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G O S P E L   A D V O C A T E   S E R I E S

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# Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary

ON  
UNIFORM BIBLE LESSONS  
FOR THE  
CHURCHES OF CHRIST

1975

This commentary is based on the Uniform Bible Lessons for the Churches of Christ.

FIFTY-FOURTH ANNUAL VOLUME

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## PREFACE

With this volume, the Gospel Advocate Company presents its fifty-fourth ANNUAL LESSON COMMENTARY. This annual bound-volume commentary, based on a uniform Sunday school study of the Scriptures, began with E. A. Elam, and was known as Elam's Notes (1922-1931); and thereafter, the commentary has been known as the ANNUAL LESSON COMMENTARY. The commentary has been edited from year to year over this long period of time by various men who have been known for their soundness in the faith and also for their scholarship—men like Elam, Boles, Hinds, and Whiteside, to mention those who have gone on to their reward.

The four quarters of the 1975 ANNUAL LESSON COMMENTARY divide into the following studies: (1) "Studies in Acts of Apostles"; (2) "Israel's Period of Conquest"; (3) "Living For Christ"; and (4) "Living For Christ", continued. The aim of the first-quarter study—"Studies in Acts of Apostles"—is to examine the details of the Lord's church in Acts, and to catch a glimpse of the zeal, faithfulness, and fervor of the early disciples. The aim of the second-quarter study—"Israel's Period of Conquest"—is to study some of the outstanding events recorded in the books of Joshua, Judges, First Samuel, and Second Samuel; to observe the actions of the people, good and bad, who participate therein; and to find in these historic occurrences lessons applicable to Christian's today. The aim of the third-quarter study—"Living For Christ"—is to study in detail those qualities of heart and characteristics of life which all who profess to be Christians must acquire and exhibit in order to enjoy the approval of our Lord here, and eternal life hereafter. The aim of the fourth-quarter—"Living For Christ", continued—is to continue to study in detail those qualities of heart and characteristics of life which all who profess to be Christians must acquire and exhibit in order to enjoy the approval of our Lord here, and eternal life hereafter.

The present author of this 1975 volume sincerely hopes that the lessons presented may contribute significantly to the overall knowledge of those members of the church who will be studying the lessons from Sunday to Sunday. He is not unaware of his limitations. He is not an authority in the Bible by any stretch of the imagination, but he believes the Bible is authoritative—the only absolute and correct and viable standard of authority in the world today. He is firmly committed to the concept that a more thorough understanding of the Word can be had when each scripture study is placed in its historical perspective, and he has made some effort to this end.

The author has prepared these lessons under the greatest sorrow of his entire life, but this sorrow has been a strong motivation for him to do his best. He hopes that time will show that he has had a reasonable measure of success, at least.

The Author

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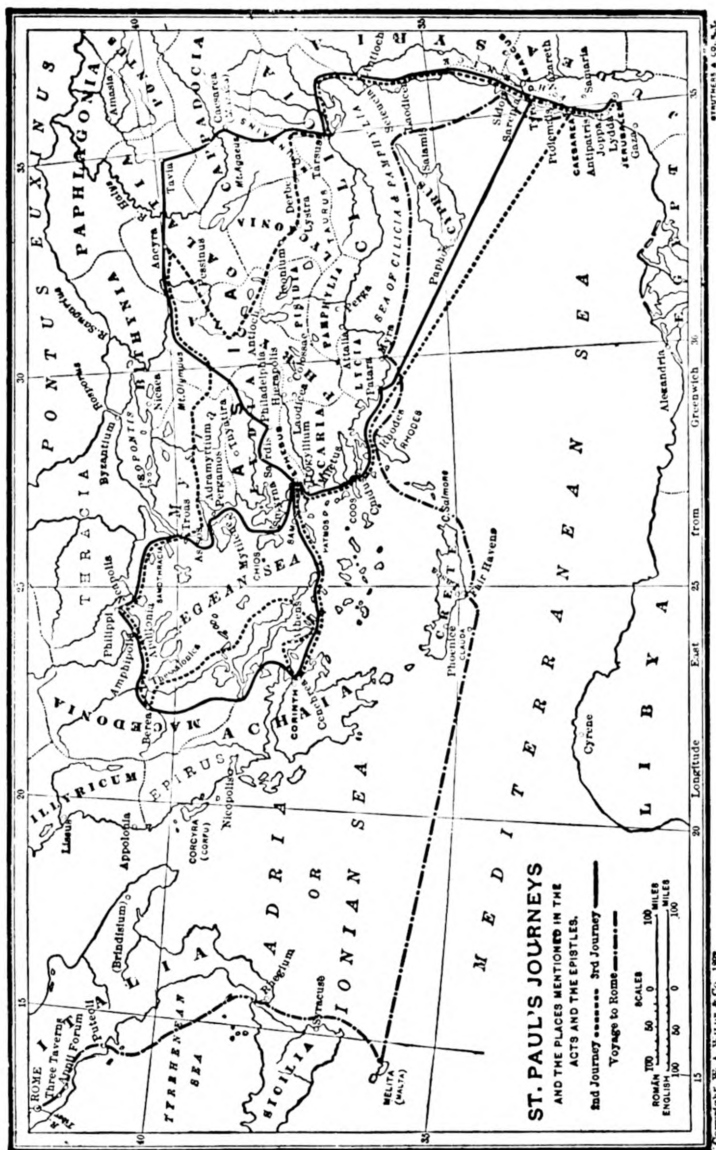
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FIRST QUARTER  
STUDIES IN ACTS OF APOSTLES  
(Part 2)

AIM.—To examine the details of our Lord's church in Acts, and to catch a glimpse of the zeal, faithfulness and fervor of the early disciples.

Lesson I—January 5, 1975

ANTIOCH, A BASE FOR GENTILE EVANGELISM

Lesson Text  
Acts 13:1-12

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.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

5 And when they were at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John as their attendant.

6 And when they had gone through the whole island unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Jesus;

7 Who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of understanding. The same called unto him Barnabas and Saul, and sought to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith.

9 But Saul, who is also *called* Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all guile and all villainy, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

12 Then the proconsul, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” (Acts 13:46.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 15:30-35.

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December 30.	M.....	Gospel Intended for All (Mark 16:15-20)
December 31.	T.....	Divine Authority for the Gospel (Matt. 28:18-20)
January 1.	W.....	No Barriers in Christ (Gal. 3:23-29)
January 2.	T.....	The World-wide Field (Acts 1:1-8)
January 3.	F.....	Paul, Minister to the Gentiles (Rom. 15:8-21)
January 4.	S.....	Mission of Paul and Barnabas (Gal. 2:1-10)
January 5.	S.....	Paul's Sense of Obligation (Rom. 1:8-17)

TIME.—About A.D. 47.

PLACES.—Antioch and Seleucia in Syria; the island of Cyprus; and Perga of Pamphylia.

PERSONS.—The prophets in the church at Antioch, including Barnabas and Saul; Barnabas, Saul, and John Mark; Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus; and Bar-Jesus, a Jew and a sorcerer.

## Introduction

The lesson subjects for the first quarter of 1975 are taken from the Acts of the Apostles. The motivating aim in the selection of the particular topics for the study is that the student may examine some of the details characteristic of the church as set forth in Acts, and that he may thereby, be informed and impressed with the zeal, faithfulness, and fervor of the early disciples. Such dedication as was characteristic of Christians then should be characteristic of Christians today.

Luke, a Greek and the beloved physician, was the author of the book of Acts of the Apostles, which book is a graphic history of the church during its first thirty-five or so years of existence. Except for Genesis, as written by Moses, no history is so remarkable for its sweeping span of events and details. Genesis and Acts are remarkable for the events and details that are recorded, and they are just as remarkable for the multitudes of events and details which were not recorded. Luke refrained from writing a book that "the world could not contain," and instead he recorded for all people of all times only the events and details necessary as vital links in God's inspired communication to man.

Luke's history of the Acts of the Apostles divides into two categories: the first category consists of the first twelve chapters with the apostle Peter as the central figure; and the second category consists of the remaining sixteen chapters with the apostle Paul as the central figure. The lessons from Acts for this quarter's study turn on the apostle Paul and the Gentile churches, beginning necessarily with the great Gentile church in Antioch of Syria.

No man has ever worked more, suffered more, and accomplished more in the Lord's church than the apostle Paul, who was first known as Saul. Paul had been a Christian for some fourteen years when he and Barnabas were separated by the Holy Spirit for the first missionary journey. Saul, or Paul, was a native of Tarsus of the province of Cilicia. He was born of strict Jewish parents of the tribe of Ben-

jamin. When he was a youth he studied at the feet of the wise and moderate Gamaliel. Saul, however, partook more of the sectarian spirit of the conservative Shammai School. If Saul ever came in contact with the Lord during his personal ministry he was much too zealous for the traditions of the fathers and much too intolerant in spirit to give serious consideration to the possibility that Jesus could be the promised Messiah. He wrote the Corinthians, "We have known Christ after the flesh" (2 Cor. 5:16), and some commentators think that the statement indicates that he had come in contact with Christ prior to his experience on the way to Damascus, but no person could really be sure that such was the intended thought to be conveyed by the statement.

Saul was probably as much as ten years younger than Christ. From the time of his conversion till the time of his first missionary journey involved a period of some fourteen years. During those years Saul was actively engaged in preaching Christ. An overview of his activities during the fourteen year period include the following:

1. He was baptized into Christ in Damascus in about A.D. 33. (Acts 9:1-19.)

2. He remained in Damascus certain days during which time he proclaimed in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. (Acts 9:19-22.)

3. He then went away to Arabia. (Gal. 1:17.)

4. He returned from Arabia to Damascus. (Gal. 1:17.)

5. He then, after three years, went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and tarried with him fifteen days. (Gal. 1:18.)

6. He then went to the region of Syria and Cilicia. His native city was Tarsus of the province of Cilicia. (Gal. 1:21.)

7. While in the region of Syria and Cilicia, Barnabas sought him out and brought him to Antioch of Syria where they continued for a whole year. (Acts 11:25, 26.)

8. Saul, after this, went with



Barnabas to Jerusalem of Judea to bear a bounty of relief to the brethren there. (Acts 29:27-30.)

9. When they had fulfilled their ministrations in Jerusalem, they returned to Antioch, carrying with them John whose surname was Mark. (Acts 12:25.)

### The Golden Text

*"Lo, we turn to the Gentiles."*

The gospel was first preached to the Jews, not for their merit's sake, but because God who, despite the unfaithfulness of man, remains faithful to all his promises. The gospel was to be preached to the Jews first and then to the Greeks. The Jews in Antioch of Pisidia were "filled with jealousy" when they saw the Gentile multitudes that had gathered to hear Paul and his companions speak concerning the Christ. "Thus they contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and blasphemed." They thrust the word of God from themselves and judged themselves "unworthy of eternal life."

Barnabas and Saul were thus in Antioch of Syria when they were separated by the Holy Spirit for a special missionary work. The lesson that follows turns on the scope, problems, and accomplishments of that missionary journey by Barnabas and Saul.

Paul's pronouncement against those Jews was plain, bold, and for that matter drastic. His statement, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles," meant that the opportunities that had been lavishly bestowed upon the Jews had now passed to the Gentiles. Opportunity invariably passes from those who judge themselves unworthy of it; and just so, opportunity invariably passes to those who are ready for it. Isaiah had previously written, "It is too light a thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." (Isa. 49:6.)

### The Text Explained

**Barnabas and Paul Separated for a Special Work**  
(Acts 13:1-3)

*Now there were at Antioch, in the church that teas 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. 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. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.*

Luke introduced the Gentile church at Antioch of Syria, and matters pertaining to how it began, in the first section of his history. (Acts 11:19-30.) He recorded how that those who were scattered abroad at the stoning of Stephen travelled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, but *they spake the work only to the Jews*. He further recorded how that there were some men of Cyprus and Cyrene who, when they came to Antioch,

*spake the word to the Greeks also*. The natural inference here is that the news of Peter's having been sent to preach to Cornelius and his household had reached them. They, therefore, unlike the former disciples who had come to Antioch, *preached the gospel to the Gentiles as well as the Jews*. Luke also recorded how that a great number of the Greeks in Antioch believed and turned to the Lord; how that the report of their conversion reached the ears of the church in Jerusalem; how that the church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch to assist in the work; how that Barnabas sought out Saul and brought him to Antioch where they continued for a whole year; how that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch; and how that Barnabas and Saul had borne a bounty to the saints in Jerusalem and had returned to Antioch.

In Paul's day Antioch, "the queen of the east," the third city of the Roman world was the capital of the Roman Province of Syria. Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch were the

three chief cities, and in that order. Located on the bank of the Orontes, Antioch was about fifteen miles from the Mediterranean Sea and about three hundred miles from Jerusalem. The city was founded in 301 B.C. by Seleucus Nicator who named it for his father Antiochus. He also bounded and fortified Seleucia, some sixteen miles away, to be the port of his new city. This very Antioch was destined, in time, to become the cradle of Gentile Christianity. The flourishing church at Antioch which sprang up almost overnight was to the Gentile world what the church in Jerusalem was to the Jewish world.

In the church at Antioch, as per the text, there were prophets and teachers. The discrimination between "prophets" and "teachers" lay in the fact that the prophets taught by inspiration; whereas, the teachers at times taught by inspiration and at other times they taught without inspiration. Luke placed Barnabas at the head of the list of the prophets and teachers at Antioch, thereby denoting that Barnabas was the best known and thus had the greatest influence of all those men, not only in Antioch but among the churches at large. Saul's name appears last on the list, and this fact indicates that he was the least known at that time, and therefore, had less influence than the other men at Antioch and also among the churches at large.

Symeon, Lucius, and Manaen had been the main leaders at Antioch while Barnabas and Saul were on their journey to Jerusalem, and those three men remained at Antioch in the same capacity of leadership after Barnabas and Saul had been separated for special missionary work abroad.

As to the work of "ministering and fasting" which was underway at the time the Holy Spirit separated Barnabas and Saul, Luke gives no details; but the work was in behalf of some vital need, trouble, or calamity in the church at Antioch. The "ministering and fasting" did not pertain to the public worship.

The statement in the text, "the work whereunto I have called them," indicates that the Holy Spirit had previously outlined for

Barnabas and Saul a special work, if not in detail, certainly in general terms. At the time of Saul's conversion, for instance, the Lord said to Ananias: "Go thy way; for he [Saul] is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:13.) At Antioch, then, the Holy Spirit directed that Barnabas and Saul should be separated from the church at Antioch and caused to enter upon a special evangelistic program that would carry them to peoples of distant places and lands. Barnabas and Saul were to go forth on a worldwide, so to speak, mission for the gospel of Christ. A point of emphasis is that they went forth with the full endorsement of the church at Antioch. No such unanimous endorsement for so great a spiritual mission could have been obtained from the church in Jerusalem. The composition and attitude of those who made up the membership of the Jerusalem church—their race bias and prejudice—would not have permitted such a wholehearted endorsement of such an all-inclusive worldwide-mission for the gospel of Christ. Another point of emphasis is that Barnabas and Saul went out as missionaries of the church at Antioch, and they returned to that same church to report what the Lord had done or accomplished through them.

Prior to the departure of Barnabas and Saul a special ceremony was held—a ceremony of fasting, prayer, and the laying on of hands. The "laying-on-of-hands" was not for the purpose of conferring gifts of the Holy Spirit, but it was to indicate the solemnity of the undertaking and their fellowship with Barnabas and Saul in the work to be done. The ceremony served to impress all with the solemn nature of the mission, with the trust and esteem which they held for those men chosen for the mission, and with their petition to God for his providence, guidance, and protection of the men as they pursued the mission. Today, in the appointment of elders or the separating of an evangelist and his family for a mission

field, such ceremonies are in order. Often such appointments and undertakings are set forth by means of only casual announcements. The Lord's work should not be projected or set forth in such a casual or frivolous way.

**Barnabas and Saul Travel to the  
Island of Cyprus**  
(Acts 13:4-5)

*So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they had also John as their attendant.*

Barnabas and Saul, with John Mark as their attendant and being led by the Holy Spirit, left Antioch and journeyed sixteen miles down to Seleucia, the seaport of Antioch. From Seleucia they embarked and sailed to the island of Cyprus. The choice of Cyprus as the first field for their worldwide efforts was natural since it was the home of Barnabas and since there were already some Christians there. (Acts 11:20.)

Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean Sea. Only Sardinia and Sicily are larger. The island at its greatest length is about one hundred forty miles, and its greatest width is sixty miles. It lies sixty miles from the Syrian coast and forty-six miles from the nearest point of the Cilician coast.

Barnabas and Saul first preached in the synagogues of the port city of Salamis. Luke leaves the reader to conjecture as to the reception of the gospel, or the want of reception, by the Jews of the synagogues in that city. He also leaves for conjecture the possible extent to which these men may have preached to the Gentiles.

Luke's silence as to the results of the preaching in Salamis and throughout the whole island to Paphos may very well indicate that the results were not especially encouraging, if not extremely discouraging. One could wish that Luke had recorded more details of the work of Barnabas and Saul as they preached the gospel in Salamis and throughout the whole island of Cyprus, but in keeping with his aim or purpose, Luke recorded in a graphic

way only those events and details that were necessary as vital links in God's inspired communication to man.

**Barnabas and Saul Encounter Elymas**  
(Acts 13:6-8)

*And when they had gone through the whole island unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Jesus; who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of understanding. The same called unto him Barnabas and Saul, and sought to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith.*

Luke's first reference to any results from the preaching of Barnabas and Saul was in connection with Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of the island—an office similar to a governor of a modern colony. This man was of considerable prominence, and he had been under the spell of a Jewish sorcerer named Elymas Bar-Jesus.

Luke stated that the proconsul was "a man of understanding." Some commentators conclude that the fact that he had chosen a Jew as his consultant for oracles and auguries in important matters was an indication that he recognized that there had been reliable prophets of that nation. The likelihood is, however, that Luke meant only that his "understanding" was reflected in his sending for Barnabas and Saul. To say the least of matters. Sergius Paulus received word of the preaching of Barnabas and Saul and straightway sent for them. He was interested in learning about the man. Jesus of Nazareth. When Barnabas and Saul spoke the word of God to him, Elymas withstood them in a strong and deliberate effort to turn him aside from the faith. Like Demetrius, the silversmith of a later time, Elymas was interested only in his position of influence with Sergius Paulus and in the financial gain that he derived therefrom. Elymas had no conscience—no regard for truth and righteousness, and no fear of a sovereign God. He denied that Barnabas and Saul were men of God. He

contradicted the word which they spoke.

**Saul Calls Down a Curse upon Elymas**

(Acts 13:9-11)

*But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on him, and said, O full of all guile and all villainy, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.*

When Elymas so strongly withstood the word which Barnabas and Saul spoke, Saul, filled with righteous indignation and assuming the role of spokesman, declared that Elymas was full of all guile and villainy, a son of the devil, and an enemy of all righteousness. Saul then with miraculous power struck the villain Elymas so blind that for a season he could not detect the rays of the sun. Thus, in a state of prostrate humiliation, Elymas went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

This was the turning point in Saul's career. From that time forward Luke wrote not of Barnabas and Saul; but rather, he wrote of Paul and Barnabas or of Paul and his company. Paul had performed a miracle of terror—a miracle which was to have a profound influence on the position and influence of the man as an apostle from that day forward to the end of his ministry. The news of the miracle was destined to accompany Paul wherever he went. No miracle was ever worked without a definite purpose. In this case the purpose was twofold: first, the miracle was calculated to confirm the word before Sergius Paulus and of all who would hear of it and see the state of Elymas; and second, the miracle was calculated to project Paul to his rightful position as the chosen and chief apostle to the Gentiles.

There is no indication that at that time Barnabas entertained any jealousy or resentment toward Paul in his new role of leadership.

This is understandable when considered in the light of the magnanimous spirit and character of Barnabas. Then too, Barnabas had known from the beginning that Saul had been chosen by Christ, as a child born out of due season, to be an apostle to the Gentiles.

The Old Testament miracles were often miracles of terror, but the miracles of the New Testament, with but two exceptions, were miracles of grace. The miracles of Christ were revelations of grace, except for his miracle of judgment against a tree which was to serve as a warning against the unfruitful nation of Israel. Only two miracles of the apostles were miracles of judgment or terror. These two were the death of Ananias and Sapphira and the blindness of Elymas.

Many within the church today speak of miracles in very loose and inaccurate terms. The youth of the church are being told that one can see a miracle every time a rose buds or a woman gives birth to a baby. Now, a person can certainly see the power of God in the budding of a rose and in the birthing of a baby, but in neither case does he see a miracle. Were the miracles of Christ only those powers of God that are observable daily in the operation of nature? If so, Jesus Christ performed no miracles. An acceptable definition of a miracle has been given by Milligan. He wrote: "A miracle may be defined as an extra-ordinary manifestation of divine power operating either independently of the laws and forces of nature, as in the original creation, or in opposition to them, as in the separation of the waters of the Red Sea, or in connection and in harmony with them, as in the Noahic deluge." In short, Paul's blinding of Elymas was no ordinary manifestation of divine power.

In light of Paul's miracle of judgment against Elymas, a statement of his in his second epistle to the Corinthians may very well take on new or added meaning. When commenting on a certain party at Corinth that had challenged his apostleship, opposed and blasphemed his work, and borne false charges against him, Paul wrote: "This is the third time I am coming to you. At the mouth of two wit-

nesses or three shall every word be established. I have said beforehand, and I do say beforehand, as when I was present the second time, so now, being absent, to them that have sinned heretofore, and to all the rest, that, if I come again, *I will not spare*; seeing that ye seek proof of Christ that speaketh in me." (2 Cor. 13:1-3.) Relative to the statement, "I will not spare," did Paul imply more than a verbal confrontation and public condemnation of the evil one? May he have meant that he would perform a miracle of judgment in much the same way that he did in the case of Elymas? Could the opposition party have heard previously of Paul's miracle

of judgment against Elymas and thus understood Paul's statement in that light? One could not be dogmatic in an affirmation that such Paul had in mind, but the thought is worthy of some consideration.

The Effect of the Miracle of Judgment upon Elymas (Acts 13:12)

*Then the proconsul, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.*

Luke records that the proconsul believed when he saw what was done to Elymas. The proconsul was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson? Repeat the golden text. Give time, place, and persons.

Introduction

What is the aim of the lessons for this quarter?  
 Who is the author of Acts?  
 Discuss the remarkable things about the book.  
 Into what two categories does Luke divide the history recorded in Acts?  
 How long had Paul been a Christian when he and Barnabas went on the first missionary journey?  
 Review Paul's activities from the time of his conversion until he went on the first journey.

The Golden Text

Why was the gospel preached first to the Jews?  
 Why did Paul and Barnabas "turn to the Gentiles"?  
 How did the Jews in Antioch judge "themselves unworthy of eternal life"?  
 What had Isaiah prophesied concerning the relationship of Christ to the Gentiles?

Barnabas and Paul Separated for a Special Work

In what chapter does Luke tell about the establishment of the first Gentile church?  
 Why did the brethren from Cyprus and Cyrene preach to the Gentiles at Antioch?  
 How did the church in Jerusalem assist in the work?

Who encouraged Saul to go to Antioch? Tell about the success of Barnabas and Saul at Antioch.  
 Discuss how Barnabas and Saul were separated for their first journey.  
 What was the purpose of the special service of fasting, prayer, and the laying on of hands, prior to the church's sending them on the journey?

Barnabas and Saul Travel to the Island of Cyprus

Tell about the location and size of the island of Cyprus.  
 Where did Barnabas and Saul do their first preaching?  
 What were the results of their preaching?

Barnabas and Saul Encounter Elymas

Describe the two men they encountered at Paphos.  
 What did Elymas try to do? Why?

Saul Calls Down a Curse upon Elymas

What did Saul say and do to Elymas?  
 What was accomplished by the miracle of terror?  
 How was this miracle different from most of the miracles of the New Testament?  
 What is the danger of referring to some things as miracles that are not actually miracles?  
 What may Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians 13:1-3 very well mean?

The Effect of the Miracle of Judgment upon Elymas

Was Sergius Paulus influenced by the miracle?  
 Did he believe?

Lesson II—January 12, 1975

OPPOSITION IN ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA

Lesson Text

Acts 13:14, 15, 44-52

14 But they, passing through from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue

on the sabbath day, and sat down.  
 15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of

the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

44 And the next sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God.

45 But when the Jews saw' the multitudes, they were filled with jealousy, and contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and blasphemed.

46 And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying,

I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles,

That thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth.

48 And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

49 And the word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region.

50 But the Jews urged on the devout women of honorable estate, and the chief men of the city, and stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and cast them out of their borders.

51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium.

52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers.” (Acts 13:32.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 13:16-39.

### Daily Bible Readings

January 6.	M.....	Persecution to Be Expected (Matt. 5 : 1 - 15)
January 7.	T.....	Reward of Suffering (Acts 5:33-42)
January 8.	W.....	Preaching Among the Jews (Acts 13:44-52)
January 9.	T.....	Preaching Among the Gentiles (Acts 13:44-52)
January 10.	F.....	Jewish Opposition (Acts 14:19-21)
January 11.	S.....	Paul, Minister of Christ (2 Cor. 11 : 23 - 31)
January 12.	S.....	Divine Assurance (Psalms 46 : 1 - 7)

TIME.—A.D. 47, sometime later than the time for the prior lesson.

PLACE.—Antioch of Pisidia.

PERSONS.—Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark; Jews and Gentiles; devout women of honorable estate, and the chief men of the city.

### Introduction

As was set forth in the prior lesson, Barnabas and Saul, on being separated by the Holy Spirit for a missionary program of work, first sailed in company with John Mark to the island of Cyprus. This island was Barnabas' native land. They first preached to the synagogues of the Jews in the city of Salamis and then throughout the whole island to and including the city of Paphos.

Luke left the reader to conjecture for the most part the success, or want of success, that accompanied those men as they preached the gospel throughout the island. He did record the case of Sergius Paulus. When Paul and his company had finished their work on the island of Cyprus, they embarked at

the city of Paphos, and sailed in a northwest direction on the Mediterranean Sea, and then up the Cestus River to Perga of Pamphylia, a province in Asia Minor.

Upon the arrival of Paul and his company at Perga of Pamphylia, "John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem." (Acts 13:13.) Luke did not explain why, but the likelihood is that John Mark feared to make the dangerous journey contemplated by Paul and Barnabas. To say the least of matters, Paul and Barnabas later had a sharp contention and separation over the matter of whether or not John Mark should be allowed to accompany them on their second journey. (Acts 15:36-40.) The

fact of the separation was certainly indicative of Paul's dissatisfaction and unhappiness over Mark's having forsaken them at Perga of Pamphylia.

In time though, John Mark was fully restored unto Paul's favor. In his Colossian epistle Paul wrote:

"Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas." To Timothy, Paul wrote: "Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering." (Col. 10:10; 2 Tim. 4:11.)

### The Golden Text

*"And we bring good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers."*

The words of the golden text were spoken by Paul to the synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia. Paul and Barnabas attended the synagogue worship on the very first sabbath after their arrival in that city. After the reading from the law and from the prophets as was customary in the synagogue worship, the rulers of the synagogue said to Paul and Barnabas: "Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." (Acts 13:15.) Paul stood up, beckoned with his hand—a characteristic gesture of his—and spoke.

Paul's speech to that synagogue was very similar in approach to the speech that Stephen had made before the Sanhedrin more than fourteen years before. At that time, and on hearing Stephen, Paul had been so outraged along with the members of the Sanhedrin that he consented to Stephen's death.

The intent of Stephen's speech was to lay upon the consciences of the Sanhedrin their wickedness in rejecting the greatest of all prophets, the Christ, as their fathers had rejected the prophets of old. The intent of Paul's speech before the synagogue at Pisidia was to lay before them in a favorable light the Christ, the seed of David.

