherds, and told them the things the shepherds had reported. No such report had ever been made to a group of people; no one now can fully realize the wonder and awe that filled the hearts of these people. They knew that such demonstrations accompanying the birth of a babe meant something wonderful; but of course they could not then know the full significance of it all. In course of time, the others might cease to think much about what the shepherds had told, but not Mary—"Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart."

### **The Shepherds Return to Their Sheep (Verse 20)**

These shepherds knew that they had had an experience that no one else, great or small, had ever had. To them the deliverance of Israel seemed near, though they understood little, or nothing, of what that deliverance would be; but they returned to their occupation, "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen."

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

Nations are given to celebrating the birth of their great men; there is this one exception: Jesus came of the Jewish nation, but they do not celebrate his birth—they repudiated and crucified him. They have not yet repented of that national crime.

The desire to celebrate the birth of Jesus is easily understood. Such things belong to human 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 manner in which people celebrate the supposed birthday of Jesus. Had God meant for Us to celebrate the birth of Jesus, he would have given us the date of his birth, and also some instructions as to the manner of its observance.

Contrary to all human tendencies, God would have us celebrate the death of Jesus instead of his birth. In the Lord's Supper we show our memory of him and of his death; in observing the Lord's 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 manner in which it is done by so many people.

We cannot entirely escape the spirit of Christmas, nor need we try to do so. It is well to have a season of joy and good fellowship. It helps to cultivate the spirit of giving, even though the gifts are not always to the needy. We like to know that our friends remember us, and we like for them to know that they still have a place in our hearts. But no thoughtful person will think that he is celebrating the birth of Christ by making these gifts on December 25, and no one who thinks seriously will have such celebrations during Christmas as will his honor Christ, and thus bring condemnation upon himself.

To us angels are mysterious beings; and yet they have played an important part in all of God's plans concerning men, and in all his dealings with men. These mysterious beings 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 announced that Jesus would be born; an angel announced his birth, and a multitude of them sang praises to God; an angel directed Joseph to flee to Egypt with the infant Jesus; an angel directed Joseph to return with the child Jesus; angels appeared to Jesus 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.  
Jesus the Prince of Peace.

### QUESTIONS

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

#### Lesson Settings

Give time, places, and persons.  
Show that a certain promise made to Abraham referred to Christ.  
In what sense did the rulers in Jerusalem not know the prophets?

#### Verse 8

Tell about the shepherds, and the habits of shepherds.  
What does this show as to the time in which Christ was born?

#### Verses 9-14

In what surroundings was Jesus born?  
To whom was the announcement of his birth first made?  
How made?  
Why were the shepherds afraid?

Repeat what the angel said.  
Discuss the titles the angel applied to Jesus.  
Tell about the multitude of angels and their song.  
What is the cause of strife and war?

#### Verses 15-19

How did the birth of Jesus and its announcement differ from men's way of thinking?  
Tell about the shepherds' visit.  
How did they know that they had found the right babe?  
What effect did their report have on those who heard?  
What is said of Mary?

#### Verse 20

In what mood did the shepherds re' turn to their occupation?  
What deliverance would they think was near?  
Discuss the reflections.

## Lesson XIII—December 27, 1942

**DYNAMIC CHRISTIAN LIVING**

Rom. 12:1-3, 9-21

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren; by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service.

2 And 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.

3 For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith.

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another;

11 In diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing stedfastly in prayer;

13 Communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men.

19 Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.

20 But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

*GOLDEN TEXT.*—"Be not Overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (Rom. 12:21.)

*DEVOTIONAL READING.*—Phil. 3:7-14.

*DAILY BIBLE READINGS.*—

December 21. M

December 22. T

December 23. W

December 24. T

December 25. F

December 26. S

December 27. S

Living Sacrifices (Rom. 12:1-3)

Love of the Brethren (Rom. 12:9-16)

Overcoming Evil with Good (Rom. 12:17-21)

Wisdom in a Virile Life (James 3:13-18)

"Think on These Things" (Phil. 4:4-8)

The Life of Faith (Heb. 12:1, 2)

A Dynamic Christian (2 Tim. 4:1-8)

**LESSON SETTINGS**

*Time.*—A.D. 58 or 59.

*Place.*—Corinth.

*Persons.*—Paul and the brethren at Rome.

*Lesson Links*—In Rom. 1:16, 17 the apostle Paul states the theme of his letter to the Romans. The gospel is God's power for salvation, because in it is revealed a way in which sinners are made righteous. He then shows that all need the gospel; for all, both Jew and Gentile, have sinned and are under condemnation. No law—natural, civil, or divine—can justify him who violates it. When men violate a law, they are under its condemnation. That is fundamental and universal. The only hope of a sinner is to be forgiven;

and forgiveness is always a matter' of favor or grace, no matter how many conditions the sinner is called on to perform. God was extending his favor, or grace, to the people on Pentecost when he promised them remission of sins on condition that they repent and be baptized.