Giving a brief overview of the history of Israel from the time of David, Paul confidently affirmed that Jesus was the promised seed and son of David, that the fact of this sonship was attested by John the Baptist, that the Jews in Jeru-

salem put Jesus to death as an imposter, and that, in turn, God raised him from the dead. Then Paul announced: "And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers." (Acts 13:32.) Those Israelites had long anticipated the rise of a Messiah of the seed of David, through whom all families of the earth would be blessed, but they were not prepared for the thought that the fulfillment of the promise would stem from the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. They were familiar with the second Psalm which reads, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," but they had never heard the statement applied to the resurrection of Jesus. The Hebrew writer said: "So Christ also glorified not himself to be made a priest, but he that spake unto him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." (Psalm 2:7; Heb. 5:5.) Since Christ was not a priest until he had died and had ascended into heaven with his own blood, there can be no doubt that the second Psalm refers to Christ's having been begotten from the dead.

Paul further supported the fact and place of the resurrection by the testimony of David who said: "Thou wilt not give thy Holy One to see corruption." "David . . . fell asleep," Paul declared, "and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption." (Acts 13:36.) The emphasis was, therefore, that David necessarily spoke of Christ and how that his body would not see corruption. This was a specific prediction of the resurrection of Christ.

### The Text Explained

Paul and Barnabas' First Sabbath  
in Antioch of Pisidia  
(Acts 13:14, 15)

*But they, passing through from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue*

*on the sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.*

Paul and Barnabas did not tarry long in Perga of Pamphylia, but rather they left for Antioch of Pisidia which was a city some one hundred twenty miles north. Luke records, relative to their return to Perga some considerable time later, that they spake the word in Perga. This statement by Luke is a strong indication that they did not tarry to speak the word when they first embarked at Perga. Apparently, upon their arrival they immediately moved on from Perga of Pamphylia to Antioch of Pisidia.

Sir Walter Ramsey, a noted historian, reasoned that Paul's illness as related or described in this epistle to the Galatians had its onset in Perga of Pamphylia, that it was caused by a chronic malaria which brought on fever, chills, and prostrating paroxysms, that on account of this serious illness the work at Perga was abandoned for higher ground, and thus that Paul and Barnabas traveled to the mountainous city of Antioch of Pisidia, a city truly of higher ground. In fact, the city of Antioch was 3,600 feet above the sea and was sheltered on the north and east by mountains and on the south and southwest a wide plain was in open view. Ramsey may have been right in his reasoning or conjecture.

Personal matters, problems, and details did not lie within the purpose and method of treatment by Luke. His intent was to state in the briefest possible manner the essential facts and links necessary for God's inspired communication to man. Thus Luke recorded simply that Paul and Barnabas passed through Perga and came to Antioch of Pisidia.

Pamphylia was a Roman province in South Asia Minor, and Perga was the chief town and one of the seaports of the province. Pamphylia lay west of Cilicia and bordered the Mediterranean Sea on the south, and joined Pisidia on the north.

Pisidia was also a Roman province of Asia Minor. Antioch of Pisidia—so called to distinguish it from Antioch of Syria—was the chief city of the province. It was one of the several Antiochs built by Seleucus Nicanor and named for his father. Antiochus. Antioch was a very important city in Paul's day.

It was located on the main highway which connected Syria and the east with Greece and Rome.

The road which Paul and Barnabas traveled from Perea of Pamphylia to Antioch of Pisidia—a distance of some one hundred twenty miles—led through dangerous mountainous area. The territory literally teemed and swarmed with robbers and bandits of the most cruel and desperate kind. The region was known for the marauding habits of those mountain people. When Paul wrote that he had been in perils of robbers, he probably referred, as one instance at least, to his journey from Perga to Antioch. (2 Cor. 11:26.)

Upon their arrival in Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas "went into the synagogue on the sabbath day." Their attendance at the synagogue did not mean, as some erroneously suppose, that the law was still in force and that they were still observing the sabbath. These men went to the synagogue each sabbath because there they found an audience that had been taught to anticipate the appearance of a Messiah of the seed of David through whom all the families of the earth would be blessed. The synagogues served as stepping stones or launching pads for the preaching of the gospel, and further, the gospel was to be preached first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles. (Rom. 1:16.) The reading from the law and then from the prophets was the customary procedure in the synagogue worship. Following the readings, words of exhortation were given by the rulers of the synagogues and/or by those whom the rulers chose to recognize. Under such prevailing circumstances, Paul was invited to speak. "Brethren," the elders said, "If ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." Paul stood, beckoned with his hand in his characteristic gesture, and spoke.

Luke recorded Paul's speech. (Acts 13:16-41.) The audience, generally speaking, seemed to be favorably impressed, though no one was sufficiently convinced to obey the gospel. As the audience was leaving the synagogue, they requested that "words might be spoken to them the next sabbath." As the synagogue broke up, many of the



Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas.

**Paul and Barnabas' Second Sabbath  
in Antioch of Pisidia**  
(Acts 13:44-47)

*And the next sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God. Blit when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with jealousy, and contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and blasphemed. And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

Without doubt, Paul and Barnabas were quite active in contacting and teaching people during the week that followed and so "on the next sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God." The synagogue itself would not have held the people, and those two men may very well have stood in the door or on the steps of the building as the best means of speaking to those who had gathered.

The Jews, on seeing the multitude of Gentiles were filled with jealousy. They, therefore, contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and they blasphemed. In short, they spoke railing evil against the Son of God. They were guilty of criminal wickedness. This spirit of jealousy had been characteristic of the majority of the Jews from the beginning of Christ's ministry. Pilate knew, for instance, that for envy the Jews had delivered Jesus up to be crucified. (Matt. 27:18.) The Jews just could not accept the fact that the Gentiles could believe on Christ and be saved without first becoming Jews. Jealousy is to the spiritual body what cancer is to the physical body. It unceasingly eats away from within, and if it is not arrested or removed, it will bring certain death. Jealousy was one of the chief sins that caused Jesus to be crucified, and it in turn caused many Jews to be lost.

The jealous outburst and blasphemy of those Jews emboldened Paul and Barnabas to speak out strongly and forthrightly against them. "It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you," they said, "and lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

The divine plan was that the gospel would be preached first to the Jews beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24:47.) Paul declared: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Rom. 1:16.) The gospel was to be preached to the Jews first because they were better prepared to receive it, understand it, and obey it. Living as they were among the Gentiles, those Jews were in a very strategic position to teach the Gentiles by both word of mouth and example of life.

Seeing that the Jews thrust the gospel from them and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life. Paul and Barnabas turned to the Gentiles. There are two pertinent points to be emphasized just here: first, opportunity invariably passes from those who judge themselves unworthy of it; and second, every responsible person judges himself as either being worthy or unworthy of eternal life by his acceptance or rejection of the Christ. The opportunities that had been lavishly bestowed upon the Jews were now to pass to the Gentiles. And those very Jews—just as men today at some point in life often make a final acceptance or rejection of Christ—had judged themselves unworthy of eternal life. The prophets of old had spoken of a time when the Messiah would be a light to the Gentiles. The Jews should have been prepared by the prophets for the appearance of the Messiah as a light to the Gentiles, and they should have rejoiced at his appearance.

**The Response of the Gentiles to Paul  
and Barnabas' Announcement**  
(Acts 13:48, 49)

*And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was*

*spread abroad throughout all the region.*

When the Gentiles heard the pronouncement by Paul and Barnabas "they were glad, and glorified the word of God." They were glad to learn that they were in God's plan and could be saved without first becoming Jews and submitting themselves to all the Jewish regulations. They were glad to learn that long ago God had said through the prophets, and especially Isaiah, "I will also give thee [Christ] for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." (Isa. 49:6.) Those Gentiles were glad to learn that they were the recipients of salvation.

No wonder Luke recorded that they "glorified the word of God." To "glorify" is to make glorious by bestowing glory—praise and honor accorded through worship and commitment—upon the one so glorified. Those Gentiles glorified the word of God by believing and obeying it.

Luke recorded, further, that "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." This statement has been the subject of much controversy. The controversy turns on the meaning of the Greek word, *tasso*, and translated, "ordain." Those of the Calvinistic persuasion see in the statement their doctrine of eternal election and foreordination. Calvin affirmed that those included in the decree of election and foreordination are irresistibly brought to faith and held in it, and that all others, even if they do believe for a time, are doomed by the same decree. Others of a modified Calvinistic persuasion understand the decree as including the former but omitting the latter.

The Greek root word, *tasso*, appears eight times in the New Testament text. The eight references and the translations and/or renderings are as follows:

Matthew 28:16, "Jesus *had appointed them*."

Luke 7:8, "a man *set* under authority."

Acts 13:48, "as were *ordained* to eternal life believed."

Acts 15:2, "the brethren *appointed* that Paul and Barnabas."

Acts 22:10, "which *are appointed* for thee to do."

Acts 28:23, "and when they *had appointed* him a day."

Romans 13:1, "the powers that be *are ordained* of God."

1 Corinthians 16:15, "they *have set* themselves to minister."

The use of any verb must be considered in the light of its context. In the case under consideration, Luke set forth a contrast between the Jews and the Gentiles. God had done for the Jews the same that he had done for the Gentiles. God sent Paul and Barnabas to both the Jews and Gentiles to set forth his word and grace to them—or to all mankind. The Jews rejected the word, but the Gentiles accepted it. They believed it and obeyed it. The student should observe the contrast:

1. The Jews were filled with jealousy, but the Gentiles were filled with joy.

2. The Jews contradicted the words spoken, but the Gentiles glorified the word.

3. The Jews were disposed to follow their traditions—they blasphemed God—but the Gentiles were ordained, or disposed to accept eternal life.

4. The Jews judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, but the Gentiles judged themselves worthy of it—they were of a disposition to have eternal life.

Thus the mental act of the Jews is contrasted with the mental act of the Gentiles. The Gentiles were ordained, or determined, or disposed to eternal life. They had been brought to such a disposition before they believed, probably by their prior association with the Jews where they learned of the Jews' concept of eternal life, and they certainly were brought to such a concept by the teaching of Paul and Barnabas upon their arrival at Antioch. Their disposition to desire eternal life led them to give ear, belief, and obedience to the word of God as spoken by Paul and Barnabas.

A further consideration at this point is the fact that the Scriptures teach that other people were ordained or disposed to eternal life. To illustrate, Jesus said: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also must I bring and they shall hear my voice: and they

shall become one flock, one shepherd." Then the Lord spoke to Paul by a vision and said: "Be not afraid ... I am with thee ... no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city." (John 10:16; Acts 18:9-10.) The point of emphasis is that when these words were spoken the people contemplated were not obedient believers, but they were of such a disposition that they would believe and obey when they had opportunity to hear the Word.

Luke reported as a result of Paul and Barnabas' preaching that "the word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region." The region was the province of Pisidia and parts. Those who believed and obeyed actively spread the word abroad wheresoever they went.

**The Jews' Manner of Persecution against Paul and Barnabas**  
(Acts 13:50)

*But the Jews urged on the devout women of honorable estate, and the chief men of the city, and stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and cast them out of their borders.*

Those evil self-blinded Jews stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas. They urged the devout women—prominent Gentile women who had been proselyted to the Jewish faith, but who were not of those who were determined for eternal life—to influence their husbands, the chief men of the city, to take legal action to banish Paul and Barnabas from the city. Their prominent position, and likely affluent circumstances, caused those devout women to be content as they were. They felt no real need for eternal life.

**The Action Taken by Paul and Barnabas**  
(Acts 13:51, 52)

*But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.*

The indignation and humiliation which Paul and Barnabas felt for their having been so summarily banished from the city of Antioch is indicated by the fact that "they shook off the dust of their feet against them." Their action was a grave and solemn judgment against those prejudiced ingrates. It was the kind of action that Christ had commanded the twelve to take. "As many as receive you not," Christ said, "... shake off the dust from your feet for a testimony against them." (Luke 9:5.)

Paul and Barnabas moved on to the city of Iconium. Luke described the newborn disciples as being "filled with joy and the Holy Spirit." Those disciples experienced great joy for their salvation though they had heaviness of heart because of the persecution against, and expulsion of their teachers, and though they recognized that their role as newborn Christians was cast in a dangerous fanatical environment of jealousy-driven men.

Those disciples were filled with joy, and they were also "filled with the Holy Spirit." The probability is that Paul had laid hands on and conferred miraculous gifts upon the disciples prior to his and Barnabas' banishment from the city. Of a certainty, the conferring of spiritual gifts upon disciples was one work performed by the apostles and especially by Paul.

**Questions for Discussion**

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place and persons.

**Introduction**

Review the work done by Barnabas and Saul at Cyprus.  
What city and province did they go to after sailing from Paphos?  
Discuss the departure of John.

**The Golden Text**

By whom, and where, were the words of the golden text spoken?  
What other very notable speech was much like Paul's?

What was the intent of Paul's speech?  
Review the expectations of the Jews concerning a Messiah.  
What is the meaning of Psalm 2:7?  
What other passage did Paul use to support the fact of Christ's resurrection?

**Paul and Barnabas' First Sabbath in Antioch of Pisidia**

Review the geographical location of Perga and Antioch.  
What danger were Paul and Barnabas subjected to in their journey to Antioch?  
Give two reasons for their attendance at the synagogue.

Discuss the procedure in the synagogue worship.

What were the results of Paul's speech?

Paul and Barnabas' Second Sabbath in Antioch of Pisidia

Why were the Jews filled with jealousy?

What did their jealousy cause them to do?

Discuss the characteristic jealousy of the Jews toward Christ, and also the Gentiles' acceptance.

How did Paul and Barnabas react to their jealous outburst?

Review God's plan for the preaching of the gospel.

The Response of the Gentiles

How did the Gentiles receive the divine announcement?

What is the Calvinist interpretation of Acts 13:48?

What word is the root of the contro-

Review the rendering of the word in other passages.

Discuss the contrast that Luke makes. What is the meaning of John 10:16 and Acts 18:9-10?

What were the further results of Paul and Barnabas' preaching?

The Jews' Manner of Persecution  
avalist Paul and Barnabas

How did the Jews stir up the persecution? Who were the "devout women of honorable estate"?

The Action Taken by Paul  
and Barnabas

What did the action of the apostles signify?

How may we account for the joy of the disciples?

What is the probable meaning of the statement, "filled with the Holy Spirit"?

### Lesson III—January 19, 1975

## THE JERUSALEM CONFERENCE

### Lesson Text

Acts 15:1-6, 22-29

1 And certain men came down from Judaea and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

2 And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, the brethren appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

3 They therefore, being brought on their way by the church, passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and the apostles and the elders, and they rehearsed all things that God had done with them.

5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses.

6 And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter.

22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men out of

GOLDEN TEXT.—*And he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.*" (Acts 15:9.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 15:7-21.

their company, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

23 And they wrote thus by them, The apostles and the elders, brethren, unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment;

25 It seemed good unto us, having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also shall tell you the same things by word of mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:

29 That ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.

Daily Bible Readings

January 13.	M.....	First Preaching to Gentiles (Acts 10:1-47)
January 14.	T.....	Peter's Defense of Gentile Preaching (Acts 11:1-18)
January 15.	W.....	Problems in Antioch (Gal. 2:11-14)
January 16.	T.....	Peter's Speech at the Conference (Acts 15:7-12)
January 17.	F.....	James' Speech at the Conference (Acts 15:13-21)
January 18.	S.....	Principles Involved (Gal. 2:15-22)
January 19.	S.....	Freedom in Christ (Gal. 5:1-15)

TIME.—A.D. 49-50.

PLACES.—Antioch of Syria; and Jerusalem of Judea.

PERSONS.—Certain brethren who reputedly came from James in Judea to Antioch of Syria; Paul and Barnabas, the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, particularly Peter and James; Judas and Silas, chief men among the brethren in Judea.

Introduction

The Gentiles were in God's purpose and plan from the very beginning. God had said to Abraham while he was in uncircumcision: "I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee tin thy seed, Christ] shall all the families of the earth be blessed." "All the families of the earth" certainly included the Gentiles. (Gen. 12:3; 13:15; 17:8.) The prophets spoke of how the Messiah would be for the salvation of the Gentiles as well as the Israelites. To illustrate, Isaiah, when speaking for Jehovah, said: "I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." (Isa. 49:6.)

The case for the Gentiles as per the New Testament include; the following:

1. Jesus said: "And other sheep I have (the Gentiles), which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd." (John 10:16.)—A.D. 29.

2. Peter said to the Pentecostians: "For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off [the Gentiles], even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him." (Acts 2:39.)—A.D. 30.

3. The Lord, when speaking to Ananias concerning Saul, said: "Go thy way: for he [Saul] is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles [or to be my chief apostles to them] and kings, and the children of Israel." (Acts 9:15.)—A.D. 33.

4. An angel directed Cornelius, a Gentile, to send for Simon Peter,

who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house." (Acts 11:14.)—A.D. 43.

5. The apostle Peter announced to Cornelius and his household: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation [Jew or Gentile] he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34-35.)—A.D. 43.

6. Some of the men of Cyprus and Cyrene, following the conversion of Cornelius and his household, came to Antioch of Syria, and they spake unto the Greeks also, ". . . and a great number [Greeks] that believed turned unto the Lord." (Acts 11:20-22.)—A.D. 44.

7. The report concerning the conversions of a great number of Greeks at Antioch came to the elders of the church in Jerusalem: "And they sent forth Barnabas" who exhorted those new converts to cleave unto the Lord. (Acts 11:22-23.)—A.D. 44.

8. Barnabas in a short time went forth to Tarsus to seek for Saul to assist in the work at Antioch. (Acts 11:26.)—A.D. 44.

9. The Holy Spirit separated Barnabas and Saul at Antioch of Syria for the first great missionary journey. (Acts 13:1-4.)—A.D. 47.

10. Saul performed a miracle of terror, or judgment, upon the sorcerer, Elymas, which proved to be the turning point in his career as an apostle. At that time and point he moved into the role of the chief apostle to the Gentiles. (Acts 13:5-12.)—A.D. 47.

11. Paul and Barnabas—on see-

ing how that the Jews contradicted, and blasphemed, and thereby judged themselves unworthy of eternal life—turned to the Gentiles, and shook off the dust of their feet against those Jews as a judgment of God against them. (Acts 13:50-51.) — A.D. 48.

12. A conference was held in Jerusalem to determine by apostolic

authority the matter of whether Christianity was an extension of Judaism—thereby requiring the Gentiles to be circumcised and to observe the tenets or requisites of the law of Moses—or whether Christianity was separate from the law of Moses, and therefore, a system in its own rights. (Acts 15.) — A.D. 49.

### The Golden Text

*"And he made no distinction between us and them cleansing their hearts by faith."* On the first Pentecost following the death of Christ, which was the day on which the church began, the apostle Peter called upon the multitude to believe, repent, and be baptized. (Acts 2:36, 38, 39.) He followed by saying: "For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him." Those that were "afar off" were the Gentiles, but at that time Peter and the other apostles understood the Gentiles to be included in the promise only as they were circumcised. Some contend that in reality Peter and the other apostles should have preached the gospel to the Gentiles from the very beginning on Pentecost.

More than ten years passed before a single gospel sermon was preached to Gentiles as such. At the conference in Jerusalem, Peter said: "Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." (Acts 15:7.) The strong implication of this statement is that God had not intended that the apostles go forth to the Gentiles from the beginning on Pentecost; but rather, the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles when God, in his own good time, directed by a series of miracles that Peter should go and preach to Cornelius and his household. There is reflected here, no doubt, the divine economy of the Scriptures. If the

apostles had gone immediately to the Gentiles with the gospel, probably more harm than good would have been done. There was need for the passing of time—time that would allow the Jews to make spiritual growth and to come to a fuller and more balanced understanding of the nature of the gospel. Through such means of spiritual growth, they would the more likely rise above their race prejudice and covenant advantage to preach the gospel in earnest to the Gentiles. Too, the Gentiles needed the spiritual direction of the Jews; and the longtime estrangement between Jews and Gentiles would have been intensified if the apostles had gone immediately to the Gentiles. The race prejudice and covenant advantage spirit of the Jews at large would have thwarted the free course of the gospel to both the Jews and the Gentiles.

The series of miracles—the appearance of the angel to Cornelius, the vision to Peter, and the outpouring of the spirit upon Cornelius and his household—combined to convince Peter, and in turn the other apostles and brethren, that God made no distinction between Jews and Gentiles. The hearts of the Gentiles, like the Jews, were to be cleansed by faith. This fact was especially evident to Peter when he witnessed the special sign of the outpouring of the Spirit upon the household of Cornelius as it had been poured out upon the apostles in the beginning on Pentecost. (Acts 11:15.)

### The Text Explained

#### Two Accounts of the Jerusalem Conference

There are two accounts of the Jerusalem conference and the out-

come of it: the account by Luke (Acts 15); and the account by Paul (Gal. 1 and 2). The conference was held in about A.D. 50, or some

twenty years after the establishment of the church and fourteen years after Paul's conversion. All the dates respecting the Acts of the apostles are necessarily based on estimates as Luke mentioned no dates. Paul wrote his account of the conference—the epistle to the Galatians—from Macedonia, or Greece in about A.D. 55 or 56—or about five years after the conference was held.

### **The Jerusalem Conference—A Historical Victory for the Peace and Position of the New Covenant**

Many Jews who believed and were baptized into Christ kept up certain of the customs and traditions characteristic of the law of Moses. Their longtime prejudice against all Gentiles, except those who became fully proselyted to the Jewish faith, blinded their eyes to the fact that the promise included those afar off—the Gentiles. When Peter baptized Cornelius and his household into Christ, they of the circumcision—the apostles in Jerusalem must have been included at least in sentiment—contended with Peter for having gone to men uncircumcised and for having eaten with them, but when Peter had expounded the matter unto them in order “they held their peace, and glorified God saying. Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life.” (Acts 11.)

The inclusion of the Gentiles, however, became the great stumbling block to the Jews. The bringing in of the Gentiles without their first being properly proselyted was too much for the Jews, so obsessed were they with the concept that Judaism was the only God-ordained religion. In their embracing Christ, many of the Jews regarded Christianity as an extension of the Jewish religion, and they accorded the Gentile Christians only a second rate membership or fellowship, within the church. Those Jews, therefore, affirmed that after the Gentiles were baptized into Christ they were obligated to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be finally saved. In this manner the Judaizing Christians sought to enforce adherence to the law of Moses.

When Paul and Barnabas re-

turned to Antioch of Syria upon the completion of their first missionary journey, after an absence of some three to four years, “they tarried no little time with the disciples.” (Acts 14:28.) During this stay in Antioch, which likely was for a year or more, Paul and Barnabas were weighted down and harassed by the influence and teachings of certain men who came from Judea in a deliberate effort to bind circumcision and the law of Moses upon the Gentile converts. The controversy raged. Those men, having come from Judea, held a decided advantage since the twelve apostles had long remained there. Paul held as much authority as the other apostles held, and he was certain, therefore, of his position. The great likelihood is that those men from Judea either affirmed or implied that Paul's authority, inspiration, and apostleship was not on a par with the twelve apostles in Jerusalem. The church in Antioch was in a state of confusion. They did not know what or whom to believe.

### **The False Teachers Identified**

(Acts 15:1, 2)

*And certain men came down from Judaea and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved. And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, the brethren appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.*

Paul described “the certain men who came down from Judaea” as false brethren. He said: “I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles . . . and that because of the false brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” (Gal. 2:1-5.) Those “certain men of Judea” were Pharisees and may have been of the number of the Pharisees at the Jerusalem conference who contended, “It is need-

ful to circumcise them [the Gentiles], and to charge them to keep the law of Moses." (Acts 15:5.) The obedience of the Gentiles—faith, repentance, and baptism—was not enough, they contended. Circumcision and the law or covenant of Moses must be added, according to those Pharisees, who after opposing Christianity for so long had finally joined in with the deliberate intention of making it an extension of Judaism.

The inclusion of circumcision and the law of Moses as being needful for final salvation would logically require the continuance of the entire legal system. Such a system would make void the efficacy of the blood of Christ for the sins of the world. It would leave no room for the blood of the new covenant which God commanded." (Heb. 9:11-20.) No wonder then that Paul wrote the Galatians: "If righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought," and further, "Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace." (Gal. 2:21; 5:4.)

The state of confusion in the church at Antioch caused the brethren to conclude that Paul and Barnabas, together with certain other brethren, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about the question. There was, however, no question in Paul's mind. He knew that his teaching on the point at issue came to him "through revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:12.) He fully knew wherein his apostleship lay. He had not received it from man, nor was he taught by man. He went up to Jerusalem, therefore, "by revelation"—that is, he was directed by the Holy Spirit to go, else he would not have gone. Divine wisdom was reflected in the Spirit's direction for him to be present at the conference. His leadership and forthrightness established the unanimous authority of the apostles for all time to come of how that the law of Moses had been abolished and that salvation can lie only in the blood of the new covenant that was shed by Christ for all—predicated, or course, upon their faith in Christ and their compliance with the terms of the gospel.

### The Journey from Antioch to Jerusalem

(Acts 15:3)

*They therefore, being brought on their way by the church, passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.*

As Paul, Barnabas, and their company journeyed from Antioch through Phoenicia and Samaria, they availed themselves of the opportunity to preach the gospel and to report the great reception of the gospel by those of the Gentile world. The report "brought great joy unto all the brethren." This meant that the Jewish Christians rejoiced along with the Gentile Christians. The Jews who lived long distances from Judea and who thus mingled daily with Gentiles were much less inclined to the prejudices characteristic of the Jews of Judea.

The prejudice of the Jewish Christians against the Gentile converts, their denial of equal rights and fellowship for them, and their second-class rank of spiritual citizenship for them was the very height of satire. To illustrate, the Jews had always desired to have the nations to bow at their feet and to do their bidding. The prophets had promised that in time the Gentiles would be subservient to the Jews. Isaiah prophesied in conjunction with his burden against Babylon that "the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors." (Isa. 14:2.) This very prophecy was being fulfilled in the conversion of the Gentiles, but even the Jewish Christians refused to recognize the fact. Gentiles were in numbers becoming captives to the Jews' God—to Christ—who was the fulfillment of the law of Moses. Isaiah never intended to say that the Jews would by military force "take captive whose captives they were." The prophecy was to be, and was being, fulfilled by means of a spiritual captivity.

At another time Isaiah announced and prophesied: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of



Jehovah is risen upon thee . . . and nations [Gentiles] shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising . . . the abundance of the sea shall be turned unto thee, and the wealth of the nations shall come unto thee." (Isa. 60:1-9.) This figurative prophecy by Isaiah was being fulfilled by the conversion of the Gentiles, and just so it continues to be fulfilled unto this day. The Gentiles, had sent already a bounty to the Jewish brethren in Judea, and Gentile Christians through the centuries since have brought their possessions, and laid them, so to speak, at the altar of the Jews' God. The Lord's day contributions of the Gentile saints is a testimony of their acceptance and subservience to the God of the Jews. Even the Jewish Christians of that time refused to recognize, to understand, that the conversion of the Gentiles was the fulfillment of the promises of the prophets and was thus, a great honor to them as God's covenant people. No man is so blind as he is who refuses to see.

**The Reception at Jerusalem**  
(Acts 15:4)

*And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and the apostles and the elders, and they rehearsed all things that God had done with them.*

Barnabas was remembered no doubt for his benevolent spirit and work in Jerusalem in the earlier days of the church. Paul had by this time become well known for his travels and preaching, including his apostleship. Those two men were cordially and enthusiastically received "of the church and the apostles and the elders." Paul and Barnabas took great delight in "rehearsing all the things that God had done with them."

**The Press for Circumcision and the Observance of the Law of Moses**  
(Acts 15:5, 6)

*But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter.*

One pertinent observation just here is the fact that two public

meetings were held. The first was the reception meeting at which time Paul and Barnabas "rehearsed all the things that God had done with them." The second was at a time later when the contentions of the Pharisees were heard. After the first meeting and thus before the second, Paul met with the three apostles present at Jerusalem at that time—namely, James, Cephas, and John—and laid before them privately the gospel which he preached to the Gentiles, lest by any means he "should be running, or had run, in vain." (Gal. 2:2.) Those apostles imparted nothing to Paul, and Paul's companion, Titus, a Greek, was not for one moment regarded as needing to be circumcised. The apostles gave to Paul the right hand of fellowship in his work among the Gentiles.

The second public meeting was a meeting of the whole church, the apostles and elders included. Luke records: "There was much questioning." In short, the Judaizers had their day in court—they were permitted to set forth in full their contentions. James, the Lord's brother and an elder, presided. Peter made the decisive address. He was followed by Paul and then by Barnabas. The fact of apostolic authority for the preaching being done among the Gentiles was affirmed, the case of Cornelius was recited, and the reception of the gospel among the Gentiles was emphasized. The issue was the question of whether Christianity was an extension of Judaism, or whether it was a real system of faith and salvation within its own rights.

James summarized the meeting. He pointed out that the inclusion of the Gentiles into the church had been rehearsed by Peter, that the inclusion was a matter of prophecy of the prophets of old, and that there was no danger of Judaism's becoming extinct, "for Moses from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath." He then proposed that they trouble not the Gentiles on those matters, and write instead that "they abstain from the pollution of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood." (Acts 15:20-21.)

### The Reaction to Janies' Proposal

(Acts 10:zz)

*Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men out of their company, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas called Barabbas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren.*

The apostles, elders together with the whole church concurred in the proposal set forth by James. They concluded, therefore, to write accordingly, a letter to the Gentiles and to choose men to dispatch the letter in company with Paul and Barnabas. They chose two chief men from among their number; namely, Judas and Silas. Later, Silas accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey.

### The Document or Letter—Called an Epistle, and a Decree

(Acts 15:23-29)

*And they wrote thus by them, The apostles and the elders, brethren, unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting: Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment; it seemed good unto us, having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also shall tell you the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.*

The document or decree as drawn was submitted in letter form—characteristic of a letter for that day—from the apostles, elders, and brethren to the brethren of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. The letter was called an "epistle," and also a "decree." (Acts 15:30; 16:4.)

Relative to this epistle or decree, the following observations are in order, namely:

1. This letter or epistle was the earliest known document to have issued from inspired men.

2. The decree claimed to be divinely inspired. Its formal claim of inspiration was set forth by the words, "it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us. . . ."

3. The decree was to be circulated among the churches throughout Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. The intent was that the decree should reach all the churches that had been disturbed by the Judaizers.

4. The expression in the decree, "having come to one accord," necessarily implied that the apostles and elders had brought those in attendance at the conference—including the dissident Judaizers—to the recognition of the fact of apostolic authority involved—the authority in which Peter, John, and James had concurred when in a private meeting with Paul and Barnabas.

5. The action taken by the conference could not under reasonable and logical deductions be pleaded as a precedent for the institution of an ecclesiastical law-making or determining body. The conference as such did not determine the matter. The determination was by apostolic authority.

6. The conference did not consist of representatives from the respective churches of a province or district, and the conclusions reached were not of the majority in respect to preference and expediency, but rather they were reached with respect to doctrine based upon the authority and pronouncements of the apostles.

7. The decree denied any responsibility on the part of the apostles and elders of the church in Jerusalem for the teaching of the men who had purported to so represent those apostles and elders: The document specifically said: ". . . to whom we gave no such commandment."

8. In the decree, the apostles and elders of the Jerusalem church addressed themselves only as brethren and thus not as superiors of the Gentile brethren in Antioch; and further, the apostles and elders ad-

dressed the Gentile Christians of Antioch as "the brethren of the Gentiles." They thereby acknowledged those Gentile Christians as brethren in Christ in the full sense and fellowship of the term.

9. The decree spoke of "our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." The statement reflects, therefore, the high esteem and regard the brethren in Jerusalem held for those men.

10. The decree proposed to lay upon the Gentiles no greater burden than that which was necessary. It, therefore, enjoined upon the Gentile Christians that which is enjoined upon men in all dispensations and generations; namely:

- a. That they should abstain from things sacrificed to idols.
- b. That they should abstain from blood.
- c. That they should abstain from things strangled.
- d. That they should abstain from fornication.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

How do we know that the Gentiles were included in God's plan of redemption?  
Did the apostles understand that God's plan of redemption included the Gentiles?

#### The Golden Text

Did Peter fully understand the promise given through him as recorded in Acts 2:39?

What did it take to convince Peter that the Gentiles were included?  
What was it that especially convinced Peter that God had made no distinction between Jews and Gentiles? (Acts 15:15-18; 15:7-9.)

#### Two Accounts of the Jerusalem Conference

Where are the two accounts recorded?  
When, and why, was the conference held?

#### The Jerusalem Conference

What did Peter's Jewish brethren have to say about his preaching to the Gentiles?

Why did the conversion of Gentiles become a stumbling block to some of the Jewish brethren?  
When did the Judaizers begin their corrupt work at Antioch?

#### The False Teachers Identified

How did Paul describe the Judaizers?  
What did those false teachers say that the Gentiles would need to do?  
Tell how Paul and Barnabas courageously defended the gospel.  
What lesson should we learn from their conduct?

What are some of the things that Paul said to the Galatians about these false teachers?

Why did Paul and Barnabas decide to go to Jerusalem about the matter?

#### The Journey from Antioch to Jerusalem

What did they do as they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria?  
What were the results of their efforts?  
What is the meaning of Isaiah 14:2; 60:1-9?

#### The Reception at Jerusalem

How were Paul and his company received by the church at Jerusalem?

#### The Press for Circumcision

Tell about the two meetings that were held.  
Who presided at the meeting?  
What did Peter tell the assembly?  
How did James summarize the meeting?

#### The Reaction to James' Proposal

How did the church react to James' proposal?  
What did they do to implement his proposal?

#### The Document or Letter

To what extent was the letter to be circulated?

Was the conference a precedent for ecclesiastical law-making bodies of today?  
What did the letter say about the Judaizers?

How were the Gentile Christians addressed in the letter?

How did they refer to Barnabas and Paul?

What four things did the letter admonish the Gentile Christians to abstain from?

## Lesson IV—January 26, 1975

# THE MACEDONIAN CALL

### Lesson Text

Acts 16:6-15

6 And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having

been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;

7 And when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not;

8 And passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.

11 Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis;

12 And from thence to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the

first of the district, a *Roman* colony: and we were in this city tarrying certain days.

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.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.”* (Acts 16:5.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 16:1-5.

### Daily Bible Readings

January 20.	M.....	Paul's Sense of Obligation (Rom. 1:8-17)
January 21.	T.....	Wider Fields Beckon (Rom. 15:14-29)
January 22.	W.....	Paul Looks for Open Doors (Col. 2:4-6)
January 23.	T.....	Paul Prays for Courage to Speak (Eph. 6:10-20)
January 24.	F.....	Other Great Calls (Jonah 3:1-4)
January 25.	S.....	Other Great Calls (John 1:43-51)
January 26.	S.....	Other Great Calls (Isa. 6:1-6)

TIME.—About A.D. 50.

PLACES.—Troas, a seaport city of the province of Mysia in Asia Minor; Philippi of Macedonia.

PERSONS.—Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke; Lydia and her household.

### Introduction

While in Troas, Paul received the Macedonian call by means of a night vision. It was a call for him and his companions to leave the continent of Asia and go to the continent of Europe.

The date was about A.D. 50. Twenty years had intervened from the beginning of the church on Pentecost following the death of Christ, until Paul received the call to go over to Europe. Paul had been a Christian and an apostle for about

seventeen years; and during those years he had preached the gospel in Arabia; in Syria; including a lengthy stay in Antioch; in Cilicia; on the island of Cyprus; in Perga of Pamphylia; in Antioch of Pisidia; in Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe of Lycaonia. In addition, Paul, together with Silas and Timothy, had traveled through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, and passing by Mysia they had arrived at Troas.

### The Golden Text

*“So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.”* Luke's statement here had reference to how Paul, in company with others, had revisited churches which he had helped to

establish on his first missionary journey. Those churches were strengthened by the presence of Paul and his companions. As the churches became stronger, more men and women were led to the

faith, and this was especially the case while Paul and his companions were visiting among them. Here lies an important and imperative lesson for churches today. The cause of Christ will go forth only as

churches are edified from within, and only as they are actively engaged in preaching the Word, both publicly and privately. For a church to go along in the even tenor of its way is not enough.

### The Text Explained

#### Paul's Second Evangelistic Journey

Paul chose Silas—one of prophets whom the church at Jerusalem had selected to accompany its epistle or decree to Antioch—to go with him on his second missionary journey. In their effort to revisit the brethren, they went to Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium. At Lystra they found that Timothy, one whom Paul had converted on his prior visit, was well reported of by the brethren, and Paul chose him to accompany them on their journey.

Timothy's mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois had taught him the sacred writings from the time that he was a babe. An unfeigned faith had first dwelt in his grandmother Lois, then in his mother Eunice, and then in him. (2 Tim. 1:5-7; 3:15.) Timothy's father was a Greek. Luke gave no indication that Timothy's father entertained any dissatisfaction of his son's going on the journey. Customarily, Luke did pass over personal details without mention, but his failure to comment in this instance may have meant that Timothy's father was dead or that he had been in time proselyted in the Jewish religion and thus had become a zealous Christian. The marriage of Eunice to a Greek—especially since she had such a rich religious background—would have been quite irregular under normal circumstances, and particularly in Judea; but young Jewish women living in remote districts and far removed from men of their own race were at a great disadvantage in the choice of a mate, or in being chosen for a mate. Under such circumstances, mixed marriages were, no doubt, quite common.

Paul caused Timothy to be circumcised. At the Jerusalem conference, he had not given way for Titus to be circumcised, "no not for an hour." (Gal. 2:3-5.) The apostles, elders, and brethren had set forth an apostolic letter or decree

stating that circumcision was not to be required of Gentile converts, and Paul was not only a party to the decree, but he had copies of it and was distributing them among the brethren. (Acts 16:4.) He wrote the Galatians: "Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision." (Gal. 5:6.)

Many, from time to time, have contended that Paul, in having Timothy circumcised, was quite inconsistent with principle and practice. Paul, however, wrote the Corinthians: "And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; . . . to them without the law, as without the law. . . . I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some." (1 Cor. 9:19-23.)

The case for Titus and the case for Timothy were quite different. Titus was a full-blooded Greek. If Paul had permitted Titus to be circumcised he would have tacitly granted that circumcision was necessary to salvation. Timothy, on the other hand, was a half-Jew. For Paul to have him circumcised only showed to the non-Christian Jews that he had no opposition to the customs of the Jews so long as those customs did not conflict with the principles of Christianity. Having Timothy circumcised was Paul's means of conciliating the non-Christian Jews and, thereby, furthering the cause of the gospel.

#### The Regions of Phrygia and Galatia

(Acts 16:6-8)

*And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not; and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.*

The geography of the continent of Asia in Paul's day, and especially of Asia Minor, is quite difficult to understand. It included the political

boundaries as well as the physical boundaries, and the political and physical boundaries were not the same. In Paul's day, the boundaries were continually changing, and political alterations were made frequently and arbitrarily. Prior to the Macedonian call, Paul's travels had been confined to the continent of Asia, except for his trip to the island of Cyprus. The continent of Asia is the largest land area on the entire globe. Asia Minor was an area of territory extending from the Aegean Sea eastward. Bordered by the Black Sea on the north and the Mediterranean Sea on the south, Asia Minor covered that territory now known as Turkey. Asia Minor was divided into seven provinces of which the Asia of Acts 16:6 was one of the provinces, and Ephesus was Asia's capital city. The provinces that made up Asia Minor were: Asia, Bithynia, Pamphylia, Galatia, Pontus, Cappadocia, and Cilicia.

Luke records: "And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia." Luke's record does not indicate that Paul and his company visited the church in Antioch of Pisidia, and the record does not recount the extent, if any, that those men preached as they traveled through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia. Commentators, generally, assume that the journey was interspersed with periods of preaching from time to time. Since one of Paul's great epistles was written to the churches of Galatia, many scholars of the past have assumed that those churches of Galatia had their beginnings when Paul, Silas, and Timothy made their way through the region of Galatia.

The late Sir Walter Ramsey, longtime professor at the University of Oxford and an extensive archaeological researcher in Asiatic Turkey and the Ancient Bible lands, has established the fact that during the first and second centuries after Christ the term "Galatia" was used in a geographical sense and also in a political sense. The geographical sense embraced the old or original "Galatia" of Asia Minor; whereas, the political sense embraced not only the Galatia of the northern country, but also in B.

C. 25 it came to embrace the southern provinces of Lycaonia, Pisidia, Pamphylia, and a large part of Phrygia.

Sir Walter Ramsey concluded, therefore, that Paul, in his epistle to the churches of Galatia, used the term "Galatia" in the Roman political sense. Thus, according to Ramsey, the churches established on Paul's first missionary journey—Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe of Lycaonia, and Perga of Pamphylia—were the churches to whom Paul addressed his epistle.

As was his custom in prior days, Paul was intent on introducing the gospel in the great and important cities. He knew that the gospel would the more likely move from the vibrant cities to the towns, hamlets, and countrysides than it would move from the countrysides, hamlets, and towns to the great cities. He, therefore, had set his heart upon the province of Asia where there were important cities, especially Ephesus the capital city, that were characterized by much political and commercial activity, but the Spirit, nonetheless, forbade him and his company to go there. Then Paul and his company went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia and assayed, or took steps, to go into Bithynia. The forbidden province of Asia was on their left, and the province of Bithynia was on their right, but the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not, or in other words forbade them to go to Bithynia. Having been thus forbidden to go into Bithynia, Paul and his companions had no other choice except to go forward. Their human wisdom or judgment was not God's will, and God, thereby, overruled their determinations. "Passing by Mysia," which means that they did not tarry at all in Mysia. they came to Troas—which geographically was a district or city in Mysia, but which politically was a district or city in the province of Asia. Troas, a seaport on the Aegean Sea and referred to in such a way as if to distinguish it from both Mysia and Asia, was near the site of ancient Troy where the Trojan War was fought, where the tomb of Achilles lies, and which was recorded in history and made famous by the poetry of Homer.

Alexander the Great, B.C. 332, was kindled in spirit as he came to Troas and stood at the tomb of Achilles. Almost three centuries later, Paul, a greater than Alexander, was stirred within himself when he came to Troy, or Troas. and beheld in a vision a man beckoning for him to come to Macedonia "and help us." Paul, unlike Alexander, was armed with spiritual weapons—visions and revelations from heaven.

**Paul's Vision at Troas**  
(Acts 16:9, 10)

*And a vision appeared to Paul at night: There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.*

The vision which appeared to Paul by night was not a mere dream, but rather, like the vision to Cornelius and the vision to Peter, it was a true unmistakable miracle. It left no place for misunderstanding or deception. Paul was awake, and he saw distinctly a man of Macedonia—on the continent of Europe—"beseeching," or appealing and begging, and saying: "Come over into Macedonia and help us." Paul then understood why the Spirit had overruled him when he had determined to go first to Asia and then to Bithynia. He and his companions concluded that God had called them to preach the gospel to the people of Macedonia. Luke recorded: "straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia."

The use of the personal pronoun "we" is indicative of the fact that Luke joined Paul's company at Troas. thereby bringing Paul's company to four: namely, Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke. Luke's expression, "straightway we sought to go forth," seems to allow no time for their having done any preaching in Troas. The fact that there was a church at Troas when Paul visited the city on his third journey does not necessarily mean that he and his company established the church there on their first visit. Paul, for instance, later resided at Ephesus for more than two years prior to his

visit to Troas on his third journey. (Acts 20:7.) He, or others, may have established the church at Troas during the period of time between his second missionary journey and his third journey.

**The Voyage from Troas to Philippi**  
(Acts 16:11, 12)

*Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis; and from thence to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony: and we were in this city tarrying certain days.*

With the providence of God directing, with a ship awaiting, and with propitious weather attending, Paul and his companions embarked immediately for Macedonia. They made "a straight course," which means that they were hurried on by a wind to their backs, to SAM-Thrace and the mainland at Neapolis. The journey required only two days. The same journey later required five days. (Acts 20:6.) Samothrace, a small island of only sixty-eight square miles between Troas and Neapolis, is prominent for having the highest mountain or peak—5,905 feet—of any of the Aegean islands, and the mountain served as a kind of lighthouse or signpost for vessels sailing across the Aegean Sea. Neapolis, a port city on the European continent, was not in Macedonia, but rather in Thrace. It was, however, located about ten miles from the inland city of Philippi of Macedonia, and served as a port for that city.

In Paul's day, Macedonia was the northern division of Greece, and Achaia was the southern division. The Romans had divided Macedonia into four separate political divisions, and Amphipolis was the capital city of the first division, of which Philippi was also a city.

When Paul entered Philippi, "the first of the district," or the first city in that division of Macedonia, he entered a city remarkably different from almost all—if not all—of the cities that he had visited in all of his prior years. Philippi was politically a miniature Rome. It had a history all its own.

In B.C. 42, the deadly battle of

Philippi had raged there. It was a

battle between the Second Triumvirate of Rome—represented by Octavius, Antonius, and Lepidus—and the Roman Republic, represented by Brutus and Cassius. The forces of the Roman Republic were defeated, and Brutus and Cassius were killed in that battle. Octavius, in commemoration of his victory, raised Philippi to the rank of a Roman colony. Then in B.C. 31, a naval battle was fought at Arctium and Antony together with Cleopatra, the former of Rome and the latter of Egypt. Antony and Cleopatra were defeated, and the victory for Octavius was to later make him emperor. In B.C. 27, he was made the sole ruler of the Roman World, at which time the Senate conferred upon him the title, "Augustus"—meaning the exalted or the sacred.

In turn, Octavius sent his retiring

veterans to Philippi and raised the standing of that city to a par with the Roman colonies in Italy. Thus Philippi was entirely a Roman city. As with the case of Paul's Roman citizenship, the citizens of Philippi enjoyed all of the rights of Roman citizenship, such as freedom from scourging, from arrest with only few exceptions, and with the individual right to appeal from a magistrate to Caesar. In addition to the common rights of Roman citizenship, the citizens of Philippi had the right to go to Rome to vote and thus to participate in making the laws. The citizens of Philippi made their own laws, and at the head of the city were two officials who appeared officially with their attendants. Latin was the official language, and the insignia of Rome was visible to every traveler who passed through the city. The coinage of the city was characterized by Latin inscriptions.

### The Conversion of Lydia and Her

#### Household

(Acts 16:13-15)

*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. 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. 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.*

As might be expected, there were no Greek Jews in Octavia Philippi. Only ten men were required for the organization of a synagogue in any city, but there was no synagogue in Philippi. Lydia may have been a Jewess, but, on the other hand, she may have been a Gentile proselyte. Luke's description of her as "one that worshipped God" is similar to his description of Cornelius.

The fact that the first convert to the Christian faith on the European continent was a woman speaks to the credit of women. Women have an enviable record with respect to Christ and his gospel. Insofar as the inspired record records, no woman ever lifted her voice in criticism of the Son of Man. Women were last at the cross and first at the tomb. A matter of historical record is the fact that the church grew by and through humble women who introduced the gospel into the home circle. No wonder then that Paul said that women shall be saved through their child-bearing if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety. (1 Tim. 3:15.) Many a church today owes its existence to one or a few godly women.

Lydia was only a temporary resident of Philippi as is indicated by the fact that Paul makes no mention of her when writing to the Philippians some years later. Lydia was a business woman, a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira. Fabrics in the rare and expensive purple dye, or clothing trimmed with purple, were the dress of the rich and privileged, and Philippi with its prominent Roman officials and retired veterans was a likely place for her wares.

Lydia closed her business each sabbath day for a prayer service with those of her household by the riverside, even though her competitors were open for business. Paul and his companions, who had ar-



rived in Philippi some days prior to a sabbath day, had observed something—probably an open temporary structure by the riverside—which caused them to suppose that it was a place of prayer. Its location by the riverside would naturally comport with the required Jewish washings. Paul and his companions went forth, therefore, and “sat down and spake unto the women that were come together.” Not one man, other than Paul and his company, was present for the prayer service.

When Lydia had heard, “the Lord opened her heart” to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul. The Lord did not open Lydia’s heart by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit as is claimed by certain religionists. Her heart was opened by the words of the gospel as preached by Paul.

The word “heart” refers to the mind—not a pumping muscle—as may be seen by a comparison of Hebrews 8:10 with 10:16. Paul was sent to open the eyes of the Gentiles, and “to open their eyes” meant to give them enlightenment. (Acts 26:16-18.) To open the eyes and to open the heart referred, therefore, to the same function or action. The “opening” was accom-

plished in each case by enlightenment, by the preaching of the gospel.

Lydia “besought”—the word indicates a delicate approach—Paul and his companions to abide in her house, which she called “my house,” thereby demonstrating that she did not, at that time at least, have a husband.

When Paul had thus enlightened Lydia, she was baptized, and then her entire household—her servants and helpers—was baptized. This explains how that she “gave heed to the things spoken by Paul.” Throughout the book of Acts, those who believed, or were converted, were baptized immediately. Peter on Pentecost told the inquiring Pentecostian to “repent and be baptized . . . for the remission of sins.” (Acts 2:38.)

There were no children in Lydia’s household, but assuming that there were, the statement that her household was baptized would not have included the children. This is true also because only believing penitents were subjects of baptism, and therefore, the term “household” within the context would include only those of sufficient age so as to obey the gospel from the heart, or understanding.

## Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.

Give time, places, and persons.

### Introduction

Where was Paul and his company when they received the Macedonian call?

Why were they at the above place?

How many years was this after the church began?

Review the extent of Paul’s preaching up to the time of this call.

### The Golden Text

What does the golden text mean by the statement, “The churches were strengthened?”

In what way were the churches strengthened?

What lesson is there in the golden text for churches today?

### Paul’s Second Evangelistic Journey

Identify the person that Paul chose to accompany him on the second journey.

Whom did they add to their company at Lystra?

Review some of the details about Timothy.

How may we account for Paul’s having Timothy circumcised when he had not given way for Titus to be circumcised?

### The Regions of Phrygia and Galatia

Why is the geography of Asia difficult to understand?

Why did they not go into Asia?

Does Luke give any details of their work in Phrygia and Galatia?

What have some scholars assumed in respect to the location of the churches of Galatia?

What did Sir Walter Ramsey say about the geography of Galatia?

What pattern, or custom, did Paul follow in his evangelistic efforts?

### Paul’s Vision at Troas

Discuss Paul’s vision at Troas.

What did he and his companions decide?

How do we know that Luke joined their company at Troas?

### The Voyage from Troas to Philippi

How long did it take them to get to Macedonia?

Review the political divisions of Macedonia.

Review some of the important things about Philippi.

### The Conversion of Lydia and Her Household

Why did Paul’s company not follow their

custom of entering a synagogue in order to begin their teaching at Philippi?

Where did they begin their work?

What was peculiar about this service?

How did the Lord open Lydia's heart?

Review some of the details about Lydia's household.

How do we know that there were no children in her household?

What did she beseech the evangelists to do after she was baptized?

## Lesson V—February 2, 1975

### ATHENS, A CITY OF IDOLS

Acts 17:16-32

#### Lesson Text

16 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he beheld the city full of idols.

17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with them that met him.

18 And certain also of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, What would this babbler say? others, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached Jesus and the resurrection.

19 And they took hold of him, and brought him unto the Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new teaching is, which is spoken by thee?

20 For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.

21 (Now all the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.)

22 And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said,

Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious.

23 For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you.

24 The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being

Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life and breath, and all things;

26 And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation;

27 That they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us:

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said,

For we are also his offspring.

29 Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man.

30 The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent:

31 Inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; but others said, We will hear thee concerning this yet again.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"But certain men clave unto him, and believed."* (Acts 17:34.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 17:1-15.

#### Daily Bible Readings

January 27. M.....	Paul's Labors in Philippi (Acts 16:19-34)
January 28. T.....	Paul's Labors in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9)
January 29. W.....	Paul's Labors in Berea (Acts 17:10-13)
January 30. T.....	Paul Goes to Athens (Acts 17:14-34)
January 31. F.....	Worldly Wisdom Rejected (1 Cor. 1:18-31)

February 1. S..... Moral Condition of the Heathen World (Rom. 1:18-32)  
 February 2. S.....Man's Need for the Gospel (Col. 1:15-23)

TIME.—About A.D. 51, but sometime later than the time of the prior lesson.

PLACES.—Athens of Achaia, at the Areopagus within the city.

PERSONS.—Paul; certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers; the Athenians.

Introduction

In B.C. 332, Alexander the Great sent an epistle to Judda, the high priest of the Jews at Jerusalem, ordering him to send auxiliaries and supplies to the Grecian army in its attack against Tyre. When Judda replied that he would stand by his oath to Darius, Alexander fumed. Gaza fell, and Alexander made haste to move upon Jerusalem. According to Josephus, the Jews prayed all night, and when Alexander met Judda the next day, he bowed to him.

At the confrontation of Alexander and Judda, Grecian culture and Hebrew revelation met head-on. A certain capitulation from both sides was inevitable. For the first time the Greeks had come upon a people who had a body of literature comparable to—and even surpassing—their own. From that day forward, the Greeks were destined to play a vital role in the history of the Jews; and likewise, the Jews were destined through their prophets and the promised Messiah to strike a deadly blow to the idolatry of the Greeks.

In A.D. 51—more than two and one-half centuries after Alexander's confrontation with the high priest Judda—the peerless apostle Paul stood on Mars Hill in Athens, Greece, in a face-to-face confrontation with the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers of that city. The city and the people were very much unlike any that Paul had ever encountered before or would ever encounter thereafter.

ter thereafter.

Athens—the eye of Greece, the mother of arts and eloquence and sculpture and architecture and theaters and schools! The city with more images than in all of the rest of Greece put together, was described by Xenophon as “one great altar, one great offering to the gods.” In a spirit of satire, Petronius said that in Athens it is easier to find a god than a man.

At hens' streets had often been trodden by the great: there Socrates walked with his disciples; there the Academy of Plato assembled; there the Lyceum of Aristotle met for study, and Alexander was one of the enrollees; there a state of pure democracy was developed, and there groundwork of America's public school system was laid.

Athens was also the home city of Pericles, a statesman, who was responsible for the building of the most beautiful of temples, the Parthenon; the home of Sophocles, a classical philologist, who wrote about one hundred twenty plays; and the home of Demosthenes, a statesman, who was regarded as the very greatest of Athenian orators.

Athens consisted of all of these features and characteristics, and more too. Significant is the fact that in this city of idolatrous antiquity, the peerless apostle Paul stood on Mars Hill to speak to the men of Athens, and particularly to the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers who were present.

The Golden Text

“But certain men clave unto him, and believed.” As Paul spoke to the Athenians on Mars Hill, he affirmed that God had furnished “assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him [Christ] from the dead.” Paul did not at this point identify the man who was raised from the dead. His intention was to hold his hearers in suspense, but the mention of the resurrection was

too much for those Athenians. They broke off his discourse.

The results were varied: some mocked; some said we will hear thee again; and some clave to him and believed. One of the number who believed was Dionysius, the Areopagite—one of the twelve judges of the Areopagus Court. Another who believed was Damaris, a woman of considerable distinc-

tion. Those two, together with others, stuck close to Paul. What glorious results these were that took place in the Athens of idols. Years before, two members of the court of the Great Sanhedrin—Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea—had believed. Later, Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus, believed, and

then came Dionysius, the Areopagite, who also believed.