The brethren at Rome had obeyed from the heart, and were therefore made free from sin. They had been buried into death—death to the world and their former manner of life; and they had been raised to a new life. In becoming Christians they pledged themselves to be the faithful followers of Christ. The first eleven chapters of Romans contain the argumentative part of this great letter. Having finished his discussion of the fundamental principles of God's dealings with man, he exclaims, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever."

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

#### A Spiritual Service (Verse 1)

The "therefore" shows that the exhortation of this verse grows out of what Paul had said. Being an apostle of Christ, Paul could have commanded the brethren, but he approaches them in a tenderer way—"I beseech" [I beg] "you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice." Mercies are benefits extended to the needy, especially to the condemned criminal. The whole world was under condemnation with no means of escape till God graciously provided a means of escape. Herein was God's mercy shown in its highest degree. Due appreciation for such mercies should lead men to give their bodies a living sacrifice. That is not said, as some suppose, in contrast with dead sacrifices of the Old Testament, for no such sacrifices were then made—no man brought a dead animal as a sacrifice. Giving up the life of the animal was the sacrifice; and we must do that with our bodies, if the need arises. But having died to sin and been made alive with Christ, let us present our bodies in living, active service to God. "Holy." The Greek word from which we have "holy," is a word that the Greeks applied to things that had been devoted to their gods. In the Christian sense—in the use here made of the word—it signifies that our bodies are to be devoted to the service of God. "For ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body." (1 Cor. 6:20.) Though our bodies may have been used as instruments of sin, yet if we devote them to God and his service, they are acceptable to him. It will be noticed that Paul addresses the inner man, which controls the actions of the body. The use we make of our bodies determines whose servants we are. "Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? .... Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof: neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your

members as instruments of righteousness unto God." (Rom. 6:12, 13, 16.) "Which is your spiritual service," or worship; or, "belonging to the reason." Though the body is the instrument of service to God, all sincere service is spiritual. Baptism has sometimes mistakenly been called a carnal ordinance, but there are no carnal ordinances in Christianity. If baptism is called carnal because the body is engaged in the act, then everything we do in obedience to God is carnal, for there is not one command that we can obey except through the instrumentality of the body. A pretended obedience might be called carnal, but obedience that comes from a sincere heart is a spiritual service.

### **"Be Ye Transformed" (Verse 2)**

Christians have been called out of the world in a moral and spiritual sense; they are dead to the world, but alive to God. The new life must be lived according to the gospel, but there is always danger of drifting back into worldly ways. The Hebrews committed a great sin against God by wanting a king, so as to be like the nations around them. That weakness possesses some of God's people even now. Other religious bodies do thus and so, and some of God's people want to be like them. But the command is plain: "Be not fashioned according to this world." Do not therefore seek to be like the world. There is another danger: We unconsciously drift into the ways and habits of those with whom we are surrounded, unless we are constantly on our guard. It requires an effort to keep our lives from being fashioned according to this world. The easiest way to keep from such desires and influences is to have our heart set on a higher goal. "Be ye transformed." This requires a decided change in our manner of living. Compare transformed and transfigured—both are translations of the same Greek word. How is this transformation, or transfiguration, to be accomplished? Not by merely making some good resolutions. A life cannot be transformed on the same old stock of ideas and ideals. We live out in our lives what we have in our minds and hearts. Thought controls the life. Renew your mind; fill it with God's thoughts. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8, 9.) Study the word of God; fill your mind with God's thoughts, and let them transform your life. In this way you will prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

### **"Think Soberly" (Verse 3)**

A true Christian is not puffed up; he does not arrogate to himself a superiority over his brethren; nor does he claim to possess a superior quality of humility. "Be not wise in your own conceits." "Be not highminded, but fear." "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded." (1 Tim. 6:17.) "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." (Prov. 16:18.) The grace that was given to Paul was the grace of apostleship, and on his authority as an apostle, he issued this

command. To think soberly is put in contrast with thinking too highly of one's self. Have a just estimate of yourself, and of what you can do. Do not be drunk on egotism.

### **Let Love Be Sincere (Verses 9, 10)**

A mere pretense of love is hypocrisy; it is mere flattery, and all flattery is hypocrisy. "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." That admonition is of wide application. We should abhor evil on general principles, and especially should we abhor it in ourselves. Seize every good thought and every good quality. "Hate the evil, and love the good." (Amos 5:15.) The one who does not hate the evil does not love the good. Instead of a pretended love, which is hypocrisy, let your love of the brethren be of a tender affectionate nature. "In honor preferring one another." In all the relations of life we should prefer the brethren. There is something wrong with a professed Christian who chooses sinners for his associates.

### **Sundry Admonitions (Verses 11-16)**

Christianity touches every phase of human life—our thoughts, our ideals, our emotions, and our conduct. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds); casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:3-5.) In our service to God we must not be slothful, but fervent in spirit. The hope of final victory and the final reward causes rejoicing. "Patient in tribulation." Patience is steadfastness—that quality that holds on even when everything about us goes wrong, even when enemies persecute us beyond measure. The person who quits because of some wrong or fancied wrong is lacking in patience—he is lacking in one of the essential virtues. And prayer is an essential part of the Christian's life, and no Christian should allow any theory to hinder his prayers. And he should know that his prayers must be of faith and from an obedient heart. And selfishness and stinginess have no place in the Christian character. "Communicating to the necessities of the saints" is helping the saints in their needs; that is one of the things that Christians must do. "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." (Gal. 6:10.) This willingness to help those who are in need leads to hospitality. Share with others their joys and their sorrows, and be of this same mind toward one another. And certainly no Christian should assume an air of superiority over his brother; condescend to the lowly.

### **"Avenge Not Yourselves" (Verses 17-21)**

One of the faults of the average human being is he often desires to avenge himself—to return evil for evil; that disposition leads to much unpleasantness, and sometimes it leads to serious trouble. No benefit ever comes of such retaliation. "Render to no man evil for evil." The Christian should remember that this is a positive



command of God. He cannot disregard it without sinning; if he does, he has put himself on a level with the man who has sinned against him. While we are not to fashion our lives after worldly ways, we must recognize the fact that the world has certain standards of honor; to violate these standards of honor is to lose the respect of the world, and thereby lose our influence for good. Hence, in so far as these standards are right, we should respect them. "Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men." Notice how Paul emphasizes the exhortation to peace: "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men." A Christian is not quarrelsome; he is not a troublemaker; but Paul's own life, as well as the lives of many other saints, shows that it is not possible to be at peace with all men. We cannot sacrifice the right, or do wrong, in order to be at peace; we cannot preach a mutilated gospel in order to have peace; but we can give up our own preferences and conveniences for the sake of peace. If a man does us a wrong, even an injury, we must not make it a personal matter, and seek to inflict punishment on him with our own hands. God is the one to take vengeance on the wrongdoer; for it is he who said, "Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense." The next chapter shows that one method the Lord uses to inflict punishment on the wrongdoer is the civil authority. "But if thou do that which is evil., be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil." Do not therefore execute vengeance with your own hand. On the contrary, "if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink." This may melt down his enmity, as fire melts things; but fire, instead of melting, hardens some things; so with good treatment. The history of Jesus, as well as that of Paul himself, shows this to be true. Do not let your own evil. impulses overcome you; overcome them by a resolute determination to do good.

### **SOME REFLECTIONS**

An active Christian is a powerful force in leading others to Christ. "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."

The greatest moralizing and civilizing force any community can have is a group of faithful Christians. A church is pitifully short in its duties, if it is not a greater force for good than any institution of man's making.

When the well-informed and faithful members of a church begin to yield to the demands of the worldly element for the sake of peace, it begins to lose its force for good. When the worldly-minded begin to dominate a church, the Lord goes out; and when he goes out, all power for good is gone. A church, which, by worldliness, has driven the Lord out, has become a synagogue of Satan. Yield not to the forces of evil.

### **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

- What is Christian living?
- How character is transformed.
- How a Christian saves others.
- How churches lose power for good.

**QUESTIONS**

Tell where the lesson is found.  
Repeat the Golden Text, and give reference.

**Lesson Settings**

Give time, Place, and persons.  
Repeat Rom. 1:16, 17.  
Why do all men need the gospel?  
How do people become Christians?

**Verse 1**

Repeat verse 1 of our lesson.  
What are we to present, and how?  
In what way is it a spiritual service?

**Verse 2**

Repeat verse 2.  
Discuss: "Be not fashioned according to this world."  
How may we violate that injunction?  
Discuss: "Be ye transformed."  
How transformed?  
Discuss the power of thoughts and ideals.

**Verse 3**

Discuss verse 3.

**Verses 9, 10**

Repeat verses 9, 10.  
Why abhor, or hate, evil.?

**Verses 11-16**

In this war against sin, to what extent are we to conquer?  
Discuss each injunction in these verses.

**Verses 17-21**

Repeat and discuss verse 17.  
Repeat and discuss verse 18.  
Who is the right person to take vengeance, and why?  
How does the Lord, in some cases, take vengeance?  
Repeat verse 20.  
Give meaning of verse 21.  
Discuss the reflections.