Luke does not record how long Paul remained in Athens. There is a great likelihood that other converts were added. Eusebius, the father of church historians, wrote of Dionysius who was converted by Paul. He stated that Dionysius was the first bishop of Athens.

### The Text Explained

#### *An Overview*

At the close of the last lesson Paul and his company were residing in the house of Lydia and were preaching to the people of that city. Their mission in Philippi was soon terminated, however, when Paul and Silas cast a spirit of divination out of a young maid who went before them and cried: "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim unto you the way of salvation." (Acts 16:16, 17.) Seeing that their means of gain was gone, the masters of the maid laid hold of Paul and Silas and dragged them before the rulers. Paul and Silas were beaten and then thrown in prison. Their imprisonment resulted in the conversion of the jailor and his household.

The day following, the magistrates ordered: "Let those men go." But Paul said: "They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men that are Romans, ... let them come themselves and bring us out." The magistrates feared when they heard that they were Romans, and they came and besought them, and brought them out, and asked them to go away from the city.

#### *At Thessalonica*

Leaving Luke and Timothy with the infant church at Philippi, Paul and Silas traveled on the Roman road through two large influential cities—Amphipolis and Apollonia—and hurried on for one hundred miles from Philippi to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue. The synagogues of the Jews played a very important role and had a very significant place in the early preaching of the gospel. They were stepping stones, or launching pads, for the preaching of the apostles. Paul's custom was to go to large central and vibrant cities where there was at least one synagogue.

Thus he used the synagogue as a base for his preaching of the gospel. Paul and Silas preached in the synagogue at Thessalonica for three sabbath days, but the Jews, being moved with jealousy, took certain vile heathens and set the city in an uproar, thereby terminating Paul's stay at Thessalonica.

#### *At Beroea*

Beroea, though somewhat secluded, was sixty miles away, and in that city there was a strong synagogue, and so "the brethren sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Beroea." The Jews of Beroea were more noble than the Jews of Thessalonica in that they examined the scriptures daily, to see whether or not the things taught by Paul and Silas were so. Many of them, along with the Greeks, believed.

Jews from Thessalonica came and stirred up the multitude in Beroea, and brethren, as a means of protection as well as fellowship, conducted Paul to Athens. Paul instructed those brethren to have Silas and Timothy come to him, with all speed. Thus Paul entered upon his mission in the city of Athens. He, together with his companions, had succeeded in establishing three churches in radiating centers—Philippi, Thessalonica, and Beroea.

#### *Paul's Reaction to Athens*

(Acts 17:16, 17)

*Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he beheld the city full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with them that met him.*

As would be expected, there was a synagogue in Athens, and there Paul began to reason with the Jews

and the devout persons—the Greek proselytes of the gate—but his spirit was so provoked within him as he beheld the city full of idols that he began immediately to reason with the people in the marketplace. The likelihood is that the Jew's of the synagogue were so overwhelmed by the spirit of Grecian culture, learning, and idolatry that for the most part they did not react either negatively or positively to Paul's preaching concerning the resurrection. There was, therefore, no reason why Paul should not daily take advantage of other audiences.

### The Stoic and Epicurean Philosophers (Acts 17:18)

*And certain also of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, What would this babbler say? others, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached Jesus and the resurrection.*

The marketplace was not solely a place of commerce—a place of buying and selling. Like the country towns of the United States on a Saturday, the marketplace was a public meeting place for idlers, kinsfolk conversations, the general dissemination of news, persons of leisure, philosophers, and the like. Here Paul conversed and reasoned with those of any group or class that met with him. In time the professional philosophers took note and encountered him. When they engaged Paul in discussion, the audiences naturally increased.

Some of those who heard the discussions and the press of Paul's message mocked. They asked, "What would this babbler [seed-picker] say?" The sense of the question was that what Paul said amounted to absolutely nothing—that it was the case of a man's picking up an idea here and there and speaking as if he were an authority. Others who heard said: "He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached Jesus and the resurrection."

Under these circumstances the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered Paul. "And they took hold of him, and brought him unto the Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new teaching is.

which is spoken by thee? For thou bringest certain foreign things to our ears: We would know therefore what these things mean." Luke at this point added by way of explanation for the reader that "the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing." Paul's presence and teaching in Athens was thus an occasion of strong delight for the Athenians and particularly the professional philosophers. He was in no danger of arrest and scourging as he had been when he had spoken on past occasions.

The Epicureans derived from the philosopher Epicurus, B. C. 340-272. The Epicureans, like the organic evolutionists today, contended that the world was not created; but rather, they explained that the world was formed by a concourse of atoms. They affirmed that the soul at death dissipates into the elements and that the dissipation is forever the end of a man. They concluded, therefore, that the highest and loftiest aim of man is necessarily gratification, whether esthetic and refined or gross and sordid, depending on the individual person's inclinations and taste.

The Stoics derived from Zeno, B. C. 336-260, who taught at Stoa, or the porch. Thus his teaching came to be referred to as "Stoicism." The Stoics believed that there is no God, except as the combined forces and laws of the universe might be called God. They, therefore, condemned the worship of images and the use of temples. According to them matter and deity are inseparable, and the soul at death, being corporeal, is burnt or absorbed into the universe, or into God. The Stoics concluded, therefore, that the highest and loftiest aim of man is reason. They affirmed that the person who followed reason, with an unconcern for pleasure or pain, was perfect and entire, needing nothing more. Their doctrine called for suicide as a way of ending one's life when reason so dictated.

Such were the philosophies of the Epicureans and Stoics. Their antipodal philosophies united in ascribing to the soul a nonexistence after death.

**Paul Escorted to the Areopagus**  
(Acts 17:19-21)

*And they took hold of him, and brought him unto the Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new teaching is, which is spoken by thee? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would, know therefore what these things mean. (Now all the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.)*

The Epicurean and Stoic philosophers escorted Paul to the Areopagus—or the hill of Mars. The hill is difficult to climb, and the top is in a natural state of protruding rock. Here the Areopagus, or the twelve judges of the Athenian court, sat in open view to render decisions involving grave matters of crime and religion, and here the philosophers escorted Paul. He was thus to explain his new doctrine.

Paul was faced with certain limitations. His usual approach of "opening and alleging from the scriptures" would have no bearing upon the Athenians. They were ignorant of God who gave the Scriptures, and they were equally ignorant of the long expected Messiah, who was the fulfillment of those Scriptures. With such limitations, "Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus," and spoke.

Some commentators have indicated that on this occasion Paul catered to the educated, that this was a philosophical approach, that his message was one of "excellency of speech" and of wisdom, that his speech met with failure, that he never tried such a philosophical approach again; and that his speech to the Athenians was on his mind as he wrote the Corinthians: "And, I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." (1 Cor. 2:1, 2.)

In light of such averments, some pertinent questions are in order: How else might Paul have spoken with effect under the prevailing circumstances? Did Paul speak by inspiration? Why did Luke report the speech in full? Why did Luke

make Paul's speech the chief part of his report of the work in Athens? Without doubt Paul's speech did not accomplish all he desired it to accomplish, but it was not a failure. A church of the Lord was raised, as it were, upon the great altar to the gods, the city of Athens.

**Paul's Speech on Mars Hill**  
(Acts 17:22-31)

*And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said. Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and, all things; and he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said. For we are also his offspring. Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think, that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man. The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

Paul's speech was a masterpiece. It logically divides into the classical order of the Greek orators, with Introduction, Body and Conclusion. An analysis of Paul's speech is in order just here.

**Introduction**

"Ye men of Athens, in all things I

perceive that ye are very religious." This was Paul's polite, simple, and direct, and skillful "attention step." He was careful not to join the Athenians and the foreign residents in his address. Such was not allowed in Athens. The Athenians were much complimented by Paul's having designated them as being very religious.

"For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD." Human nature is very much the same in all ages. Men today enjoy hearing a foreigner speak of their city and his visit through the streets of the city and to the city's chief points of interest, both geographical and historical. Paul had passed along the streets of Athens, and the Athenians were happy to hear him say so. They were happy that he had observed the objects of their worship, including the altar to an unknown God. They were not for one moment offended by Paul's reference to their objects of worship. Thus by his general statement of fact, Paul was establishing a good rapport with his audience.

"What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you." The Athenians, by means of their altar to an unknown God, tacitly admitted that there was at least one god whom they did not know. Paul in substance said: "The God that you do not know, I do know and will set him forth unto you." Paul projected the Athenians' need for a knowledge of the unknown god; and he assured them that he would submit the information which they needed. He would satisfy the need of those Athenians by reciting the facts and characteristics of their unknown god, and he, thereby, avoided the appearance of introducing a foreign god of another city or nation.

### Body

"The God that made the world and all things therein. . . ." Here Paul introduced God—not a god, but the one and only God, the creator of the world and all things therein. The Greeks claimed no such for any single one of their gods. Paul's affirmation was a contradiction of the teaching of the Epicu-

reans who believed that the many gods were responsible for the many parts of creation; and further, Paul's affirmation was a contradiction of the teaching of the Stoics who believed that matter—the combined forces and laws of the universe—is eternal.

"He being Lord of heaven and earth dwelleth not in temples made with hands." Here Paul referred to great marble temples built for the dwelling places of the gods. Solomon had said: "But will God in very deed dwell on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded." (1 Kings 8:27.) Paul's point was that no temple could house the creator of heaven and earth.

"Neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." Here Paul placed the true God in direct contrast with the Athenians' gods. Those heathens thought their gods had needs that could be served by men's hands. Thus they placed food and drink at the altars and in the temples for the welfare of their gods, but Paul affirmed that the true God giveth to all life, breath, and all things. He cannot be served, therefore, with man's hands as if he, the giver of all, needed anything. No Athenian was willing to ascribe such power, completeness, and independence to any single one of his gods.

"And he made of one [one blood, K.J.V.] every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." The Greeks thought that a certain god formed or made a nation while still another god formed or made another nation. On this basis the Greeks, and all heathens, conceived of the many gods of the many nations. They thought of the gods as vying and fighting against each other. Paul affirmed, however, that all nations derived from the same source—whether white, black, yellow or tan. Human blood is different from all other blood. It makes for the cross-fertilization among all the human races. Paul's affirmation was in fact prescientific.

". . . having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of

their habitation." Here Paul affirmed that God appointed the seasons and national boundaries of all the nations which sprang from the one man whom God created. In short, God regulated, or regulates, all the nations.

". . . that they should seek after God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us." Paul here spoke of the supreme purpose of God—that all men everywhere should seek after God and find him. God's will through the ages was that he should remain known to man, but man refused to have him in his knowledge. Even without revelation, there was and is sufficient evidence for the existence of God for man to "feel after him" for he is not far from anyone. When any man asserts that man cannot prove that there is a God, that he can only believe there is one, he has gone much too far in his assertion. God is so near at hand that man anywhere may be expected to "feel after him." "The heavens declare the glory of God." (Psalm 19:1.) Such natural revelations cannot take the place of supernatural revelation, but they can fit a person to believe and conform to the teaching of the supernatural as it may be set forth to him.

". . . for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain of your own poets have said. For we are also his offspring." Paul here speaks of the omnipresence of God. He is everywhere. In him man has his being. Paul's exact quoting of the Grecian poets served to show that certain Greeks had been feeling after God and had reached a point of truth—the truth being that all men are the offspring of God. Further, his quotation served to show that he was quite conversant with Greek literature. On two other occasions Paul quoted from the Greek poets—in his epistle to the Corinthians and in his letter to Titus. (1 Cor. 15:33; Tit. 1:12.) Paul was fully qualified by education and culture alone to speak on Mars Hill before the learned Athenians.

"Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of

man." Those Grecians were schooled in the force of logic, and they of all men were capable of understanding how that if man is the offspring of God then the Godhead cannot be like unto precious metals or stone graven by the art and device of man. There is absolutely no life in such graven stones and devices, but man is alive. He thinks, he speaks, and he moves. Paul's statement here is very self-vibrant. If man is alive—vibrant—then God is necessarily alive also, since man is the offspring of God.

### *Conclusion*

"The times of ignorance God overlooked." In his epistle to the Romans, Paul speaks of "the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God." (See Rom. 3:1-23, 30). At Lystra, Paul said that God "in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways." (Acts 14:16.) One may inquire as to the extent in which God passed over the sins of the Gentile world. Were the Gentiles left as an object lesson to show how low man will fall in the absence of revelation? Man, this side of eternity, may never quite understand or give answers to the questions that can be raised in this regard. One thing is certain, God did not regard idolatry and moral sins as being innocent. The want of revelation among the Gentiles was beyond question a mitigating factor in their behalf.

". . . but he now commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent." Thus Paul called upon the Athenians to repent. Their "fullness of time" had come. The plan of redemption for all men was complete, and the universal call to repentance was being set forth.

". . . inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained." Here Paul strikes at the conscience of his audience. A day of judgment had been set, and those Athenians would be present. Paul affirmed that God will execute the judgment in the person of a man whom God had ordained, but he did not at that point reveal the identity of the man.



. . . Whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." In just this skillful way, Paul affirmed the power and hope of the resurrection of Christ. God, according to Paul, had given assurance unto all men by raising a man from the dead. The resurrection is the very apex of the Christian faith. If one man can be raised from the dead then, all men can be raised. Neither the Epicureans nor the Stoics believed that a soul has existence after death or that a body can be raised from the tomb. At the point of the affirmation concerning

the resurrection, Paul was interrupted, and thus his speech to the Athenians was ended.

### The Results Which Followed

(Acts 17:32)

*Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; but others said, We will hear thee concerning this yet again.*

While the results were disappointing, Paul had not failed. There were converts, and an infant church had been established. Now, there were four churches on the European continent—Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?

Repeat the golden text.

Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

When did the Greeks first meet a people that had literature which surpassed theirs?

Review some of the notable things about the city and people of Athens.

#### The Golden Text

The text has reference to what event?

Why did the Athenians break off Paul's discourse to them about the Unknown God?

#### An Overview

Review the activities of Paul's company between the last lesson and this lesson.

What was the significance of the synagogues in the early preaching of the gospel?

How far was Thessalonica from Philippi?

How long did Paul preach in the synagogue at Thessalonica?

What were the results of his preaching?

How far was Berea from Thessalonica?

What difference was there between the Jews of Thessalonica and those of Berea?

Why did Paul leave Berea so soon?

What message did he send back?

#### Paul's Reaction to Athens

Why was Paul's spirit provoked at Athens?

What success did he have in the synagogue?

#### The Stoic and Epicurean Philosophers

What uses were made of the marketplace?

Who encountered Paul in the marketplace?

What did they do with him?

What explanation does Luke give of the Athenians?

What were some of the corrupt teachings of the Epicurean philosophers?

What were some of the beliefs of the Stoics?

#### Paul Escorted to the Areopagus

Review some of the things about the Areopagus.

What limitations did Paul face at Athens?

What assumption have some commentators made about his speech to the Athenians?

What difficulties are presented by the assumption?

#### Paul's Speech on Mars Hill

Into what order is Paul's speech divided?

How did he establish rapport with his audience?

How did his affirmation about God contradict the teaching of the Epicureans?

What prescientific statement did he make about man?

What did the Greeks believe about the different nations?

How did Paul conclude his speech?

Review the results of his speech.

## Lesson VI—February 9, 1975

### PAUL'S LABORS IN CORINTH

#### Text

Acts

1:1-16

1 After these things he departed from Athens, and came to Corinth.

2 And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a man of Pontus by race, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had

commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome; and he came unto them;

3 And because he was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their trade they were tentmakers.

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks.

5 But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

6 And when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook out his raiment and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

7 And he departed thence, and went into the house of a certain man named Titus Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8 And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

9 And the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid,

but speak and hold not thy peace:

10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city.

11 And he dwelt *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment-seat,

13 Saying, This man persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.

14 But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If indeed it were a matter of wrong or of wicked villainy, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you:

15 But if they are questions about words and names and your own law. look to it yourselves; I am not minded to be a judge of these matters.

16 And he drove them from the judgment-seat.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.” (Acts 18:8.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 18:18-28.

### Daily Bible Readings

February 3.	M.....	Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:1-11)
February 4.	T.....	Paul Before Gallio (Acts 18:12-17)
February 5.	W.....	Carnality of the Corinthians (1 Cor. 3:1-9)
February 6.	T.....	Man's Wisdom Versus God's (1 Cor. 2:1-14)
February 7.	F.....	God Revealed through Christ (Heb. 1:1-9)
February 8.	S.....	Division in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:10-18)
February 9.	S.....	The Superiority of Love (1 Cor. 13:1-13)

TIME.—A.D. 51-52.

PLACE.—Corinth of Achaia.

PERSONS.—Apollus; Paul; Aquila and Priscilla; Silas and Timothy.

### Introduction

When Paul left Athens and walked the forty-five mile distance to Corinth he moved from the capital of culture to the capital of commerce of the Greek world—from a free Greek city to a Roman colony. Athens was a drowsy aristocratic city that lived amidst its memories and glories of its past preeminence, but Corinth, like Tyre of former centuries, was the mart of nations between the Asiatic and Roman worlds. Corinth was a thriving city. Its streets and marketplaces were teeming with men of all races, and nations, and climes of the then known world.

The ministry of the apostle Paul

was so interwoven with the city of Corinth that no student of the Bible can afford to make a serious study of Paul's epistles to the Corinthians—and for that matter, his epistles to the Thessalonians—without his acquiring considerable knowledge relative to the history, the geography, and the morals of that city which was so famous for its wealth, its luxury, and its immorality.

Unlike other occasions when Paul was driven from one city to another, he moved from Athens to Corinth of his own accord. The special burden upon his heart at the time was the plight of the brethren in Macedonia, particularly at Thes-

salonica, and thus he intended only a short stay at Corinth. (1 Thess. 2:17, 18; 3:9-13.) In the absence of divine revelation he could not have foreseen a stay of a year and six months—the longest stay of his ministry except for his stay at Ephesus.

Like the Israelites whom God through providence placed on the fertile crescent—the bridge between Egypt and Asia—as a means of contact with and influence upon the heathen world, Paul through divine guidance was stationed in Corinth for a long stay—where the Isthmus bridge also made for a crossroads between the Peloponnesus and Northern Greece and also for a crossroads between Asia and Rome—so that he, too, might have a greater means of contact with and influence upon the heathen world. (Acts 18:9-11.) While in Corinth Paul entered upon the third phase or period of his most eventful ministry—the beginning of the period of his inspired writings which came, in time, to make up the largest portion of the New Testament canon. His epistles, particularly to the church at Corinth, give the student the only, yet partial, insight into his personal life as an apostle—his emotional feelings; his burdens of heart; his fears and anxieties; his physical hardships; his physical illnesses; and his physical weakness and weariness through trials of persecutions, through the toil of long arduous journeys, and through the burden of a premature old age. Paul was the Jeremiah of the New Testament.

The city of Corinth had a long history. It was founded, according to the best glimpses of history, about B.C. 1350. The Romans completely destroyed it in B.C. 146, and it lay in ruins until B.C. 46, at which time Julius Caesar established a Roman colony on the Isthmus—or neck—which joins the northern mainland of Greece with the southern mainland, or the Peloponnesus. Later Augustus made it the capital of Achaia, which included Thessaly as well as Greece. From the time of its refounding by Julius Caesar merchants began to flock to the Isthmus; and the city of Corinth, which lay immediately at the western end of the Isthmus, ex-

perienced a hearty growth which made it the wealthiest and most important city in Greece.

The Peloponnesus, or southern portion of the mainland of Greece, is a peninsula—a body of land nearly surrounded by water and connected with a larger body by a neck or isthmus. The neck or isthmus connecting the two mainlands of Greece was the geographical feature which made the difference. It was the land pass that joined the two land areas of Greece, and it was the gateway between the eastern and western seas.

The isthmus at its narrowest point was only four miles wide, and this small strip of land separates the Saronic Gulf on the east and the Corinthian Gulf on the west. The two gulfs open respectively into the Aegean Sea on the east and Ionian Sea on the west. There were two good harbors on the Saronic Gulf—Cenchreae and Schoenus—and there was one good harbor on the Corinthian Gulf—Lechaeum. The harbors, Cenchreae and Schoenus, were open on the east for ships from Asia; and the harbor Lechaeum was open for ships from Italy and Spain. These harbors were quite safe and inviting; whereas, the Mediterranean waters around the cape—Cape Malera—were very treacherous and dangerous. Thus Corinth—on the isthmus—built a “slipping through,” a wooden tramway, in which ships were drawn for a lucrative toll the four miles land distance from one sea to the other. The tramway was sufficiently sturdy for the usual trade vessels of that day. Even Augustus—B.C. 31—moved his fleet through the “slipping through” when in hot pursuit of Antony and Cleopatra after the battle of Actium. The Isthmus was to the Corinthians and to commerce in general what the island city of Tyre of prior centuries had been to the Phoenicians and to commerce in general at that period of time.

Corinth was famous for its wealth, its luxury, and its immorality. On the summit of the mount near the city of Corinth was the temple of Aphrodite, the goddess, and identified by the Romans as Venus. This goddess owned more than a thousand temple “virgins”

whose sandal message left in the sand as they plied their trade, read: "Follow me." The system of prostitution, promoted by the priests of Aphrodite—who received the income therefrom—was a major industry of the city. The people of the city looked on these "hospitable women" as public benefactors. On account of these women, ship captains and mariners looked forward to a layover in Corinth. There they freely surrendered their money. The geographic advantage of the isthmus and courtesans' trade combined to crowd the city with people everywhere. Those women were still plying their ancient trade in Paul's day, as is evidenced by his

denouncement of them in his first epistle to the Corinthians. (1 Cor. 6:15-20.)

Jews flocked in great numbers to Corinth, the metropolis of the Peloponnesus, along with Romans, Greeks, and Orientals. The city was thoroughly Roman. The Panhellenic Isthmian games were played there every two years, and those games attracted many visitors to the city. In Paul's day, the population of the city was about four hundred thousand. Here Paul entered upon a mission that was to be echoed around the world by means of the peoples' coming to and going from the city of Corinth.

### The Golden Text

*"Many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."* With respect to the gospel of Christ, there are facts to be believed, commands to be obeyed, and promises to be enjoyed. The Corinthians heard the facts of the gospel, they believed those facts, they repented of their sins, and they were baptized into Christ for the remission of their sins, just as did the Pentecostians of prior years. (Acts 2.)

Scriptural baptism is predicated upon faith, repentance, and the good confession. If those Corinthians did not repent of their sins, and thus did not make the good confession of faith, their baptism was sheer mockery. Upon their hearing, the Corinthians believed. Luke states this fact in such a way

so as to reflect the fact that their belief included repentance and the good confession.

Unfortunately, the primary principles of the gospel—including the conditions of salvation—are not being stressed today, generally speaking, as they were stressed by the preachers of a former generation. Too often today, the preaching in a series of gospel meetings is of such a nature and approach that a sinner could attend for several services without learning what to do to be saved. The primary principles of the gospel must be preached again and again. Wherever Paul and his companions went, they preached faith, repentance, confession, and baptism.

### The Text Explained

#### Pan! Formed Acquaintance of Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:1-3)

*After these things he departed from Athens, and came to Corinth. And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a man of Pontus by race, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome: and he came unto them; and because he was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their trade they were tentmakers.*

Luke's record indicates that Paul did not remain long in Athens after his discourse to the Athenians on

Mars Hill. Luke merely states that "after these things" Paul departed—that is, he left of his own accord and came to Corinth. Thus Paul moved from the Grecian capital of culture to the Grecian capital of commerce.

In his epistle to the Corinthians some five years later, Paul wrote: "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." (1 Cor. 2:3.) This statement gives some indications relative to Paul's emotional state of mind as he entered upon the work at Corinth. He was tired, discouraged, and lonesome. Further, he was penniless. Though a man of letters in his

own right as well as an apostle of Christ, he was forced to resort for means of a livelihood to the Jewish trade that he had learned as a youth—the trade of tentmaking.

Under those prevailing circumstances, Paul “found a certain Jew named Aquila, a man of Pontus” a province in Asia Minor, lately come to Corinth with his wife Priscilla, and because Paul was of the same trade—that of tentmaking—he abode with them, and they wrought.” Every Jewish boy was taught a trade. Rabbi Juda said: “He that teacheth not his son a trade teacheth him to be a thief.” The Talmud read: “What is commanded of a father toward his son? To circumcise him, to teach the law, to teach him a trade.” Through the trade learned in his youth, Paul formed the acquaintance of a man and his wife who were to be his companions and fellow workers, in one way or another, for the rest of his life. There is no indication that Aquila and Priscilla were at that time Christians, but later they expounded unto Apollos “the way of God more accurately.”

Aquila and Priscilla had of late been driven out of Rome, together with all the other Jews, by Claudius the Emperor. Claudius was emperor of Rome from A.D. 41 to 54, at which time there were some 20,000 Jews in the city of Rome. Claudius had been quite friendly to the Jews, and he drove the Jews from the city of Rome—not from Italy—because of their tumultuous actions, and that not before they had been sufficiently warned.

One very interesting observation relative to Aquila and Priscilla is the fact that they traveled from place to place so freely; from Pontus to Rome, from Rome to Corinth, from Corinth to Ephesus, and from Ephesus to Rome again. A second interesting observation relative to them is the fact that out of five New Testament references, Priscilla is named before Aquila. This would indicate that Priscilla was the more energetic and better informed of the two. (Acts 18:2, 26; 1 Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:3; 2 Tim. 4:19.)

**Paul Reasoned In The Synagogue**  
(Acts 18:4)

*And he reasoned in the syna-*

*gogue every sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks.*

While Paul wrought with Aquila in the trade of tentmaking, he took opportunity to “reason in the synagogue every sabbath.” Paul was not still observing the sabbath as a religious holy day; but rather, the sabbath day and his synagogue rights as a Jew afforded him a base for his preaching Christ. He “persuaded both Jews and Greeks”—apparently the Greek proselytes of the gate. His preaching seemingly failed to command the attention that it had in other cities. His position as a tentmaker preacher may very well have made a difference.

**Silas and Timothy Joined Paul at Corinth**

(Acts 18:5)

*But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.*

Paul had waited for Silas and Timothy at Athens. Timothy in time did join Paul at Athens, but for only a short period of time, as Paul’s letter to the church at Thessalonica indicates. Paul wrote: “When we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; and sent Timothy . . . to establish you.” (1 Thess. 3:1, 2.) If Silas joined Paul at Athens, he, too, was sent on a mission. Thus Paul was alone in Athens, and he was alone in the beginning of his work in Corinth.

Apparently Silas and Timothy were together when they arrived in Corinth. Their joining Paul was a great source of encouragement to him, and he took on new life and renewed courage and “was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.” Paul had previously “reasoned” with those Jews, and now he spoke forthrightly concerning Jesus. Those Jews were thus faced with an acceptance of Jesus as the Christ or with an outright rejection of him.

**Paul Separated Himself from the Synagogue**

(Acts 18:6)

*And when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook out his raiment and said unto them,*

*Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.*

The Jews "opposed themselves and blasphemed." This was no new experience with Paul. The Jews in Corinth reacted as he had often seen Jews react throughout his nineteen years of apostleship.

At Antioch of Pisidia, Paul shook off the dust of his feet—an action performed in the street—against the rebellious Jews, but here "he shook out his raiment"—an action performed indoors—against them. (Acts 13:51.) In this action Paul showed his deep emotion, and he declared, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go to the Gentiles." His words constituted a strong indictment and judgment. Paul had performed his responsibility and he would not continue with the Jews of the synagogue further lest he "cast his pearls before swine." Like other synagogues of Jews before them, the Jews of the synagogue at Corinth had "judged themselves unworthy of eternal life." (Acts 13:26.)

Paul "departed thence, and went into the house of a certain man named Titus Justus." This man was evidently a prominent proselyte of the gate. His having "a house that joined hard to the synagogue" indicated that he was a man of some means. Though not sufficiently convinced so as to obey the gospel, he was fair and honest and willing to hear and consider. His house came to be the new place of meeting.

#### **Many Corinthians Hearing Believed and Were Baptized** (Acts 18:8)

*And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.*

In Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, he states that he personally baptized Crispus. (1 Cor. 1:14.) The baptism of Crispus and his house was bound to have a tremendous influence upon the Jewish community, both then and also later.

"Many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." The

Corinthians were the pagan Greeks. They had no connection with the synagogue. Paul's two epistles to the church at Corinth indicate that the congregation was made up, predominantly, of Gentiles.

#### **The Lord Personally Encouraged Paul**

(Acts 18:9-11)

*And the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city. And he dwelt there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.*

The likelihood is that Paul entertained fears of his continuing at Corinth lest he might excite an attack upon himself that would bring persecution upon the newly made converts, as had been the case in the young church at Thessalonica. The brethren at Thessalonica were constantly on his mind. He had sent Timothy from Athens to learn of their state. From Timothy, he had learned that while they had suffered they had remained strong. Such, however, might not be the case at Corinth, he probably reasoned.

Therefore, the Lord gave Paul the encouragement he needed to continue at Corinth. "Speak and hold not thy peace," the Lord said, thereby indicating that Paul, while preaching the word, was being over-cautious in his efforts to refrain from setting the disobedient vicious Jews in an uproar. The Lord assured Paul that he would suffer no personal hurt. Further, the Lord announced: "I have much people in this city." Those people had not yet heard the gospel, nor were they already God's elect. They were simply of a disposition of heart to accept the gospel when they heard it.

The result of the Lord's communication to Paul by means of the vision was that Paul remained in Corinth for a year and a half. Herein is seen the divine guidance which accompanied the preaching of the word. Paul was at the crossroads of the commercial world. Many who heard and obeyed would be carrying the gospel to other parts.

The church at Corinth, through

means of Paul's long stay, was one of the very best taught churches that he had established. If someone should raise the question of why so many spiritual problems in the church at Corinth existed if it were so well taught, the fact remains that no one could know how many more spiritual problems the church would have had if it had not been so well taught.

**Paul Wins a Victory  
in Gallio's Court**  
(Acts 18: 12-16)

*But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment-seat, saying, This man persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If indeed it were a matter of wrong or of wicked villainy, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: but if they are questions about words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves; I am not minded to be a judge of these matters. And he drove them from the judgment-seat.*

In time—Luke did not indicate how long—"the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment-

seat." Gallio, a brother of the Stoic philosopher Seneca, was at that time the new proconsul of Achaia. The position and influence of the Jews of Corinth was demonstrated by their having charged Paul with being in violation of their own law. They said: "This man persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law"—that is the law of Moses. They apparently thought that their great numbers would move the new proconsul to punish and to banish Paul, but when Gallio ascertained that the dispute was over questions about the Jews' law, he said: "If indeed it were a matter of wrong or of wicked villainy, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: but if they are questions about words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves: I am not minded to be a judge of these matters." Thus the Lord's assurance to Paul that "no man shall set on thee to harm thee" was fulfilled. When Gallio threw the Jews' case out of court, they persistently remained, and he then "drove them from the judgment-seat." Gallio's proconsulship dates from May 1, 52 to May 1, 53, as has been established by a limestone inscription from the 1909 finding of the Hagias Elias quarries near Delphi. Thus Paul remained in Corinth until the spring of 53.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of our lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

How did Paul probably travel from Athens to Corinth?  
What special burden was upon his heart when he first arrived at Corinth?  
Review some of the things about the location and history of Corinth.  
What were some of the notable things about the people of Corinth?

#### Golden Text

Explain the significance of the golden text.  
What are the things that precede scriptural baptism?  
What is unfortunate about much of the preaching of today?

#### Paul Formed Acquaintance of Aquila and Priscilla

Review some of the things about Paul's friendship with Aquila and Priscilla.  
Compare the city of Corinth with Athens.  
Give some of the interesting things about Aquila and Priscilla.

#### Paul Reasoned in the Synagogue

Why did Paul attend the synagogue services every sabbath day?  
How may we account for the Greeks that attended the synagogue services?

#### Silas and Timothy Joined Paul

What did Paul do after Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia to Corinth?  
For what purpose had Paul sent Timothy from Athens back to Macedonia?

#### Paul Separated Himself from the Synagogue

What did Paul do when the Jews "opposed themselves and blasphemed"?  
Was the conduct of the Jews a new experience for Paul?  
What indictment did he make against them?  
Give the meaning of his statement—"Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean."  
Where did Paul go after leaving the synagogue?

#### Many Corinthians Hearing Believed and Were Baptized

Was Crispus an unusual synagogue ruler?

Was Crispus baptized?

The Lord Personally Encouraged Paul  
What is the meaning of the Lord's statement, "I have much people in this city"?  
How long did Paul stay at Corinth?

Paul Wins a Victory  
in Gallio's Court

What charges did the Jews bring against Paul?  
How did Gallio respond to their charges?  
What were the dates of Gallio's proconsulship?

Lesson VII—February 16, 1975

SUCCESS IN EPHEBUS

Lesson Text

Acts 19:1-10

1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples:

2 And he said unto them, Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed? And they said unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given.

3 And he said, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said, Into John's baptism.

4 And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus.

5 And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

7 And they were in all about twelve men.

8 And he entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading as to the things concerning the kingdom of God.

9 But when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

10 And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

GOLDEN TEXT. — "So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed."

(Acts 19:20.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 19:11-20.

Daily Bible Readings

- February 10. M..... Paul's First Visit to Ephesus (Acts 18:18-21)
- February 11. T..... Apollos in Ephesus (Acts 18:24-28)
- February 12. W..... Paul and the Twelve in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-12)
- February 13. T..... Peter and John in Samaria (Acts 8:14-25)
- February 14. F..... Paul's Letter to the Ephesians (Eph. 1:1-14)
- February 15. S..... The Lord's Letter to the Church in Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7)
- February 16. S..... Paul Encourages the Ephesian Church (Eph. 2:11-22)

TIME.—A.D. 53-56.

PLACE.—Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia

Minor.

PERSONS.—Paul and the Ephesian disciples.

Introduction

The student should bear in mind that the aim for the first quarter study in Acts of Apostles is "to examine the details of our Lord's church in Acts and to catch a glimpse of the zeal, faithfulness, and fervor of the early disciples." Paul, of course, is the central figure in

this study. No serious student can make this study from lesson to lesson without being amazed to observe Paul—his successes and failures—as he traveled long distances under hard physical and mental strains and fears. Other than the Christ, himself, no man ever suf-



ferred so much and accomplished so much as did Paul. He is to the New Testament—with respect to suffering, hardships, and loneliness—what Jeremiah was to the Old Testament. The angel that came to comfort Daniel addressed him: "O Daniel, thou man greatly beloved." (Dan. 10:11.) Surely the peerless apostle Paul is among that number who are "greatly beloved."

Paul wrote the Philippians: "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." (Phil. 3:8.) Actually, Paul's statement to the Philippians was an understatement. Christians who are so caught up with and in the exciting joys and pastime of this present affluent society, with all its comforts and pleasures, can well afford to consider the loneliness, hardships, and sufferings of the apostle Paul.

When Paul terminated his work in Corinth, he had been on the European continent for about three years. During that period of time he had established churches in the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth. When Paul left Corinth, Aquila and Priscilla accompanied him as far as the city of Ephesus. In their home he had resided while in Corinth and with them he had wrought in tent-making for his livelihood for the entire time that he was in Corinth.

Luke gave no explanation as to why Aquila and Priscilla went to Ephesus and took up residence there. The very natural conclusion would be that the city of Ephesus was to be the next focal point of Paul's missionary efforts; and therefore, Aquila and Priscilla moved to that city in order to establish a base not only for Paul's preaching there but also to provide for him a means for a livelihood through the trade of tentmaking.

One would conclude from circumstantial matters that Aquila and Priscilla had no children, that they had a yen for travel, that they were engaged in a profitable trade which could be established in almost any city with little effort or preparation, and that they were so dedicated to the cause of Christ that they were willing to move to any city where they could make a greater contribution to the furtherance of the gospel. Their instruction to Apollos "in the way of God more accurately" would lend credence to such conclusions.

Ephesus, the city of the present study, was the capital of Asia, a province in Asia Minor. It was a large and wealthy city—larger and wealthier even than Corinth. It was a city of Greek culture and of Oriental superstition. One of the seven wonders of the world—the temple of Diana—was there, and a synagogue of the Jews was there. It was truly one of the great centers of the Roman World.

### The Golden Text

*"So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed"* The thought is that not only did the word grow, but it did so over adverse forces. It prevailed against antagonistic Jews, and against idol-

atrous Gentiles. It grew from community to community and from city to city, and all Asia heard the word of the Lord. No wonder the churches of Asia Minor came to be so well-known and influential.

### The Text Explained

#### Questions that Pertain to John's Baptism (Acts 19:1-3)

*And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples: and he said unto them. Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed? And they said unto him, Nay, we did not so much as*

*hear whether the Holy Spirit was given. And he said, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said, Into John's baptism.*

After having returned to the church in Antioch of Syria to visit and also to give a report of his labors, Paul then set out on his third missionary journey. Judging from Luke's account, he apparently traveled alone.

Luke states that "Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus." The "upper country" was the Galatian and Phrygian region, and Paul visited and established the disciples throughout that territory. On his prior journey, Paul had desired to preach the gospel in Asia—a province of Asia Minor whose capital city was Ephesus—but the Holy Spirit forbade him to do so. Thus on his third journey he was permitted by divine providence to enter upon a work in the city of Ephesus.

Luke stated: "And it came to pass, that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul . . . came to Ephesus." Luke had already introduced Apollos—as per Acts 18:24-28—and that, without doubt, for a particular purpose or reason. For one reason Apollos had made a very significant contribution to the cause of Christ; and for another reason, Apollos had known only of the "baptism of John."

The reader is left to infer that by Luke's account of both Apollos and the twelve who "knew only the baptism of John" that the matter of John's baptism constituted a problem that begged to be settled. The very great likelihood is that Apollos and the twelve were not the only disciples that knew only the baptism of John. The likelihood is that disciples of John beyond Palestine perpetuated his teaching and baptism.

The subject of John's baptism will stimulate a live discussion today—and often a heated one—in nearly any Bible class on the local church level. The discussion will turn on certain questions as follows: Were the apostles baptized? Were the one hundred twenty baptized on Pentecost? Were the five hundred who saw Christ after his resurrection baptized?

The reading of Luke's account of Apollos and of the twelve will leave the reader with the necessary conclusion that Apollos needed only to be better informed concerning Christ, not baptized again; whereas, the twelve needed to be "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Why the difference? What was the difference in John's baptism and the baptism administered on the day of Pentecost?

Relative to John's baptism, the following observations are in order:

1. One aspect of John's baptism was that true repentance and confession of sins were required. There were those whom John refused—the Pharisees and Sadducees—because they had not repented. (Mark 1:4, 5; Matt. 3:6; 3:7-9; Luke 3:7-9.)

2. Another aspect of John's baptism was that faith in Christ who was to come was required. (Acts 19:4.) Repentance, therefore, was linked with and predicated upon faith in Christ who was to come.

3. A third aspect of John's baptism was that it was for or unto the remission of sins. (Mark 1:4, 5.) This point is pertinent, and often brethren refuse to grant the fact of it.

A contrast of John's baptism with Christ's baptism should include the following:

1. John's baptism demanded faith in the "one to come." (Acts 19:4; John 1:7, 8.) Christ's baptism demands faith in the "one who has come"—in the one who has been raised from the dead.

2. John's baptism was administered in no name. Christ's baptism is administered into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19.)

3. John's baptism was limited to the preparatory period of the kingdom or church. Christ's baptism has no limitation. It is to continue to the end of the world. (Matt. 28:19, 20.)

4. John's baptism gave the recipients the right, assuming that they did believe on Christ when he came, to become children of God—that is the right to be citizens of the kingdom or church when it would be established on Pentecost. (John 1:1-14.) Christ's baptism was the consummating step which inducted the recipients directly into the church or kingdom. (Rom. 6:1-4.)

An application of the principles pertaining to John's baptism is in order. Apollos had received John's baptism while it was valid—or prior to the death of Christ. The twelve, on the other hand, had received John's baptism after the death of Christ and thus when John's baptism was no longer valid. Apollos only needed, therefore, to

be further instructed relative to the fact that Christ had already come and had been raised from the dead; whereas, the twelve at Ephesus needed to be so instructed and also to be baptized into Christ. The twelve had received a baptism which had ceased to be valid before they received it.

The student should be informed that the kingdom or church existed in certain stages and/or periods of development prior to its actual establishment. The kingdom or church existed first in purpose, next in promise, then in prophecy, afterward in preparation, and finally in fulness or perfection. John's baptism of repentance for the remission of sins was a part of the preparatory period of the kingdom. In short, John prepared material that was to be fitted into the kingdom or church. Like the prepared material for the Temple fitted together without the sound of a hammer, the material prepared by John fitted into the church on Pentecost without the sound of a hammer, so to speak.

With respect to the twelve at Ephesus, there remain some unanswered questions. To illustrate: Who so taught the twelve and administered to them the baptism of John? If Apollos taught and baptized them, as is so often assumed, why did he not with his characteristic "fergency of spirit"—which means to boil or to seethe—carry back to those men the new truth which he had learned? If Apollos taught and baptized the twelve, why did he not inform Priscilla and Aquila concerning them? If Apollos did inform Priscilla and Aquila of the twelve, why did Priscilla and Aquila not "expound unto them the way of God more accurately"?

There are at least two possible answers to the seeming dilemma. In the first place, the twelve may have been wholly unknown to Apollos and to Priscilla and Aquila. Luke stated that Paul "found certain disciples." The statement does not indicate that he had been put on notice concerning them—and thus how to incidentally find them. Luke further stated that Paul said to them: "Did ye receive the Holy Spirit"—a miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit—"when ye believed?" Actually, the context of this matter

indicates that Paul had no prior knowledge of the twelve or of their problem. Instead, the context indicates that he incidentally learned that the twelve knew nothing about the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead. In the second place, if Apollos did inform Priscilla and Aquila concerning the twelve, there is the distinct possibility that neither Apollos nor they knew whether or not the twelve men should be baptized again and, therefore, that they refrained from raising the question, thereby leaving for Paul at his return the determination of the problem by means of apostolic authority.

Now, in order to answer questions that are often raised concerning John's baptism, the following is submitted:

Relative to the question, "Were the apostles baptized?" the answer is "yes." They were baptized under John's baptism. Those who refused John's baptism "rejected the counsel of God against themselves." (Luke 7:30.) Thus of a certainty, Christ did not choose for apostles those who had refused John's baptism. (John 1 and 2.) When setting forth the necessary qualifications of a person who might replace Judas, Peter stated: "Of the men therefore that have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, *beginning with the baptism of John* . . . of these one must become a witness with us of his resurrection." (Acts 1:21-22.) In short, a person who had not received John's baptism was not qualified to take Judas' place as an apostle.

Relative to the question, "Were the one hundred twenty baptized on Pentecost?" the answer is "no." They had already been baptized for the remission of sins. They, therefore, had the power, the right, to become sons of God—or enter into the church or kingdom—and thus they fitted into the church when it began on Pentecost. Luke recorded that about three thousand souls were *added unto them*—unto the one hundred twenty—on that day. (John 1:1-14; Acts 2:41.) The five hundred and all others who had received John's baptism fitted into the church or kingdom when it began on Pentecost, providing that they

believed that Christ had been raised from the dead by the power of God.

**Baptism, the Laying on of Hands,  
and the Holy Spirit**  
(Acts 19:4-7)

*And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And there were in all about twelve men.*

When the twelve learned that Christ had already come and that the baptism of John was invalid, "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," that is, by the authority of the Lord Jesus. (Col. 3:17.) Paul then proceeded to lay "his hands upon them," and the Holy Spirit came on them.

The apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit, and they possessed all nine of the gifts of the Spirit as itemized by Paul in his Corinthian epistle. (1 Cor. 12:4-11.) The apostles had the power to "lay hands" upon the disciples and confer miraculous gifts upon them. Paul, for instance, admonished Timothy: "I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying on of my hands." (2 Tim. 1:6.) The point of this is that when Paul laid his hands on the twelve, he did so in order to confer miraculous gifts upon them. No wonder then that Luke states, "the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied." While Paul was dwelling in Corinth with Priscilla and Aquila, he "laid hands" upon many Christians—to the extent that he wrote: "the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift." (1 Cor. 1:7.) This fact naturally raises the question as to whether or not Paul had conferred miraculous spiritual gifts on Priscilla and Aquila, and the great likelihood is that he had conferred miraculous gifts upon both of them.

**Paul's Preaching in the Synagogue**  
(Acts 19:8, 9)

*And he entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading as to the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.*

Paul, upon his arrival at Ephesus in company with Aquila and Priscilla, had gone into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. He had been favorably received and was asked to remain. He promised to return, and when he did, he entered into the synagogue and spake boldly for a space of three months.

For Paul to be allowed to continue in the synagogue for three months, while "reasoning and persuading as to the things concerning the kingdom of God," was quite exceptional; but this state of affairs was not to last, for "some of those Jews were hardened and disobedient." The point is that the men hardened themselves, and this is the case with all hardened sinners. Only at the point that the sinners resist wholly and *in toto* does God "give them up."

The reaction and disobedience of those Jews at Ephesus was not new. They spoke evil of the Way. They contradicted Paul's teaching before the multitude.

Paul departed from the synagogue, he separated the disciples from the synagogue, and he moved to the school of Tyrannus where he reasoned daily. There are several notions as to what this school was—a Greek school for boys, a private synagogue, a school conducted by Tryannus to teach the law, and a lecture hall. The fact remains that no man knows what the school was.

**The Length of Paul's Stay  
in Ephesus**  
(Acts 19:10)

*And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.*

Paul had already taught in the synagogue for three months, and thus he was in Ephesus for a mini-

mum of two years and three months—the longest stay that he had in any one city.

Luke added: "All they that dwell in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks." The reference is to the cities of the province of Asia Minor; namely, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sar-

dis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Colossae, and Hierapolis. Ephesus was the base of operation, the radiating center. Paul, no doubt, engaged and directed other evangelists in that evangelistic program of work. Paul was engaged in the very greatest, and most successful, of his evangelistic activities.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?

Repeat the golden text.

Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

What is the aim of the lessons for this quarter?

Who is the central figure in this study?

Why?

How long had Paul been on the European continent when he left Corinth?

What churches had he established?

Who accompanied Paul from Corinth to Ephesus?

#### Golden Text

What is the setting of the golden text?

Discuss some of the things that the word of God prevailed against at Ephesus.

What should we learn from this?

#### Questions that Pertain to John's Baptism

Locate the "upper country" that Paul passed through on his second trip to Ephesus.

What conditions did he find on his return visit?

Why did he ask the twelve if they received the Holy Spirit when they believed?

What reply did the disciples give?

What was Paul made aware of by their reply?

What does Luke's account about Apollos in Acts 18:24-28 seem to imply?

Why did these disciples need to be baptized again?

How was their condition in regard to baptism different to that of Apollos, the apostles, the one hundred twenty, and the five hundred?

How long had John's baptism been fulfilled?

Give some of the differences and contrasts of John's baptism with the baptism of the great commission.

Review the development stages of the church.

Why did not Apollos, after he had received further instruction from Priscilla and Aquila, baptize the disciples "into the name of the Lord Jesus"?

#### Baptism, the Laying on of Hands, and the Holy Spirit

What did it mean to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus?

What did Paul give these disciples by laying "his hands upon them"?

Why was there, during these early days, such a great need for miraculous gifts?

#### Paul's Preaching in the Synagogue

How long did Paul preach in the synagogue?

What was exceptional about his efforts in the synagogue?

#### The Length of Paul's Stay in Ephesus

How long did Paul teach in the school of Tyrannus?

What were the results of his teaching?

Do you suppose that the seven churches of Asia were established during Paul's long stay at Ephesus?

## Lesson VIII—February 23, 1975

### PAUL AT TROAS

#### Lesson Text

##### Acts 20:1-12

1 And after the uproar ceased, Paul having sent for the disciples and exhorted them, took leave of them, and departed to go into Macedonia.

2 And when he had gone through those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece.

3 And when he had spent three months *there*, and a plot was laid against him by the Jews as he was

about to set sail for Syria, he determined to return through Macedonia.

4 And there accompanied him as far as Asia, Sopater of Beroea, *the son* of Pyrrhus; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.

5 But these had gone before, and were waiting for us at Troas.

6 And we sailed away from Phi-

lippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we tarried seven days.

7 And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight.

8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber where we were gathered together.

9 And there sat in the window a certain young man named Eutychus, borne down with deep sleep; and

as Paul discoursed yet longer, being borne down by his sleep he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead.

10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Make ye no ado; for his life is in him.

11 And when he was gone up, and had broken the bread, and eaten, and had talked with them a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

12 And they brought the lad alive, and were not a little comforted.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord’s death till he come.”* (1 Cor. 11:26.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 20:13-16.

### Daily Bible Readings

February 17. M.....	Paul Leaves Ephesus (Acts 20:1-6)
February 18. T.....	Paul Arrives in Troas (Acts 20:7-12)
February 19. W.....	Paul Goes to Melitus (Acts 20: 13-16)
February 20. T.....	Ephesian Elders Called (Acts 20:17-38)
February 21. F.....	Institution of Lord’s Supper (Luke 22:14-23)
February 22. S.....	Lord’s Supper Enjoyed (1 Cor. 11:20-34)
February 23. S. ....	First Day Meeting (1 Cor. 16:1-9)

TIME.—A.D. 57.

PLACES.—Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor; Macedonia and Greece of Europe; and Troas, a seaport city of the province of Mysia in Asia Minor.

PERSONS.—Paul and Luke; the company that went before Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus; and Luke.

### Introduction

At the time of the last lesson, Paul was in Ephesus, and Luke’s summary statement was that Paul continued in the school of Tyrannus for the space of two years—that is after his three month’s preaching in the synagogue, a total of two years and three months—so that all that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. Paul met with his greatest period of success while he was in Ephesus, the capital city of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

In today’s lesson, Paul departs from Ephesus. His departure from Ephesus was occasioned by an uprising brought on by Demetrius and those of his craft. They were silversmiths who made silver shrines of Diana. They were concerned that Paul had brought their “trade into disrepute” by preaching that “there are no gods, that are made

with hands.” The craftsmen pled their case on the basis of their loyalty to the goddess Diana. The city was turned into a state of confusion, and an uproar erupted which lasted for the space of two hours.

The uproar terminated Paul’s work in Ephesus, but even prior to the uproar Paul had contemplated his leaving that city for other fields of labor. For example, Luke recorded: “Now after these things,” that is, after the burning of books on magical arts, “Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. And having sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.” (Acts 19:21, 22.) The significant point is that Paul had already

planned a trip into Macedonia and Achaia, then to Jerusalem, and then to Rome.

At about this time, Paul wrote First Corinthians. In this epistle he said: "But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost; for a great

door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." (1 Cor. 16:8, 9.) Paul's statement in his Corinthian epistle relative to his plans agrees with those plans as represented by Luke as cited above.

### The Golden Text

*"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come."* The greatest news ever announced to mortal man is the news that Christ died on the cross and in his death shed his life blood as an atonement for the sins of man. He died in the place of man. He died for all men—not just a select elect.

Though not every Christian can be a public proclaimer of the great news that Christ died in the place of man, every responsible person—whether man, woman, boy or girl—can be a public proclaimer of that

death, when and as he assembles with the saints on Christ's resurrection day, the first day of the week, and reverently and discerningly eats of the bread and drinks of the fruit of the vine. Through this simple but meaningful observance the Christian looks backward and forward—backward to the death and blood atonement of Christ for man, and forward to Christ's second coming. The Christian thus makes a public proclamation of both Christ's death and his second coming.

### The Text Explained

#### Paul Takes Leave of Ephesus for Macedonia (Acts 20:1)

*And after the uproar ceased, Paul having sent for the disciples and exhorted them, took leave of them, and departed to go into Macedonia.*

The effectual and fervent door that Paul wrote of in his first epistle to the Corinthians had suddenly been closed. Demetrius and those of his trade—the making of miniature silver shrines of Diana—had staged a fearful uprising. The many adversaries, concerning whom Paul had written the Corinthians, had prevailed.

Following the uproar, "Paul having sent for the disciples and exhorted them, took leave of them, and departed to go into Macedonia." Luke gave no indication as to Paul's pent up fears and emotions as he left Ephesus to cross again the Aegean Sea into Macedonia where he had previously undergone so many disappointing experiences, but Paul wrote of his frame of mind and spirit in his second letter to the Corinthians. Paul went from Ephesus to Troas, and there he found an open door, but he was much too troubled in mind to take advantage of his opportunities. He immediately embarked from Troas for Mac-

edonia in an effort to meet Titus and learn more of the state of affairs in the church at Corinth. Upon his arrival in Macedonia, he wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians, and in the epistle stated: "Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ, and when a door was opened unto me in the Lord, I had no relief for my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went forth into Macedonia." (2 Cor. 2:12, 13.) While at Ephesus Paul was so concerned about the affairs in the church at Corinth that, prior to his leaving Ephesus, he had sent Titus by ship to Corinth to assist the brethren there with their problems. Titus was to complete his mission at Corinth and return by land to Macedonia and from there to sail to Troas to meet Paul. Paul was disappointed almost to the point of distraction when Titus was not waiting for him at Troas. Like a distraught frantic mother in search for a missing child, Paul had "no relief for his spirit," and hurried on to Macedonia hoping thereby to meet Titus.

#### Paul Visits Greece (Acts 20:2-6)

*And when he had gone through*

those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece. And when he had spent three months there, and a plot was laid against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he determined to return through Macedonia. And there accompanied him as far as Asia, Sopater of Beroea, the soil of Pyrrhus; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. But these had gone before, and were waiting for us at Troas. And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we tarried seven days.

Those who were so exhorted by Paul were the disciples in the churches of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Beroea. Then Paul went into Greece. Previously, Luke wrote of Achaia, but here of Greece. Achaia was a Roman province which included Greece and Thessaly; whereas, "Greece" was the geographical region—the region as it was before it was included, or made along with Thessaly, into the Roman province of Achaia. Corinth was a prominent city of the region of Greece. A pertinent observation is that Paul reached Corinth soon after his second letter was sent to the church there.

Paul remained at Corinth for three months. During his stay there he wrote his great epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians. Paul had planned to sail for Syria, along with men chosen by the churches to bear a bounty to Jerusalem—a bounty for the poor—but he changed his plans when he learned that a plot was laid against his life by the Jews. Thus instead of his traveling by sea, he went by land from Corinth through Macedonia, and from Philippi of Macedonia by sea to Troas where he was scheduled to meet his companions in travel.

Paul had for some time been urging the churches of Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia—churches composed principally of Gentiles (Rom. 15:26-27), to raise a general collection for the poor saints in Judea. The collection had been raised, and the time was at hand for the men

chosen by the churches to bear it to Jerusalem. Paul's company—namely, Sopater of Beroea; Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica; Gaius of Derbe; Timothy of Derbe and Corinth; and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia—were the men chosen by the churches to bear the bounty. These men left Corinth before Paul and sailed to Troas, and they waited for Paul in that city. Luke's record reads: "And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we tarried seven days." The "we" of Luke's record shows that Luke had again joined company with the apostle Paul. Five years had intervened since Paul had left Luke with the young church in Philippi. Paul's trip from Philippi (Neapolis was the sea port) to Troas took five days. On his second missionary journey, he and his company sailed from Troas to Neapolis in two days. The season of the year for this trip is made certain by the expression, "the days of unleavened bread," meaning the feast of the Passover. This paschal supper fell on the fourteenth day of Nisan, and Nisan is equivalent to the month of April.

Paul had intended to leave Ephesus by Pentecost, but the uproar created by Demetrius and those of his craft terminated his work sometime prior to Pentecost. (1 Cor. 16:8, 9.) He must have left Ephesus about April. He probably reached Corinth before the end of that year, and with a three months stay in Corinth, he reached Philippi of Macedonia before the feast of the Passover the following year. Thus more than one year had passed from the time Paul left Ephesus until he arrived at Troas from Macedonia when on this way to Jerusalem.

#### Disciples Meet on the First Day of the Week (Acts 20:7)

*And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight.*

Paul and his companions tarried in Troas for seven days which ter-



minated on the first day of the week. On that day the disciples gathered to break bread—not to hear Paul preach as some contend. There are two prominent positions affirmed with respect to the observance on this occasion. Some contend that the observance was a mere incidental example. Others contend that the observance is not only a binding example but also constitutes the only authority for the observance of the Lord's supper on each first day of the week.

There is a difference in an "approved example" and in a "binding example." An approved example is the conduct of a person, or it is an event, or it is a course of action that is suitable or worthy of being imitated; whereas, a binding example is so interwoven with facts and circumstances so as to constitute the necessary inference that Christians must imitate that example.

The fact is that the case of the disciples' breaking bread on the first day of the week at Troas is more than just an approved or a mere example, as the circumstances connected with that assembling will necessarily indicate. The apostle Paul and his companions, though in a hurry to reach Jerusalem, tarried seven days. Now, why under the circumstances would they tarry for seven days, except to assemble with the disciples at Troas? The necessary inference here is that Paul was cognizant of a custom among disciples to assemble on the first day of the week for the explicit purpose to break bread.

The first day of the week is the day upon which Christ arose from the dead. It is his resurrection day, and it is the day on which the church was established. The first day of the week is the greatest and most momentous day in the annuals of history. When the significance of the first day of the week is associated with the object and purpose of the assembly of the saints at Troas—as per Acts 20: 1-7—the necessary and inescapable conclusion is that disciples must meet on, and only on, the first day of the week to break bread.

The authority for, and obligation for, the breaking of bread on the first day of the week, however, does not depend solely upon the case of

the disciples at Troas who met on that day to break bread. The authority for, and the obligation for, the observance of the Lord's supper each first day of the week is well established by scriptures other than Acts 20:1-7 involving the case of the disciples at Troas. If the twentieth chapter of Acts were deleted from the New Testament, disciples of Christ would still have authority for, and an obligation for, their assembling every first day of the week to break bread.

The church at Corinth is a case in point. The church at Corinth had an established custom of coming together on the first day of the week, and those disciples came together on that particular day to eat the Lord's supper. This is certain because Paul charged the Corinthians: "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, wait one for another." (1 Cor. 11:33.) Then Paul further charged: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." (1 Cor. 16:1-2.) Now observe: the Corinthians came together to eat—to eat the Lord's supper—and further, they came together on the first day of the week. This "was their custom, and it was also the custom of the Galatians. The conclusion that follows is inescapable, namely:

The Corinthians, like the Galatians, had an established custom of coming together every first day of the week. (1 Cor. 16:1-2.)

The Corinthians came together to eat the Lord's supper. (1 Cor. 11:33.)

Therefore, the Corinthians came together on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's supper.

Contrary to what many scholars conclude, the great likelihood is that the disciples at Troas came together in the daytime on the first day of the week, and not after the sabbath had ended on what would now be termed, "Saturday night." Further, and contrary to many scholars, the "and when he was gone up and broken bread, and eaten"—and that apparently after

midnight—was very likely not the eating or observance of the Lord's supper: but rather the "eating" was that of refreshments which were eaten by Paul and his companions. Emphasis should be placed upon the fact that the disciples at Troas came together "to break bread." The conjecture that the disciples continued for more than five hours before they actually "break bread"—the observance for which they had assembled and that after midnight—is hardly a reasonable one.

The disciples likely assembled to break bread toward the middle to late afternoon on that first day of the week. The more reasonable conjecture is that after the disciples had broken bread—the real purpose for which they had come together—Paul preached to them and continued his speech until midnight, intending to depart on the morrow, or Monday. The "morrow" would have begun at 12:00 P. M., Roman time.

#### Eutychus Falls to His Death

(Acts 20:8-12)

*And there were many lights in the upper chamber where we were gathered together. And there sat in the window a certain young man named Eutychus, borne down with deep sleep; and as Paul discoursed yet longer, being borne down by his sleep he fell down from the third story, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Make ye no ado; for his life is in him. And when he was gone up, and had broken the bread, and eaten, and had talked with them a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. And they brought the lad alive, and were not a little comforted.*

The disciples assembled in the third story of a building. This fact indicates that the place was proba-

bly selected because the rent was cheap. As Paul prolonged his speech, Eutychus, who sat in a window, "being borne down by his sleep," fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. The circumstance of Eutychus sitting in a window indicates that the meeting place was quite crowded. Luke's reference to the many lights in the upper chamber" conveys the idea that all were so interested in Paul's discourse that no one observed that Eutychus was asleep, though the room was brilliantly lighted.

The meeting of the disciples in the third story of a building is the case of an incidental example, and incidental examples impose no obligation for imitation. An incidental example may be defined as an act or course of action that is subordinate, or subsidiary, or auxiliary to the performance of the purpose or charge at hand. In the case of an incidental act or course of action, some other act or course of action could be substituted; and yet, the same purpose or charge at hand would be accomplished. The purpose or charge at hand was to eat the Lord's supper. The disciples could have performed the purpose, or charge at hand, just as well by eating the Lord's supper on the first story of the building as they did by eating it on the third story of the building.

Eutychus was dead. This Luke, a physician as well as an evangelist, specifically reported. Paul went down and fell on him, and embracing him said, "Make ye do ado, for his life is in him." This statement indicates that the disciples were in a state of excitement and mourning. The raising of Eutychus was a great source of joy to all. Paul and his companions took food, and talked a long while, even till break of day. Then Paul departed.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of the lesson?

Repeat the golden text.

Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

Where was Paul at the close of the last lesson?

Why did Demetrius call the silversmiths together?

What plans did Paul have even before the uproar?

What did he write to the Corinthians about the work at Ephesus?

#### Golden Text

How can every Christian proclaim that he believes in the vicarious death, and also the second coming of Christ?

How do we look both backward and forward when we observe the Lord's supper?

#### Paul Takes Leave of Ephesus for Macedonia

Why was Paul's work in Ephesus terminated?

What does Paul say about his emotions and fears in 2 Corinthians 1:8-11? Tell about the opportunity afforded him at the city of Troas. Did he grasp the opportunity? Why?

Paul Visits Greece

What churches did Paul revisit before he reached Corinth?

Which epistle did he write while he was visiting one of these churches? (2 Cor. 9:1-5.)

How long did Paul stay in Greece, or at Corinth, this time?

What epistle did he write before he left Corinth? (Rom. 15:22-26; Acts 20:3.)

Why did he return through Macedonia instead of sailing for Syria?

Discuss the collection for the poor, and the messengers of the churches.

At what place did Luke join company with Paul again?

They sailed from Philippi to Troas at what time of the year?

How long had it been since Paul left Ephesus until he arrived at Troas from Macedonia?

Disciples Meet on the First Day of the Week

How long did Paul and his companions tarry at Troas? Why?

For what purpose did the disciples at Troas assemble on the first day of the week?

Was this meeting more than a mere example?

Define an approved example.

What is the difference in an approved example and a binding example?

Would there still be authority for, and obligation for, the breaking of bread on the first day of every week if Acts 20:7 was deleted from the New Testament? Why?

Why do Christians assemble for worship on the first day of the week rather than on the seventh day or sabbath day?

Eutychus Falls to His Death

What kind of a building did the disciples meet in?

What does the New Testament say about the kind of buildings Christians should meet in for worship?

What is an incidental example, and how does it differ from an approved example and a binding example?

Discuss the fall, death, and restoration of Eutychus.

Lesson IX—March 2, 1975

PAUL IS ARRESTED IN JERUSALEM

Lesson Text

Acts 21:27-40

27 And when the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the multitude and laid hands on him,

28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and moreover he brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath defiled this holy place.

29 For they had before seen with him in the city Trophimus the Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.

30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together; and they laid hold on Paul, and dragged him out of the temple: and straightway the doors were shut.

31 And as they were seeking to kill him, tidings came up to the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in confusion.

32 And forthwith he took soldiers and centurions, and ran down upon them: and they, when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, left off beating Paul.

33 Then the chief captain came near, and laid hold on him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and inquired who he was, and what he had done.

34 And some shouted one thing, some another, among the crowd: and when he could not know the certainty for the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the castle.

35 And when he came upon the stairs, so it was that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the crowd;

36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, Away with him.

37 And as Paul was about to be brought into the castle, he saith unto the chief captain, May I say something unto thee? And he said, Dost thou know Greek?

38 Art thou not then the Egyptian, who before these days stirred up to sedition and led out into the wilderness the four thousand men of the Assassins?

39 But Paul said, I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no

mean city: and I beseech thee, give me leave to speak unto the people.

40 And when he had given him leave, Paul, standing on the stairs,

beckoned with the hand unto the people; and when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew language, saying,

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."* (Acts 21:13.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 21:1-26.

### Daily Bible Readings

February 24.	M.....	Journey to Jerusalem (Acts 21:1-6)
February 25.	T.....	Arrival in Jerusalem (Acts 21:15-19)
February 26.	W.....	A Meeting with the Brethren (Acts 21:15-25)
February 27.	T.....	Seized by the Mob (Acts 21:27-31)
February 28.	F.....	Paul Saved from Death By Soldiers (Acts 21:32-36)
March 1.	S.....	Paul Permitted to Speak (Acts 21:37-40)
March 2.	S.....	Blessing of Roman Citizenship (Acts 22:24-40)

TIME.—A.D. 57.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Paul; Jews from Asia; and the chief captain of the band.

### Introduction

The lesson for this occasion turns on Paul's arrest in Jerusalem. A knowledge of the conditions and circumstances which led to Paul's being in Jerusalem is imperative if the student is to have a proper and full understanding of and appreciation for Paul's vital concern for the unity of the church. There had come to exist within the church a very grave dissension or disunity between the Jews and Gentiles. The estrangement between the two classes or races, within the church, had reached such emotional proportions that Paul felt constrained to accompany the men chosen by the churches, the churches composed predominantly of Gentiles, to bear their collection to the poor saints of Judea.

Paul in the outset had been very confident that the collection from the Gentile churches for the poor saints in Judea would do much to heal the breach. He emphasised to the Gentiles that they were debtors to the Jews, that they had been made partakers of spiritual things that had come wholly from the Jews, and that, therefore, they were obligated to pay their debt to the Jews by ministering unto them with their carnal things. (Rom. 15:25-27.) Paul was confident that such a contribution would do much to convince the Jews that the Gentiles were striving sincerely to do the work of God—the work of the Jews' God—but the rift between the

two classes widened before the gift could be delivered. The growing rebellious attitude of the Jews became so heated and pronounced that Paul feared lest the saints in Judea should reject the collection from the Gentile churches. Thus in his letter to the church at Rome—written from Corinth on the eve of his taking leave for Jerusalem, together with the men chosen by the churches to bear the bounty—he wrote: "I beseech you . . . that ye strive together with me in your prayers . . . that I may be delivered from them that are disobedient in Judea, and that my ministration which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints." (Rom. 15:30-31.)

The details or case for the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem include the following:

1. In A.D. 49-50, the conference held in Jerusalem was concluded by Peter, James, and John encouraging Paul to remember the poor, which thing Paul was already minded to do. (Gal. 2:9-10.)

2. From A.D. 50-56, Paul urged a general collection for the poor saints in the churches of Galatia, Macedonia and Achaia. (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:1-15.)

3. Paul had not at the first decided definitely that he would accompany the bounty to Jerusalem. He wrote the Corinthians concerning the collection: "And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve.

them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem: and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me. (1 Cor. 16:3-4.)

4. Within six months later—A.D. 56—Paul learned how that the churches of Galatia had been alienated from him through the influence of Judaizing teachers. (Gal. 1:6-8.) Less than three years had intervened since Paul, on his third missionary journey, had visited the churches of Galatia. (Acts 18:22-23.)

5. The decree of the conference at Jerusalem had been carried as a means of great comfort to the Gentile churches, but in time the Judaizing teachers had rejected the decree and renewed the controversy, and they had undermined the faith of the Galatians. (Acts 15:31; 16:4, 5; Gal. 1 and 2.)

6. Even the church at Rome, the western extent of the gospel at that time, had been adversely affected by the controversy, as Paul indicated in his epistle to the Romans written from Corinth in A.D. 56. (Rom. 3:1-20.)

7. Under those and other foreboding circumstances, Paul wrote the church at Rome: "I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints. For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem. . . . When therefore I have accomplished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by you unto Spain. . . . Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that are disobedient in Judea, *and that my ministration which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints*; that I may come unto you with joy through the will of God, and together with you find rest." (Rom. 15: 22-32.)

Thus from the epistle to the church at Rome, the student can get a glimpse of the anxiety and concern which Paul held for the divided state of the church. That he was the chief instrument in healing the breach between the Jewish and Gentile Christians becomes abundantly

clear as Luke's history unfolds, and especially when it is combined with Paul's epistles.

Luke made no mention of the matter of the saints' acceptance or rejection of the gift, but he did record: "And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly." (Acts 21:17.) He necessarily inferred, therefore, that the gift or ministration for the poor was heartily and appreciatively received by the Jewish saints in Jerusalem and throughout Judea. The pronounced rift between the Jewish and Gentile saints, and especially the indictments of the Jewish saints against Paul, was made more certain by the fact that James and the elders at Jerusalem proposed that Paul take a Jewish vow upon himself that all might know that there was no truth in the charges made against him. James and the elders related that the charges against Paul were made by the "many thousands" of Jews that had believed. Though Christians, those Jews "were all zealous for the law."

Those Jewish Christians had been informed that Paul taught all the Jews among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, that he taught them that they should not circumcise their sons, and that he taught them that they should not walk after Jewish customs. The charges were false. Paul, on the one hand, had required Timothy, a half-Jew, to be circumcised so that Timothy would not be in violation of the custom of circumcision among the Jews; but Paul, on the other hand, did not allow Titus, a Gentile, to be circumcised.

The Mosaic regulations, customs and observances were in no wise objectionable among the Jewish Christians so long as they were observed as customs and were not regarded as observances necessary for salvation. On such a basis the customs could be observed or set aside as the requirements of the gospel might demand. Those Jewish regulations, customs, and observances were objectionable and sinful, however, when they were regarded as being necessary for salvation. While a Christian Jew could take upon himself a temporary Nazirite vow as a matter of custom, he could not offer with propriety and with-

out sin an animal sacrifice as a sin atonement. The offering of an animal would stand to say that the blood of Christ did not avail, or else it would stand to say that the blood of Christ was only on a par with the blood of animals.

Paul suffered great spiritual anxieties, false charges, physical hardships, and a severe beating in order to preserve the unity of the church and thereby heal the breach be-

tween the Christian Jews and Gentiles. Paul's visit to Jerusalem—his vow, his arrest, and his beating—afforded him the opportunity to set himself before the Jewish Christians in his proper light as the chief apostle to the Gentile world. His speech to the Jews from the steps of Antonia, the fortress of the Roman garrison, was the turning point for better in this grave problem.

### The Golden Text

*"I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."* Paul, in company with eight other men, was on his way to Jerusalem to bear a bounty to the poor saints there. Just prior to this time he had written the saints at Rome that "having no more any place in these regions," that is no other place where he had not preached," and having these many years a longing to come unto you, whensoever I go unto Spain (for I hope to see you in my journey . . .) but now, . . . I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints." (Rom. 15: 22-29.)

Paul was at Philippi during the Jewish Passover or "the days of unleavened bread." (Acts 20:6.) On leaving Philippi, he determined to be at Jerusalem, if possible, by Pentecost which fell fifty days after the feast of the Passover. As if to show that Paul did reach Jerusalem by Pentecost, Luke recorded the journey from Philippi to Jerusalem in detail, including the number of days spent at certain places.

As Paul moved from city to city, there were those who testified through the Spirit, or by inspiration, that bonds and afflictions awaited him at Jerusalem. (Acts 20:13; 21:4.) A significant point here is that just as Paul's healing

power was not available to him for the miraculous healing of his own infirmity, just so his prophetic power was not available to him for the miraculous revealing of his own future. When Paul and his companions arrived at Caesarea—a city only seventy miles from Jerusalem—and were visiting in the home of Philip, the evangelist, Philip's four virgin daughters also joined their prophecy with those who had prophesied previously of Paul's coming bonds and imprisonment.

Then Agabus the prophet came down from Judea. He took Paul's girdle and bound his own feet and hands, and said, "Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." (Acts 21:11.) Luke recorded: "When we heard these things, both we and they of that place besought him not to go up to Jerusalem." Paul answered in the words of the golden text: "What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Upon Paul's reply, Luke and the others ceased from their persuading, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

### The Text Explained

The text for this lesson is for the most part self-explanatory on its face. There are, however, certain matters that call for explanation. Those matters that seemingly call for explanation may be listed as follows: (1) the "seven days," (2) the "Jews from Asia," (3) the "chief captain," (4) the "castle," and (5) the "Egyptian."

### State of Mob Violence (Acts 21:27-30)

*And when the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the multitude and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and*

*this place; and moreover he brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath defiled this holy place. For they had before seen with him in the city Trophimus the Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple. And all the city was moved, and the people ran together; and they laid hold on Paul, and dragged him out of the temple; and straightway the doors were shut.*

The "seven days" that were almost completed referred to the customary days required for the termination of the vow which the four Jewish saints had taken upon themselves. Paul had purified himself in keeping with requirement of the vow and had qualified himself so as to pay the expense for the four men for the termination of their vow. In a strict sense, Paul took no vow. His hair was not cut, and he made no offering for himself.

On observing Paul in the Temple, "Jews from Asia" stirred the multitude to a point of mob violence. Those "Jews from Asia" were Paul's long time vicious opponents from the province of Asia. They were very likely from the city of Ephesus. Those "Jews from Asia" charged not only that Paul taught all men everywhere against the people, the law, and the city, but also that he had brought Trophimus the Ephesian, or Gentile, into the Jewish court—the Gentiles were only admitted into the outer court—and had thereby defiled the temple. The charge was false, but those "Jews from Asia" were not seeking truth, fairness, and justice; rather, they were bent on stirring up a mob violence whereby Paul might be killed under such circumstances that no one person or persons would be held guilty as murderers.

Trophimus the Ephesian was one of the seven that bore the bounty to the poor saints in Judea. (Acts 20:4-5.) He was a representative of the church, or churches, in Asia. The Jews likely had seen him and Paul together, but they certainly had not seen him in company with Paul in the Jewish court of the Temple.

### Rescue and/or Arrest (Acts 21:31-34)

*As it was as they were seeking to kill him, tidings came up to the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in confusion. And forthwith he took soldiers and centurions, and ran down upon them; and they, when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, left off beating Paul. Then the chief captain came near, and laid hold on him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and inquired who he was, and what he had done. And some shouted one thing, some another, among the crowd: and when he could not know the certainty for the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the castle.*

The Jews of Asia, like Demetrius and those of his craft of Ephesus, were successful in bringing the city of Jerusalem to a high state of confusion and violence. Paul was seized and dragged out of the Jewish court of the temple. His life was in grave danger.

The chief captain of the band, upon learning that mob violence and confusion had erupted, caused soldiers and centurions to run down upon the mob. Those men literally "ran down" from the castle Antonia. The castle, built by Herod the Great, stood just northwest of the Temple and towered above it with its stairway descending into the enclosure of the Temple area—the area which was designated the Court of the Gentiles.

Herod had equipped the castle both as a royal palace and as a garrison for the soldiers. The intent of its location, its towering position, and its steps descending into the court of the Temple was to provide the civil or Roman forces with the means to quell any mob violence which might, and often did, erupt.

The chief captain, or Chiliarch, was the commander of one thousand men called a cohort. A centurion was the commander of one hundred men within the cohort. The chief captain's name was Claudius Lysias. (Acts 23:36.)

Thus the chief captain, Claudius Lysias, rescued Paul from the mob. This was the second time that the Romans had rescued Paul. (Acts

18:12-17.) The Roman Empire was the fourth of Daniel's four world Empires which were to be raised up in succession to make their peculiar and particular contributions to the "fullness of time." The Roman government was making one of its contributions to the fullness of time when and as it rescued Paul and kept him from death at the hands of the Jews.

### Permission to Speak (Acts 21:35-40)

*And when he came upon the stairs, so it was that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the crowd; for the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, Away with him. And as Paul was about to be brought into the castle, he saith unto the chief captain, May I say something unto thee? And he said, Dost thou know Greek? Art thou not then the Egyptian, who before these days stirred up to sedition and led out into the wilderness the four thousand men of the Assassins? But Paul said, I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and I beseech thee, give me leave to speak unto the people. And when he had given him leave, Paul, standing on the stairs, beckoned with the hand unto the people; and when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew language.*

Paul was borne by soldiers away from the violent mob and up the stairway to the castle of Antonia. As Paul was about to be brought into the castle, he requested of the chief captain that he be permitted to speak to the multitude. Paul spoke to Lysias in the Greek language. Lysias replied: "Dost thou know Greek? Art thou not the

Egyptian . . . who led into the wilderness four thousand men of the Assassins?" The Egyptian, for whom Paul was mistaken, was a pretended prophet. Josephus gave an account of this man and his deeds.

Paul replied to Lysias' questions by saying: "I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city." Thus Paul said enough for Lysias to have gathered, at the very least, the possibility that the man was a Roman citizen. Had Lysias been more alert he could have avoided his later embarrassment and for that matter his criminal conduct in ordering that Paul, a free born Roman citizen, be examined by scourging. (Acts 22: 24.)

Lysias granted Paul his request to speak. Paul's unique pulpit and his most unusual audience must necessarily have been providentially arranged. How else could he have had the opportunity to speak to such a violent and yet captive audience under such a controlled situation? Paul beckoned with his hand unto the people, and when there was made a *great silence* to prevail over the multitude, he spake in the Hebrew language.

Paul was no ordinary man, else, how could he, on just having been delivered from death at the hands of his own Jewish brethren, so calmly and so masterfully rise above the murderous passions characteristic of his fellow Jews so as to courteously address them as "brethren." But the address is another lesson. What over-ruling providence had intervened to give Paul the opportunity to speak to such a tremendous and controlled multitude of his fellow Jews concerning Jesus the Nazarene—the son of God!

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject for today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

Discuss the estrangement between the Jewish and Gentile Christians that brought about Paul's arrest.  
How was Paul trying to bring about better relations between them?  
What did he ask the Christians in Rome to do about the above conditions?  
On what occasion did Peter, James, and John ask Paul to remember the poor in Judea?  
Did Paul carry out their request?  
Why did Paul decide to go with the men

that had been appointed by the churches to carry the bounty to Jerusalem?  
Discuss the influence of the Judaizing teachers.  
How do we know that these men were willfully teaching false doctrine?  
Who had the greatest influence in healing the breach between the Jewish and Gentile Christians?  
What does Luke say about how Paul was received by the brethren in Jerusalem?  
What does his statement imply?  
What did James and the elders advise Paul to do? Why?  
What charges were being made against Paul?  
Review some of the things that Paul suf-



ferred in his attempt to heal the breach between the Jewish and Gentile Christians.

How should his example encourage us?

Golden Text

On what occasion did Paul speak the words of the golden text?

Where was Paul at the time of the Jewish Passover?

Paul was trying to get to Jerusalem by the time of what feast?

How many days were there between the feast of the Passover and the feast of Pentecost?

What is the feast of Pentecost called in the Old Testament? Why? (Ex. 34:22; Deut. 16:9-10; Lev. 23:9-16.)

What did Agabus tell the brethren at Caesarea about Paul?

What did Paul's company and the brethren at Caesarea beseech him to do?

State of Mob Violence

What happened to Paul when the "seven days" were almost completed?

Discuss the charges that the Jews brought against Paul.

Rescue and/or Arrest

What was happening among the Jews that caused the soldiers to "run down upon them"?

What is meant by the statement—"ran down upon them"?

How many soldiers were commanded by a chief captain?

Permission to Speak

What request did Paul make of the chief captain as he was being carried up the stairs of the castle?

How did Claudius Lysias respond to Paul's request?

Discuss Paul's unique pulpit and audience on this occasion.

How did Paul get the attention of the people?

Lesson X—March 9, 1975

PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE THE PEOPLE

Lesson Text

Acts 22:1-16

1 Brethren and fathers, hear ye the defence which I now make unto you.

2 And when they heard that he spake unto them in the Hebrew language, they were the more quiet: and he saith,

3 I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day:

4 And I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

5 As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and journeyed to Damascus to bring them also that were there unto Jerusalem in bonds to be punished.

6 And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am

Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.

9 And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me I came into Damascus.

12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there,

13 Came unto me, and standing by me said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And in that very hour I looked up on him.

14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth.

15 For thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.

16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.” (Acts 26:19.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 22:17-30.

### Daily Bible Readings

March 3. M.....	Suffering for Christ (1 Pet. 4:12-19)
March 4. T.....	Blessedness of Faithful People (Matt. 5:1-16)
March 5. W.....	Save Life By Losing It (Matt. 16:21-28)
March 6. T.....	Comfort in Persecution (2 Thess. 1:1-12)
March 7. F.....	Benefits of Trial (James 1:1-18)
March 8. S.....	Reward of Suffering (Mark 10:23-31)
March 9. S.....	Blessings of Contentment (Phil. 4:4-13)

TIME.—A.D. 57.

PLACE.—The stairway to the tower of Antonia in which the Roman garrison was quartered. This tower overlooked the Temple in Jerusalem, by about twenty feet, and the stairway connected the tower, or castle, to the enclosure of the Temple.

PERSONS.—The Jewish mob; Paul, and Claudius Lysias (Acts 23:26), who was the chief captain, a cohort of one thousand Roman soldiers.

### Introduction

The last lesson closed at the point where the chief captain, Claudius Lysias, had granted Paul his request to address the violent mob from whom Lysias had just rescued him. This was the second time that Paul's life had been saved by Roman authorities.

Paul's pulpit was on the stairs leading into the castle of Antonia, and his audience was a multitude of

Jews, including the members of the Great Sanhedrin. The pulpit and the audience were both quite unusual. The circumstances, and the audience must have been providentially arranged! How else could Paul have had the opportunity to speak to such a violent and yet captive and attentive audience under such a controlled situation?

### The Golden Text

“I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.” The “heavenly vision” included the entire revelation of Jesus—both that which was given to Paul on the road to Damascus and that which was given to Ananias. Paul's negative statement, “I was not disobedient,” sug-

gests that he might have been; but rather, he reversed himself from a deadly persecutor of Christ to an ardent servant and disciple of his. He obeyed in all respects. He was not disobedient to that heavenly vision.

### The Text Explained

Paul's Introduction to His Audience  
(Acts 22:1, 2)

*Brethren and fathers, hear ye the defence which I now make unto you. And when they heard that he spake unto them in the Hebrew language, they were the more quiet.*

When Paul beckoned with his hand from his unique pulpit to his most unusual audience, he rose above the inflamed passion of those fellow Jews that had attempted only moments before to kill him by means of mob violence, and he addressed his hearers as, “brethren and fathers.” The address was

quite respectful. The calm polite manner with which he spoke so soon after he was rescued from the mob is a very real testimony as to the measure of the man.

Paul spoke in the Hebrew language. His having dared or chosen to speak in Hebrew rather than Greek, particularly when in the presence of the Roman military, was flattering to those Jews even though they were so violently opposed to him. Thus “they were the more quiet.”

Paul's courteous introduction or address was an acknowledgement that the Jews were his own brethren.

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ren after the flesh; and further, it acknowledged with profound respect "the fathers" or those in authority. With due respect and in all sincerity, he requested: "Hear ye the defense which I now make unto you."

**Paul's Defense Before the Elders  
and the Audience**  
(Acts 22:3-5)

*I am a Jew, bom in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day: and I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and journeyed to Damascus to bring them also that were there unto Jerusalem in bonds to be punished.*

Paul then proceeded with a recital of facts and personal experiences which they needed to know about himself. He declared: "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel." The intent of this information was to show his fellow Jews that he was born a Jew, reared as a Jew, and educated as a Jew. Though born in a Grecian city, he had been reared and educated in Jerusalem, and that at the feet of Gamaliel. The expression "at the feet of" conveyed the idea of both intimate nearness and subjection to authority. Students or disciples of that day were wont to sit cross-legged on the floor as they listened to their teacher who sat on an elevation above them. The Talmud records: "They are to dust themselves with the dust of his feet."

Gamaliel was known by the title, "the glory of the law." His father was rabbi Simeon, and his grandfather was the illustrious Hillel. Gamaliel died in about A.D. 52, some eighteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem, and at the time that Paul was on his first visit to the city of Corinth. Gamaliel had been president of the Sanhedrin under three different Roman

emperors—Tiberius, Caligula, and Claudius, respectively.

In keeping with Jewish custom, Paul probably entered the Hillel School of Religion at about the age of fifteen. The course of study in that institution was the Old Testament in its entirety. The fact that Paul had a sister living in Jerusalem—presumably older than he—leaves one to conjecture the great likelihood that Paul resided with the sister while enrolled in the Hillel School. (Acts 23:16.)

At the time Paul addressed the mob from his unique pulpit, he was a very accomplished and exceptionally well educated man. He was by culture a Greek, by citizenship a free born Roman, and by religion a Hebrew of Hebrews. (Phil. 2:5.) He would certainly be "Dr. Saul" in this day and time.

Paul affirmed that he had been instructed according to the strict—the most exact and accurate—manner of the ancestral law of the fathers. He further affirmed that he was "zealous for God"—or a zealot for God—"even as ye all are this day." This was Paul's way of saying, "As you are this very moment worked up to a point of white heat and mob violence, once I was as you are now."

Perhaps to the amazement of many in that great audience, Paul then declared: "I persecuted this Way"—the church or this religion—"unto death." (Phil. 3:6.) Paul's persecution "unto death" was apparently not confined to the death of Stephen. (Acts 7:54-60; 8:1-3.) When addressing Agrippa, Paul said: "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this I also did in Jerusalem: and I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them." (Acts 26:9-10.) This statement infers that Christians, other than Stephen, were put to death by the edict of the Sanhedrin, and by the consent, whether officially or unofficially of Paul.

Paul was in position to establish his statements by authoritative sources. Twenty years had intervened since he was legally autho-

rized to wage such a persecution against Christians, but the high priest at that time was still living and could be summoned for testimony. Further "all the estate of the elders," or the members of the Great Sanhedrin that had participated in the authorization were still living, and perhaps were present as Paul spoke. Paul had acted under National authority. His authorization, signed by the high priest, was a matter of official record. He had been the Sanhedrin's Inquisitor-in-Chief, the head persecutor of Christians.

#### Paul's Account of Conversion (Acts 22:6-15)

*And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. Arid I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, arid go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there, came unto me, and standing by me said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And in that very hour I looked up on him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. For thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.*

There are three accounts of Paul's conversion in the book of Acts: the first is Luke's graphic account, the second is Paul's account as related before the mob in Jerusalem, and the third is Paul's account as related before king Agrippa. (Acts 9:22-26.) The three accounts har-

monize, but the details vary. The variations and/or additions in the accounts are far more natural than would be three accounts of perfect uniformity. The modern critics who contend that the accounts are independent and discordant narratives fail to take into consideration the fact that the three accounts were at Luke's disposal—to include them or not to include them, and to assimilate them or not to assimilate them. Luke, without doubt, regarded the accounts as being harmonious.

In giving an account of his conversion, Paul's intent was to explain to that mob multitude how that he—once a persecutor of Christians—later became a Christian and an apostle, and particularly an apostle to the Gentiles. He was on a journey to Damascus—the former capital city of Syria—with a letter from the Great Sanhedrin and the signature of the high priest affixed thereto authorizing him to bring Christians, both men and women, in bonds from Damascus to Jerusalem to be punished. The likelihood is that those Christians in Damascus had fled Jerusalem to escape the persecutions there.

In recounting some of the details of his conversion, Paul stated that as he "drew nigh unto Damascus, about. . . Luke's own account does from heaven a great light round about. . ." Luke's own account does not mention the fact that the light from heaven came at about noon or midday. At midday the sun shines with its greatest brilliance, and thus the light which flashed about Paul was far greater in brilliance and intensity than the light of the noon-day sun. Paul related, "I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying to me, Saul, Saul,"—this was no doubt his Hebrew name, and perhaps he had been so named for king Saul—"why persecutest thou me?" Then Paul asked: "Who art thou, Lord?" The Jews by custom, addressed their superiors as "Lord." Paul recognized that he was in the presence of a superior, but he did not know the identity of his superior. Jesus recognized that Paul had asked the question in all sincerity, and thus he replied: "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." The term "Nazareth"

was used by the Lord so as to properly identify himself to Paul.

With this answer from Jesus the Nazarene, Paul learned that Jesus was not and is not a fake, or imposter, as he had thought him to be. Understandably, Paul asked: "What shall I do, Lord?" Luke, in his account, did not record that Paul asked this question. The Lord then said to him, "Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." If ever the Lord directly informs a man as to what he should do to be saved, or tells him that he is saved, surely this would have been one of those occasions.

The Lord, however, did not tell Paul what to do; rather, he sent Ananias to tell him what to do. The principle involved is that the gospel has been committed to earthen vessels. Paul already had written the Corinthians: "We have this treasure [the gospel] in earthen vessels." (2 Cor. 4:7.) A vessel is a container, and an earthen vessel is a container made of the earth. Such a man—that is, made of the earth—and Paul's statement simply meant that man is an earthen vessel, and the gospel is to be borne, carried, or preached only by mortal man. The Lord left for mortal man, therefore, the mission of informing Paul relative to what he must do to be saved.

Paul stated: "And they that were with me," probably the temple police, "beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me." This is not a contradiction with that of Luke's account where he recorded: "And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man." (Acts 9:7.) The meaning of Paul's statement, "but they heard not," is that they "understood not." The men heard the voice, the language, but they did not understand it.

Paul related how that he could not see for the glory of the light, and how that he was thus led by the hand of those with him until he came to Damascus. Luke's record states that "he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink." (Acts 9:9.)

According to Paul, three days

after the light flashed upon him, Ananias came to him. For the benefit of those of his audience, Paul emphasized that Ananias was a devout man according to the law and that he was well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there. Ananias said: "Brother Saul, receive thy sight." In that very hour—which means immediately or without delay—Paul received his sight. The return of his sight was adequate to show Paul that Ananias was sent by the Lord, else how did Ananias have miraculous power with which to restore his eyesight.

Then Ananias announced to Paul: "the God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth." Three important conditions are herein embraced:

1. Paul, was to know his (God's) will. He was to know, understand, and obey the gospel in order to be saved.

2. Paul was to see the Righteous One. He actually saw Jesus in his glory. (1 Cor. 9:1; 15:1-9.) Without the direct vision of the risen Lord, Paul could not have been an apostle on a par with the twelve apostles.

3. Paul was to hear a voice from the mouth of the Righteous One. Thus a direct vision was not only necessary for Paul to be an apostle of Christ, but also speech out of the mouth of the Righteous One was necessary. Through the means of the heavenly vision, the Lord qualified Paul to be an apostle.

Ananias continued his announcement by stating what "the God of our fathers" had further appointed for Paul. He said: "Thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." Then Ananias asked: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." Though Paul had seen and heard the Lord, still his sins were not forgiven. He needed to be washed or to be baptized. Ananias, therefore, urged Paul to arise from his position and cause himself to be baptized and "wash away thy sins." This was and is the purpose of baptism—the washing away of sins. In baptism the sinner comes in contact with the

cleansing power of the blood. (Rom. 6:1-4; John 19:33-34.) Baptism is for, or in order to, the remission of sins. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16.) Paul was to call on the name of the Lord because only through the name of the Lord may any person receive the forgiveness of sins.

### Paul Only Required to be Baptized (Acts 22:16)

*And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.*

Ananias did not tell Paul to believe as Paul and Silas later told the jailor to believe. Why? Paul was already a believer! He had seen Jesus face to face when he was enroute to Damascus. If Ananias had told Paul to believe on the

Lord, Paul would have informed Ananias that he was already a believer. Furthermore, Ananias did not tell Paul to repent as Peter had previously instructed the Pentecostians to do. Why? Paul had already repented! He had been in Damascus on the street called "Straight" for three days. Further, he had been in a very penitent state for the whole time, and he had continued in prayer for the whole time. In fact, Paul was so penitent that he had not taken food to eat nor had he taken water to drink. Why should Ananias tell Paul to do that which he had already done? Ananias' instructions to Paul began at the point of Paul's need. Ananias told Paul: "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

## Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

### Introduction

How many times had the Romans saved Paul's life to this point and time?  
What over-ruling providence is obvious? Why?

### Golden Text

To whom was Paul speaking when he spoke the words of the golden text?  
When did Paul receive this "heavenly vision"?  
What does his statement imply?

### Paul's Introduction to His Audience

Discuss the manner in which Paul addressed these people that had sought to kill him.  
What did the term "fathers" indicate?

### Paul's Defense Before the Elders and the Audience

What personal facts and experiences did Paul relate to the people?  
Review some of the important things about Paul's teacher Gamaliel.  
Discuss Paul's training, culture, and citizenship.  
What is meant by his statement, "I persecuted this Way unto death"?  
Was Paul in position to establish his statements by authoritative sources?

### Paul's Account of Conversion

In what three chapters of Acts are the accounts of Paul's conversion found?  
How may we account for the variations in the three accounts?  
What problem does a modern critic face when he contends that the accounts are independent and discordant?  
What was Paul's intent in telling this audience about his conversion?  
How did the Lord say to Paul when he fell to the earth?  
How did Paul respond?  
What did his response imply?  
How did Jesus answer him?  
What did Paul then ask Jesus?  
How did Jesus answer his second question?  
Why did not the Lord tell Paul what to do instead of sending him to Ananias?  
How may we account for the difference in Luke's and Paul's account in respect to the men that were with Paul, "hearing the voice" (Acts 9:7) and "they heard not the voice" (Acts 22:9)?  
What does Luke tell us about Paul during the three-day period that occurred before Ananias came to him?  
Discuss the things that Ananias told him.

### Paul Only Required to be Baptized

Why did Ananias not tell Paul to believe on the Lord, as he later told the jailor to believe?  
Why did not Ananias tell Paul to believe and repent and be baptized, as Peter told the Pentecostians to repent and be baptized?

Lesson XI—March 16, 1975

PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE THE COUNCIL

Lesson Text

Acts 23:1-10

1 And Paul looking stedfastly on the council, said, Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day.

2 And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth.

3 Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: and sittest thou to judge me according to the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?

4 And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest?

5 And Paul said, I knew not, brethren, that he was high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of a ruler of thy people.

6 But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees: touching the

hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

7 And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees; and the assembly was divided.

8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.

9 And there arose a great clamor: and some of the scribes of the Pharisees' part stood up, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: and what if a spirit hath spoken to him, or an angel?

10 And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should be torn in pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the castle.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be of good cheer: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." (Acts 23:11.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 23:12-35.

Daily Bible Readings

- March 10. M..... Paul Chosen to Suffer (Acts 9:10-19)
- March 11. T..... Peace Even in Persecution (John 16:25-33)
- March 12. W..... Enduring Hardship (2 Tim. 2:1-13)
- March 13. T..... Triumph in Bondage (Phil. 1:12-22)
- March 14. F..... Fellowship with the Lord (Phil. 3:7-11)
- March 15. S..... Promise of Protection (Psalm 125:1-5)
- March 16. S..... Help in Time of Trouble (Psalm 86:11-17)

TIME.—A.D. 57, the morrow following the last lesson.

PLACE.—The Gentile court in Jerusalem, probably near the Temple.

PERSONS.—Lysias, the chief captain; Paul; the Council, or Sanhedrin, including the high priest Ananias, and composed of both Pharisees and Sadducees.

Introduction

The present lesson can be properly understood only in the light of the prior lesson, entitled, "Paul's Defense Before the People." Certain historical perspectives are imperative in order for the student to understand the kind of meeting and/or defense which Paul made before the council.

As Paul proceeded in his defense before the multitude in Jerusalem, he related how that the Lord had

said to him, "Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." (Acts 22:21.) At the point of this statement the hitherto silent multitude erupted. "Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live," the multitude cried. "They threw off their garments, and cast dust into the air," thereby signifying that they would stone Paul except for the Roman military.

The chief captain, Claudius Lysias, then commanded that Paul "should be examined by scourging." (Acts 21:24.) This was not just an inept command; rather, it was an illegal one. Lysias was criminally liable for having given it. The command for "examination by scourging" meant that the soldiers were to beat the truth out of Paul. It was a command for examination by torture, and it was a violation of Paul's constitutional rights as a free born Roman citizen. True, Lysias did not know that Paul was a Roman citizen, but except for his ineptness, he could have known. When Lysias first interrogated Paul, Paul said: "I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city." Paul's statement here was sufficient to have prompted Lysias to inquire as to the possibility of his being a Roman citizen, but this he did not do.

Scourging was performed by first strapping the victim forward and down. Then the victim was beaten by an instrument with a short handle that had several thongs attached thereto and with metal or bone fastened at the up of each thong. Thus every lash made several stripes, and the tips cut the flesh. When the victim had been sufficiently lashed, he was presented to the captain for questioning.

As Paul was being strapped down for the terrible ordeal of scourging, he asked the centurion, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?" On hearing the question by Paul, the centurion went immediately to Lysias and asked: "What art thou about to do? for this man is a Roman." Lysias lost no time. He came to Paul and said: "Tell me art thou a Roman?"

Lysias had committed a criminal act. Not a single charge had been lodged against Paul, and not a single accuser had come forth to testify against him. Paul had not had his day in court. The supreme Roman authorities would have dealt severely with Lysias had his conduct been brought to their attention.

Lysias was aware of his plight. Luke records: "They then that were about to examine him straightway departed from him: and the chief

captain also was afraid when he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him." (Acts 22:27-29.) Further, Lysias' intended cover-up letter to Governor Felix is obvious on its face when all the facts and circumstances are drawn together and summarized. The letter read as follows: "Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent Governor Felix, greeting. This man was seized by the Jews, and was about to be slain of them, when I came upon them with soldiers and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman. And desiring to know the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him down unto the council: whom I found to be accused about questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. And when it was shown to me that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to thee forthwith, charging his accusers also to speak against him before thee." (Acts 23:26-30.) Now, two points in this letter are especially significant; namely (1) Lysias' reference to the fact that Paul was a Roman citizen, and (2) Lysias' reference to the council in Jerusalem.

Respecting Lysias' reference to the fact that Paul was a Roman citizen, he stated the matter so as to leave the impression that he was in the very outset alert in ascertaining that Paul was a Roman citizen. He further left the impression that he had been very careful to maintain Paul's citizenship rights: whereas, the case was that he had violated those citizenship rights. He had ordered Paul to be "examined by scourging," and Paul was being strapped down for scourging when he had the first opportunity to plead to an official, a centurion, his rights as a Roman citizen. Lysias had ordered a Roman citizen to be scourged without first being heard or tried in a legal court of Justice.

Respecting Lysias' reference to the Jewish council, he "brought Paul down unto the council." This fact necessarily infers that the council or Sanhedrin was not in a formal meeting within its own hall; else, Lysias would not have been allowed to be present. The meeting of the council was within the court of the Gentiles. Lysias had called the



meeting and that for the specific purpose of ascertaining just what charges the Jews had against the apostle Paul. No charges had been filed against Paul. No accusers had appeared, and, therefore, no examination could be held. Lysias could not even institute a trial by questioning against Paul in the absence of a criminal charge, and/or in the absence of witnesses.

Paul's appearance before the council or Sanhedrin was definitely not a trial by that body. Claudius Lysias had no authority to so order such a trial. His call for the informal meeting was to the end that he

might ascertain the charges and hear the witnesses against Paul.

A study of Paul's defense before the council can be properly understood only in the light of the foregoing. The meeting was disorganized and disruptive from the start. Luke gave no details of the proceedings, and he presented only two incidents that transpired at the meeting; namely, Paul's encounter with the high priest and the clash between the Pharisees and Sadducees. Luke left for conjecture the matter as to how the proceedings began and also the matter of how Paul was given the floor to speak.

### The Golden Text

*"Be of good cheer: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem so must thou bear witness also at Rome."* When Paul was so discouraged in the work in the city of Corinth, the Lord appeared to him in a vision and said: "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set upon thee to harm thee." (Acts 18:9-10.) Paul was in prison in Jerusalem when the Lord gave him the encouragement as per this golden text. He had testified of Christ before the mob multitude of Jews in Jerusalem, and he

had testified of Christ the next day before an informal meeting of the Sanhedrin. Only jails and imprisonment seemed to await him. His concern for the church and his fellow Jews weighed heavily upon him. Though Luke does not record, Paul must have experienced many emotional fears and anxieties while in Jerusalem similar to those he had experienced at Corinth and other places. Thus the Lord spoke words of encouragement to Paul, and he informed him that he must also bear testimony under similar circumstances to those in Rome.

### The Text Explained

#### Paul's Affirmation Before the Council (Acts 23:1)

*And Paul, looking stedfastly on the council, said, Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day.*

Luke did not describe the decorum, if there was any, which prevailed at the beginning of the council meeting. He did not state who presided, and he did not relate the circumstances that placed Paul as a spokesman before the council.

Logic would seem to infer that Lysias presided, that he called upon the council members to state their criminal charges and testimony against Paul, that no one rose to testify, and that eventually some member suggested that Paul be granted the privilege to speak for himself.

The term "council" is equivalent to the term, "the Great Sanhedrin."

The Great Sanhedrin was the highest tribunal of the Hebrew system of jurisprudence. The jurisdiction of this court embraced all phases and functions of government, religion, and education. Unlike the American system of government—with its independent legislative, executive, and judicial departments—the powers of this supreme tribunal were legislative, executive, and judicial.

The Great Sanhedrin was composed of seventy-one members when the court was full. Its organization was divided into three chambers—the chamber of the priests, the chamber of the elders, and the chamber of the scribes. (Mark 14:53.) Theoretically, each of the three chambers was composed of twenty-three members—a total of sixty-nine and with two presiding officers thus constituting the requisite number of seventy-

one. The chamber of priests represented the religious or sacerdotal aspect of Hebrew life; the chamber of the elders represented the democratic or popular element of Hebrew life; and the chamber of scribes represented the literary and/or legal aspects of the law. The scribes were learned in the law. Like Paul, they were graduates of such Hebrew schools as the Hillel School of Religion and the Shammai School of Religion.

Jesus the Christ had stood before that august court of justice—the Great Sanhedrin—and was tried and convicted. On the occasion of this lesson, the apostle Paul addressed the members of this same court. This was the body of men upon whom Paul “looked stedfastly” and said: “Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day.” Some three things seem to be made apparent by this address. For one thing, Paul’s use of the term “brethren” before men of such importance indicates his factual recognition of his own high position as an apostle of Christ. He certainly was on a par with them. For another thing, the address “brethren” indicates, as has already been developed in the introduction, that this was not a formal session of the Sanhedrin. For still another thing, Paul’s affirmation that he had “lived before God in all good conscience until this day” indicates that this was his summary answer to all the accusations, and riotous charges which had been made against him, and especially those made the day before. Paul had lived in all good conscience. Though wrong relative to Christ, he had done what he had been taught was right. When Paul spoke before king Agrippa, he said: “I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.” (Acts 26:9.)

**Paul’s Encounter with  
the High Priests**  
(Acts 23:2-5)

*And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: and sittest thou to judge me according to the*

*law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God’s high priest? And Paul said, I knew not, brethren, that he was high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of a ruler of thy people.*

At the point of Paul’s affirmation of integrity and innocence, the high priest commanded the council members who stood nearest to Paul—the fact of their standing reflects the want of order and formality—“to smite him on the mouth.” This was Ananias’ injunction for Paul to cease speaking. This was his way of declaring that the sum and substance of Paul’s defense—his claim to integrity and innocence—was absolutely false on its face. This was also Ananias’ way of demonstrating his authority before and for the benefit of Lysias, the chief captain of one thousand Roman soldiers. The question of whether or not Paul was actually struck in the mouth in compliance with Ananias’ command cannot be determined with absolute certainty.

Paul, with the bearing of that which only a god-fearing man can have, replied to Ananias: “God shall smite thee, thou whited wall.” Here Paul is not to be understood as giving rise to a sudden human burst of hot temper. Paul’s words stemmed from a soul full of righteous indignation. Paul thus charged Ananias with “sitting to judge” him according to the law and at the same time of commanding him to be smitten contrary to the law. This was an apt description of the kind of man that Ananias was. The Jewish law, like all proper laws, presumed innocence until guilt was proven.

Those that stood by said: “Revilest thou God’s high priest?” Paul replied: “I knew not, brethren, that he was high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of a ruler of thy people.”

Assuming that Paul spoke with sincerity and not in irony, the following seem to be the foregone conclusions:

1. That Paul did not know Ananias, personally.
2. That the high priest wore no robe or badge.

3. That the meeting was informal and disorganized.

4. That Paul, out of respect for an office as such, would have withheld his rebuke of Ananias had he known that Ananias was the high priest.

5. That the Holy Spirit gave Paul in that hour what he should speak to Ananias.

6. That, therefore, a fuller part and purpose of revelation was served in Paul's not having known that Ananias was the high priest. In short, Paul's rebuke was very much in order and deserved.

### The Clash Between the Pharisees and the Sadducees (Acts 23:6-9)

*But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees: touching the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees; and the assembly was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great clamor: and some of the scribes of the Pharisees' part stood up, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: and what if a spirit hath spoken to him, or an angel?*

Verses six and seven are significant. They read: "But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of a Pharisee; touching the hope [of the Messiah] and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." Paul's statement provoked a dissension—a clash—between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Now, with what intent or purpose did Paul declare himself to be a Pharisee? Was his claim one that lacked candor? Was it a mere clever, crafty device—a cunning trick—to divide the assembly? Did Paul equivocate—that is, use language to deceive—when he declared himself to be a Pharisee?

The answer to all these questions is "No." Observe that Luke said:

"When Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council," he cried out, he literally shouted! The very strong inference is that Paul shouted in order to be heard. This would infer that somehow, or for some circumstance, or by some accusation, there had come to be a heated disagreement or discussion between the Sadducees and the Pharisees during the course of the assembly. A later statement by Paul in his defense before Governor Felix lends force to the inference. He said there: "Let these men themselves say what wrong-doing they found when

I stood before the council, except it be for this one voice, that I cried [shouted to be heard] standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question before you this day." (Acts 24:20-21.) As has been observed already, Luke did not record the procedures and details of the meeting with the council, but apparently the two parties had in some way become involved in a loud and heated debate so as to cause Paul to cry out—actually to shout—in order to be heard. Of a certainty Paul had known from his early years of association with the Sanhedrin that there was a running debate between the Pharisees and Sadducees who made up that court.

Paul did not equivocate, that is he did not declare himself to be a Pharisee in order to deceive. Every council member present knew that Paul was a Christian, and the hope of the Christian turns on the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The thrust of Paul's statement constitutes an argument within itself. The Sanhedrin was composed, in the majority, of Pharisees. How could that body, therefore, condemn a man who held the main doctrine and tenets of Phariseism? Paul's intent was to show to the Pharisees that their central theme of the law lay in the belief in the resurrection. With this common bond of truth, the Pharisees might accept Christ, but with the Sadducees there was no common bond because they outright rejected the resurrection.

When a great clamor was raised, some of the Pharisees and scribes

stood with Paul. They said: "We find no evil in this man: and what if a spirit hath spoken to him, or an angel?" Up to this point no charge that would seem reasonable to a Roman cohort had been brought against Paul, and at this point certain of the Pharisees and scribes joined with Paul. The remaining opposition, particularly the Sadducees, were left in a very embarrassing position. They were left with no justifiable reason for their having demanded the death of Paul. Thus "a great clamor" arose, and "some of the scribes of the Pharisees" part stood up, and strove" with the Sadducees—that is they did battle with them.

### Lysias' Rescue of Paul

(Acts 23:10)

*And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should be torn in pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the castle.*

Observing the clamor and great dissension, Claudius Lysias feared

lest Paul should be torn in pieces, and commanded—or called to the soldiers above—to come down and take Paul by force from among the members of the Sanhedrin. The soldiers responded with haste and Paul was brought up the stairs and into the castle. This was the third time that Paul had been rescued by the Romans, and it was the second time that he had been rescued by Claudius Lysias.

The Roman Empire, as per Daniel 2, was to be raised up by God so that it might make its own peculiar contribution for the coming of Christ and the establishment of the church. Through the Roman cohort, Claudius Lysias, the Roman Empire was serving his purpose. The Romans were protecting Paul from his fellow Jews.

The divine and over-ruling providence of God was at work in Paul's behalf. How else could he have spoken to so many of his fellow Jews under such controlled circumstances? How else could he have spoken to the members of the Great Sanhedrin with a Roman official as his bodyguard, so to speak? Great are the mighty wonders of Jehovah!

## Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?

Repeat the golden text.

Give time, place, and persons.

### Introduction

What is the relationship of the last lesson to today's lesson?

The Jews gave attention to Paul's speech, from the stairs of the castle, until he spoke of what?

What did they then say and do?

What did their actions signify?

What did Claudius Lysias then command concerning Paul?

Discuss the procedure of examining a person by scourging.

At what point, and how, did Paul make an appeal for his rights as a Roman citizen?

What lesson may Christians learn from Paul's action?

How had Lysias committed a criminal act?

Why did Lysias fear when he learned that Paul was a Roman?

How did Lysias cover-up in his letter to Governor Felix?

What does Lysias' statement, "I brought him down unto their council," infer?

### The Golden Text

Where was Paul when the Lord gave him the encouragement stated in the golden text?

On what other occasion had the Lord given him similar encouragement?

### Paul's Affirmation Before the Council

How much detail does Luke give about the meeting of the council?

Discuss the council, or the Great Sanhedrin.

What two innocent persons had this same council sentenced to death?

What great affirmation did Paul make before the council?

Does Paul's affirmation mean that he had always done what was right?

To what extent is the conscience of man an adequate guide?

### Paul's Encounter with the High Priest

What did the high priest Ananias command those near Paul to do when Paul affirmed that he had lived "before God in all good conscience"?

How did Paul respond?

Did Paul err in what he said to Ananias?

### The Clash Between the Pharisees and the Sadducees

What statement by Paul provoked a dissension between the members of the council?

Why did his statement provoke a dissension?

Why did he cry out in the council?

What was probably Paul's intent in mentioning the resurrection of the dead?

What were the results of dissension?

Lysias' Rescue of Paul  
Why did Lysias command the soldiers to

go down and take Paul from the council?  
How many times does this make that Paul had been rescued by the Romans?

Lesson XII—March 23, 1975

PAUL APPEALS TO CAESAR

Lesson Text

Acts 25:6-12, 23-27

6 And when he had tarried among them not more than eight or ten days, he went down unto Caesarea; and on the morrow he sat on the judgment-seat, and commanded Paul to be brought.

7 And when he was come, the Jews that had come down from Jerusalem stood round about him, bringing against him many and grievous charges which they could not prove;

8 While Paul said in his defence, Neither against the law of the Jews nor against the temple, nor against Caesar, have I sinned at all.

9 But Festus, desiring to gain favor with the Jews, answered Paul and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?

10 But Paul said, I am standing before Caesar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou also very well knowest.

11 If then, I am a wrong-doer, and have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but if none of those things is true whereof these accuse me, no man can give me up unto them. I appeal unto Caesar.

12 Then Festus, when he had con-

ferred with the council, answered, Thou hast appealed unto Caesar: unto Caesar shalt thou go.

23 So on the morrow when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and they were entered into the place of hearing with the chief captains and the principal men of the city, at the command of Festus Paul was brought in.

24 And Festus saith, King Agrippa, and all men who are here present with us, ye behold this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews made suit to me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying that he ought not to live any longer.

25 But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death: and as he himself appealed to the emperor I determined to send him.

26 Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you and specially before thee, king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I may have somewhat to write.

27 For it seemeth to me unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not withal to signify the charges against him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He hoped withal that money would be given him of Paul." (Acts 24:26.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 24:22-27.

Daily Bible Readings

- March 17. M..... Roman Citizenship (Acts 22:25-30)
- March 18. T..... Benefits of Roman Citizenship (Acts 23:26-30)
- March 19. W..... Paul's Appeal to Caesar (Acts 25:6-12)
- March 20. T..... Paul to Be Carried to Rome (Acts 27:1-6)
- March 21. F..... Perils of the Sea (Acts 27:9-13)
- March 22. S..... A Great Storm (Acts 27:14-27)
- March 23. S..... Shipwreck (Acts 27:27-44)

TIME.—A.D. 58-59.

PLACE.—Caesarea, a city on the coast of Palestine rebuilt by Herod, and dedicated to the divine Caesar. Under the Roman procurators, Caesarea became their official seat and the capital of Palestine.

PERSONS.—Porcius Festus, newly appointed Procurator of Palestine, Jews from Jerusalem; Paul; Agrippa and Bernice; chief captains and principal men of the city.

### Introduction

The thoughtful student who has followed in successive order the lessons for this quarter has likely contemplated already the obvious and evident over-ruling providence of God in the life of the apostle Paul. The J. W. McGarvey, the prince of scholars, has in his book—*McGarvey's Sermons*—two sermons on providence; namely, "The Providence of Joseph," and "The Providence of Esther." The providence of God is tremendously evident in the lives of both Joseph and Esther, but it is even more evident in the life of the apostle Paul.

The space allotted for this lesson does not permit a thorough study of the over-ruling providence of God in the life of Paul, but a skeleton lead in such a study would include the following outstanding events in the life of Paul.

1. Paul's unusual background: by culture and education, a Greek; by citizenship, a free-born Roman; and by religion, a Hebrew of Hebrews.

2. Paul's experiences as the Inquisitor-in-Chief for the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, including the death of Christians and particularly the death of Stephen.

3. Paul's unusual call to the apostleship of Christ, especially as the chief apostle to the Gentiles.

4. Paul's last visit to Jerusalem, the occasion of it and the prevailing circumstances upon his arrival there, including the predictions of bonds and imprisonment which awaited him.

5. Paul's arrest in Jerusalem and his address before his most unusual and attentive audience, the mob multitude of the Jews.

6. Paul's appearance and address before the council, or Great Sanhedrin, for whom he had once served as Inquisitor-in-Chief.

7. Paul's defense before Gover-

nor Felix and later his private appearance before Felix and his wife Druscilla, of Jewish heritage—the result of a plot of the Jews against Paul's life which became known to Paul's sister's son.

8. Paul's appearance and address before Governor Festus.

9. Paul's appearance and address before king Agrippa, who had jurisdiction over the Temple and had the power to appoint the high priest.

10. Paul's journey to Rome—a city that he had of longtime purposed to visit—to appear before the judgment seat of Caesar and that at the expense of and protection of the Roman government.

11. Paul's unusual occasion and means of communication—including the preaching of the gospel—with the chief men of the Jewish synagogues in Rome.

12. Paul's unusual occasion and means of communication—including the preaching of the gospel—with those of the Roman guard and of Caesar's household.

With some reflection, the serious student will be able to comprehend how that with the passing of usual and normal circumstances Paul would never have had the opportunity to preach to that quiet-attended multitude of Jews at Jerusalem, or to the Great Sanhedrin for whom two decades prior he had served as Inquisitor-in-Chief, or to and before Governors Felix and Festus, or to and before king Agrippa, or to the leading Jews of Rome, or to the Roman guard in Rome and/or Caesar's household. In short, there is a God in heaven who is abundantly able to over-rule the raging of evil men for his own glory and for the welfare of his own dedicated people. Paul was a glorious instrument in the hand of God!

### The Golden Text

"He hoped withal that money would be given him of Paul." Following Paul's defense before the council in Jerusalem, forty men bound themselves under a curse to

kill him. They revealed their wicked plot to the chief priests and elders and asked that the council signify to the chief captain that he bring Paul down as though the

council would judge of his case more exactly, and "when he comes near," they said, "we will slay him." The chief priests and elders agreed to cooperate. One would hope that not all the council, particularly those who had taken Paul's part at the meeting of the council, knew of the plot. The criminality of those members of the Great Sanhedrin is shocking to the sensibilities of just people.

The criminal plot was thwarted by a premature disclosure to one of Paul's near relatives, a nephew. How this nephew learned of the plot will forever remain a mystery! Was he present when the conspirators formed the plot? Was he a strict Jew? a Christian? Anyway, what providence intervened!

Paul was dispatched immediately by the chief captain, Claudius Lysias, to Caesarea for safe keeping. In his letter to Governor Felix, he stated that he knew no criminal charges to be filed against Paul. Five days later the high priest Ananias with certain elders and with Tertullus, a gentile orator and lawyer, arrived in Caesarea to accuse Paul before Governor Felix, but they were unable to establish any criminal charges against him. Governor Felix should have released Paul in very much the same way that the Proconsul Gallio of Achaia had released him; but instead, Felix held him over in mili-

tary custody as a "trustee," "until Lysias should come down," he said—but these were feigned words. Further, Lysias did not "come down," and so Paul remained in prison.

Governor Felix had observed from Paul's defense that he had brought alms to his people. Felix sensed that Paul was a prominent man of wide travel and with financial connections. He thought, therefore, that if he held Paul in prison that Paul and/or his adherents would pay him money—bribe him, as it were—for Paul's release. To this end "he sent for Paul the oftner, and communed with him." He gave Paul every opportunity possible to arrange a bribe for his release. He would have released Paul for a sufficient price, and he reasoned that Paul's many friends could and would pay a considerable price for his release. He no doubt reasoned that upon his releasing Paul, he could answer the objections of the Jews by simply stating that they had failed to establish any criminal charge against the man.

The months dragged on until a year had passed, and then another year, but Paul and his friends submitted no offer of a bribe. They regarded "bribe giving" as being in moral turpitude next to "bribe taking." Paul and his associates did not subscribe to the doctrine of situation ethics.

### The Text Explained

#### Paul Stands Before Festus

(Acts 25:6-8)

*And when he had tarried among them not more than eight or ten days, he went down unto Caesarea; and on the morrow he sat on the judgment-seat, and commanded Paul to be brought. And when he was come, the Jews that had come down from Jerusalem stood round about him, bringing against him many and grievous charges which they could not prove; while Paul said in his defense, Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar, have I sinned at all.*

The unprincipled Felix was governor, or procurator, of Palestine from A.D. 52 to A.D. 60. He secured the office through the influ-

ence of his brother Pallas, a favorite minister of the emperor Claudius. Nero became emperor on October 13, A.D. 54, and he recalled Felix in A.D. 60. According to Josephus, Nero called Felix to Rome to answer for his crimes, and Felix barely escaped execution. Though Felix left Paul in prison to appease the Jews, the Jews later turned up to accuse him before Nero.

Porcius Festus was appointed to succeed Felix and he died in office some two years later. While some historians and commentators emphasize that in personal character and integrity he was much better than Felix, the fact remains that there was much to be desired in his character as will be noted in this present study.

Verses six through eight of this lesson—as per the above reading—are self-evident on their face. Festus, as would be expected, moved immediately to acquaint himself with the responsibilities, circumstances, and problems of his proconsulship of Palestine. Jerusalem, the city of the Jews, constituted by far the greatest single responsibility and the greatest potential for problems and uprisings. Festus, therefore, went up to Jerusalem immediately to observe the situation there.

The chief priests and principal men took advantage of Festus' visit—especially since he was the new governor—to inform him of the apostle Paul and to request that Festus dispatch Paul to Jerusalem to be tried. Though Paul had been in prison for two years, those Jews had not given up their hatred of him and their wicked purpose to put him to death.

Festus, with wisdom, insisted instead that those accusers—those that were of power among the Jews—go down to Caesarea and accuse Paul there. Festus remained in Jerusalem for some eight or ten days, and when he returned to Caesarea, Paul's accusers appeared before the judgment seat to bring accusations against him. The charges were many and grievous, but the accusers were unable to establish or prove them. The charges were only a repetition of those that had been made formerly.

The entire procedure was in keeping with the provision of the Roman courts of justice. The accused Roman citizen had the inalienable right to face his accusers and to hear their charges against him. The Roman court provided also that the accusers were to be presented first with the responsibility to show forth reasons and facts as to why the defendant should be charged with criminal offence. In turn, the defendant was then called upon to present his defense, and that in the presence of his accusers. The court procedure was regular in every detail.

Luke did not record the specifics of the charges presented nor did he record the specifics of Paul's defense. He did record that Paul—likely as a summation of his de-

fense—said: "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar, have I sinned at all." His summation turned, no doubt, on the chief accusations made against him.

Paul had not sinned against the law—that is, his affirmation of the resurrection of Christ was not contrary to the law of Moses, but instead, the doctrine of the resurrection was in agreement with the law. Paul had not sinned against the temple—that is, he had not desecrated it by carrying the Gentile Trophimus of Ephesus into the court of the Jews. Paul had not sinned against Caesar—that is, he had not violated any Roman law.

### Paul Appeals to Caesar

(Acts 25:9-12)

*But Festus, desiring to gain favor with the Jews, answered Paul and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me? But Paul said, I am standing before Caesar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou also very well knowest. If then I am a wrong-doer, and have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but if none of those things is true whereof these accuse me, no man can give me up unto them. I appeal unto Caesar. Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Thou hast appealed unto Caesar: unto Caesar shalt thou go.*

Governor Festus recognized that there was no criminal offense that could be lodged against Paul. Integrity of character and a high sense of justice demanded that Festus should set Paul free. Two years of unjust imprisonment had already been carved out of the life of that great and active man. Festus, though, requested that Paul consent to go up to Jerusalem to be tried there. He said: "Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?" Festus desired to placate the Jews and to make them his friends. The request was for a change of venue for the trial, but before the same judge, Festus.

From the standpoint of justice, what justice was to be served by such a hearing in Jerusalem? Fes-



tus knew that Paul was innocent. What a little man Festus was—a corrupt politician without even a reasonable sense of honor! If Paul had agreed to such a hearing the wicked Jews would have waylaid him in a further attempt upon his life.

The request by Festus gave Paul the opportunity to appeal his case. During his two-year imprisonment no such means was available to him because no decision had been made by the court at Caesarea. In short there had been no court decision from which he could make an appeal. Thus when Festus made the request, Paul replied: "I am standing before Caesars' judgment-seat where I ought to be judged. ... I appeal to Caesar." Paul knew Roman law. He understood his rights, and Governor Felix recognized that Paul knew his rights. Unlike the courts of the United States where an appeal moves from a lower court to a higher court, the Roman citizen had the right to appeal to the court of the Emperor of Rome himself. This Paul did.

Paul's averment of innocence and appeal to Caesar was certainly an affront to Governor Festus! His appeal to Caesar under the prevailing circumstances was a tacit charge of malfeasance against Festus. Following a private conference with his legal advisers, Festus replied, with a certain determination: "Thou hast appealed unto Caesar: unto Caesar shalt thou go." Actually, Festus had no other choice.

The appeal to Caesar was an appeal to the court of last resort. No case, except that which was exceedingly grave and involved, should have been allowed by a Roman court to move to the court of last resort. Festus was left in an embarrassing situation. In his first experience to sit as judge on the bench at Caesarea—and perhaps his first experience to sit as a judge in any capacity—he had received an appeal from his decision to the court of last resort, and he had not one single criminal charge to file against the defendant so making the appeal. He was in no small predicament.

### Paul Is Brought Before King Agrippa (Acts 25:23)

*So on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and they were entered into the place of hearing with the chief captains and the principal men of the city, at the command of Festus Paul was brought in.*

King Agrippa, A.D. 27-100, sometimes called Agrippa the second or younger in order to distinguish him from his father, was the son of King Herod, of Acts 12, and he was the great-grandson of Herod the Great and Mariamne, the Jewess and granddaughter of Hyrcanus of the Maccabean family. King Agrippa's father, Agrippa I or Herod, put to death the apostle James.

King Herod had the one son, Agrippa, and four daughters, namely: Drusus; Bernice, who lived with her brother, Agrippa, as his wife; Mariamne; and Drusilla, the wife of Governor Felix. Within the veins of the children of king Herod coursed the blood of both the Edomites and the Jews. Drusilla was said to have been a very beautiful woman.

According to Josephus, Emperor Claudius, A.D. 41-54, in time made Agrippa king over the tetrarchies formerly held by Philip and Lysanias and also committed to him the guardianship of the Temple of Jerusalem, including especially the keeping of the sacred vestments and with the right of nominating or appointing the high priest. King Agrippa's seat of government was at Caesarea Philippi.

King Agrippa was said to have zealously embraced the Jews' religion. The Talmud records the account of his weeping at the public reading of the law as to how any Gentile was forbidden to bear rule in Israel, whereupon the people cried out to console and reassure him.

As political circumstances moved toward a possible rebellion of the Jews against the Romans, king Agrippa did all within his power to dissuade the Jews from such an uprising. When the war broke out, he took sides with the Romans against his countrymen. When Jerusalem fell, his domain was extended.

Later he lived chiefly at Tiberias as a Roman vassal prince. He died childless in about A.D. 100—the last prince of the house of Herod.

Immediately following Festus' appointment as proconsul of Palestine, king Agrippa and Bernice, his sister and common law incestuous wife, went down from Caesarea Philippi to Caesarea Palestine to give formal greetings to the new procurator, Festus. Under the prevailing circumstances, the case of Paul was an inevitable subject of conversation between those two rulers. When Festus recounted his problem relative to Paul, king Agrippa commented that he could wish—which may mean, I have been wishing—to hear the man, myself. Festus replied: "Tomorrow thou shalt hear him."

Governor Festus took advantage of Agrippa's request, and he arranged for a formal dress occasion. There were five chiliarchs or chief captains at Caesarea—commanders of one thousand men each—and there were also the prominent men of the city. These all appeared in their proper regalia. All niceties, etiquette, and precedence of protocol were carefully supervised, and thus entered, with excessive pomp and ostentation Agrippa and Bernice into the very hall and almost on the very spot where their father had been stricken by an angel some fourteen years before. What an audience this was—an audience dressed fit for the entrance of the Emperor of Rome!

Festus commanded, and "Paul was brought in"! What a contrast this was! There entered not a king but a prisoner. The prisoner was not just a prisoner of the Jews and of Governor Festus, but he was more than all of that a prisoner of Christ.

"Paul was brought in!" His appearance before that august assembly was as that of a man at a wedding feast without his wedding garment. Paul was not on trial as he stood before that audience. What a strange providence attended Paul's presence there! What an unusual hall—Herod's Hall, built for parade, pomp, and ostentation—had been opened for Paul! What a large and unusual audience—royal persons, politicians, military officers and

men, professional people, and prominent business men—had assembled to hear Paul testify as to why he had turned from his persecution of Christians to become a Christian, himself.

### Festus Justifies His Position Relative to Paul (Acts 25:24-27)

*And, Festus saith, King Agrippa, and all men who are here present with us, ye behold this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews made suit to me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death: and as he himself appealed to the emperor I determined to send him. Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I may have somewhat to write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not withal to signify the charges against him.*

Festus was in an embarrassing predicament as all could see. He was sending a man to court of last resort, and he had not withal a single criminal charge to file against him. He had certainly misjudged Paul when he requested him to go to Jerusalem for trial. If he had followed the law of justice and right, Paul would have been a free man, and he would not have been in such a predicament.

Festus left himself—or at least such was his purpose—in a favorable but dishonest light when he said: "I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death: and as he himself appealed to the emperor I determined to send him." The impression was left that just as he (Festus) was ready to set Paul free, Paul appealed to Caesar and thereby left him without recourse to set Paul free. His statement amounted to an unmitigated lie. As Festus had in private reported to Agrippa, he had requested that Paul agree to go to Jerusalem to be tried there—this he did instead of moving to set Paul free. At the point of Festus' request, Paul appealed to Caesar.

## Questions for Discussion

Give the subject of the lesson.  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give the time, place, and persons.

### Introduction

Was the providence of God at work in the life of Paul?  
Discuss the providence of God in the life of Paul.  
Under normal circumstances could Paul have hoped to preach to the governors and kings?

### The Golden Text

Why did Governor Felix not set Paul free?  
What moral turpitude is involved in the taking of bribes?  
Is moral turpitude involved in giving of bribes?

### Paul Stands Before Festus

Give a brief account of Felix.  
Discuss how that Paul came to stand before Festus.  
Discuss the procedure of the trial.  
Were the requirements of Roman court procedure observed? Explain.  
Did Luke record the specific charges?  
Did Luke record the specifics of Paul's defense?  
How had Paul not sinned against the law? Against the Temple? Against Caesar?

### Paul Appeals to Caesar

What step did justice demand that Festus take with respect to Paul?

Why did Festus request that Paul go to Jerusalem to be tried?  
Did this show integrity of character on the part of Festus?  
Compare Festus with Gallio.  
Discuss how Festus' request to Paul provided Paul with the base for an appeal to Caesar.  
How did a Roman appeal differ from an appeal in the United States?  
What did an appeal to Caesar really mean?  
How did Paul's appeal constitute a source of embarrassment to Festus?

### Paul Is Brought Before King Agrippa

Who was king Agrippa?  
What was his domain?  
What was his relationship with the Jews?  
Where was the seat of king Agrippa's government?  
What was the seat of Festus' government?  
Who was Bernice?  
What was her relationship with Agrippa?  
Describe the formal dress occasion wherein Paul stood before King Agrippa.  
Discuss the unusual circumstances connected with this occasion, particularly that of Herod's Hall.

### Festus Justifies His Position Relative to Paul

How did Festus explain the reason of the assembly?  
How could Festus have avoided his embarrassing predicament?

## Lesson XIII—March 30, 1975

### PAUL IN ROME

#### Lesson Text

Acts 28:16-24, 30, 31

16 And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him.

17 And it came to pass, that after three days he called together those that were the chief of the Jews: and when they were come together, he said unto them, I, brethren, though I had done nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans:

18 Who, when they had examined me, desired to set me at liberty, because there was no cause of death in me.

19 But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had aught whereof to accuse my nation.

20 For this cause therefore did I entreat you to see and to speak with me: for because of the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters from Judaea concerning thee, nor did any of the brethren come hither and report or speak any harm of thee.

22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against.

23 And when they had appointed him a day, they came to him into his lodging in great number; to whom he expounded *the matter*, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning till evening.

24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.

in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him,

31 Preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.

30 And he abode two whole years

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Caesar.” (Acts 27:24.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 28:1-16.

Daily Bible Readings

- March 24. M.....On the Island of Melita (Acts 28:1-6)
- March 25. T.....Miracle on Melita (Acts 28:7-10)
- March 26. W.....Arrival in Rome (Acts 28:11-16)
- March 27. T.....Conferences in Rome (Acts 28:17-28)
- March 28. F.....Letter to the Romans (Rom. 1:1-17)
- March 29. S.....Paul, Prisoner in Bonds (Eph. 6:10-20)
- March 30. S.....Paul’s Labors in Rome (Acts 28:30, 31)

TIME.—March, A.D. 59.  
PLACE.—Rome, Italy.

PERSONS.—Luke and Paul; chief unbelieving Jews of the city; members of the praetorian guard; and all that came unto Paul.

Introduction

More than two years—A.D. 56 or 57 to 59—had passed since Paul wrote from Corinth his general epistle to the Romans in which he stated how that for many years he had held “a longing to come unto you.” He explained, “Whensoever I go unto Spain (for I hope to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thither-ward by you, if first in some measure I shall have been satisfied with your company)—but now, I say, I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints.” (Rom. 15:24-25.) Even before Paul wrote the Roman epistle and while he was still at Ephesus — about A.D. 56 — he had planned to visit Rome and go from there to Spain. Luke recorded, concerning Paul’s great success at Ephesus, “Now after these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. And having sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.” (Acts 19:21-22.)

converts from other places who had either resided there all the while and had heard and obeyed the gospel when on a trip away from Rome or by converts who had moved from some other city or province to Rome. To illustrate, “sojourners from Rome” were present on Pentecost and heard Peter preach the first gospel sermon ever delivered to mortal man. (Acts 2:10.) A considerable number of Paul’s own converts—including his longtime companions Priscilla and Aquila and certain relatives—were residing in Rome when he wrote his epistle to the Romans, as may be gathered from the greetings extended in the sixteenth chapter of his epistle.

One reason why Paul so much desired to visit Rome was that he had no other place in Europe as well as the other great regions of Asia where he had not preached. He wrote the Romans: “Wherefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you: but now, having no more any place in these regions, . . . whensoever I go unto Spain . . . I hope to see you in my journey.” (Rom. 15:22-24.) The serious student will contemplate the matter of the travels and labors and hardships of the apostle Paul, as well as the churches that he had planted, and he will calculate how

Paul had thus for many years longed to visit Rome. No apostle had ever been there. The churches in Rome had been established by

that all of this was accomplished in less than a quarter of a century, or from about A.D. 33 to A.D. 57.

Paul certainly had not anticipated a two-year imprisonment in Rome, nor had he anticipated that his journey to Rome would be under a military guard. He had not anticipated either that while in Rome he would be confined to one certain place without liberty to move through the streets of the city and visit the members of the church throughout the area.

In preparation for the journey from Caesarea to Rome, Governor Festus placed Julius, a centurion of the Augustian band, over Paul and certain other prisoners. The company embarked at Caesarea on a ship of Adramyttium which was scheduled to sail to places on the coast of Asia. Luke and Aristarchus of Macedonia were a part of the company. Julius, the centurion, treated Paul kindly, and when the ship touched at Sidon, he gave Paul leave to go unto his friends. This denotes that there was a church at Sidon.

When the company had arrived at Myra, Julius found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy. Embarking thereon the company sailed slowly until eventually they reached Fair Havens, a harbor of the city of Lasea. At this time, "the fast was already gone by." The reference to "the fast" was to the Jewish fast on the day of atonement which occurred in the month of October, and it denoted that the time had arrived when a voyage on the high seas was considered dangerous, since all navigation was terminated from early November to early March.

Fair Havens was not a commodious place to winter, and plans were laid to sail to Phoenix, a haven of Crete, and winter there. Paul strenuously advised against the voyage at that season of the year. He said: "Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the lading of the ship, but also of our lives." (Acts 27:10.) Julius, however, gave more heed to the master and to the owner of the ship than he did to that which was spoken by Paul.

The voyage from Fair Havens proved to be more than a nightmare. A tempestuous hurricane wind, the

Euraquilo, caught the ship and tossed it to and fro upon the high sea. Neither sun nor stars shone "for many days," and all on the ship despaired of their lives. Then Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, "Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have set sail from Crete. . . . And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For there stood by me this night an angel of the God whose I am, whom also I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Caesar. . . . Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God."

The ship crashed at the island called Melita, but not one life was lost. The barbarians showed no common kindness to the shipwrecked men. During the three months stay on the island Paul performed many miracles among the natives. Luke left for conjecture the matter of whether or not a church was set in order on that island, but the likelihood is that such was the case.

After three months and with the opening of Spring, the company embarked from Melita and touched at Syracuse, then at Rhegium, and then disembarked at Puteoli, the harbor of what was later Naples and was located on the southwest coast of Italy. On learning that there was a church in Puteoli—which need not be a surprise—Paul urged the centurion, Julius, that they remain there for seven days, which thing Julius granted. The journey had been underway for months, and Julius' granting the stay must indicate the high esteem he held for Paul. The seven days naturally included a first day of the week—a Lord's day.

Brethren in Rome heard of Paul's arrival, and they met him at the Market of Appius and The Three Taverns. The distance from Puteoli to Rome was more than one hundred twenty-five miles. The Market *pi* Appius was about forty miles from Rome and The Three Taverns was about thirty miles away. Paul thanked God and took courage. Though Paul arrived as a prisoner, the brethren at Rome did not avoid him; rather, they received him as he really was—the greatest

man on earth, the humble apostle to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews.

Like Joseph, Paul saw how that the hand of the Lord was in it all.

### The Golden Text

*"Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Caesar "* These were the angels' encouraging words to Paul at a time when all on the ship despaired of their lives. The hurricane-driven ship was being tossed to and fro upon the high sea of Adria. Neither sun nor stars shone upon Paul and his companions for many days, and in this fearful time an angel stood by with the encouraging news that not a life

would be lost. God would preserve the lives of all Paul's companions. The angel announced in the words of the golden text: "Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Caesar."

The Lord had shown years before to Ananias that Paul was a chosen vessel to bear his (the Lord's) name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel. (Acts 9:15.) The statement to Ananias was certainly being fulfilled.

### The Text Explained

#### Paul Enters Rome (Acts 28:16)

*And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him.*

When Julius delivered his prisoners and their official records to the imperial officer, he had performed his commission. The immediate and kindly treatment that the imperial officer accorded Paul would indicate that not only did Festus give him a favorable report but also that the centurion Julius gave him a good report. Julius would hardly have let the opportunity pass to relate his association and experiences with Paul, and especially relative to Paul's having saved the lives of all the men on the ship when it crashed against shore on the island of Melita.

Paul was allowed to live by himself in his own hired house with only a soldier to guard him. Conjecturally, Luke and Aristarchus dwelt there also. Paul was fastened to the soldier with a simple chain, a matter of relatively small inconvenience. How different this was though from the dreams and aspirations which Paul had entertained when he had first purposed to go to Rome. If one may judge by Paul's description of his emotional state when he entered penniless upon his labors in Corinth, he must have been quite humiliated and discouraged to enter upon his labors in Rome as a prisoner under guard. In reality Paul reflected his embarrassment in a measure when

in A.D. 60 he wrote the Colossians: "Continue stedfastly in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving; withal praying for us also, that God may open unto us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am in bonds; that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak." (Col. 4:2-4.)

The soldier guard for Paul was changed every three hours, at least in the daytime. In his two year imprisonment in Rome, Paul was chained to many soldiers and through them, and attending circumstances, he came in contact with Caesar's household. No wonder then that when Paul wrote the Philippians a year later—A.D. 61—he stated: "Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole praetorian guard, and to all the rest; and that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear." (Phil. 1:12-14.) Paul mentioned how that they of Caesar's household sent salutations to the brethren of Philippi. (Phil. 4:22.) Like Joseph who—on hearing and talking with his brethren—realized that God had sent him ahead to preserve the family in Egypt, so the apostle Paul had come to recognize that his bonds had been a blessing to the souls of many people.

### Paul Contacts the Jews (Acts 28:17-19)

*And it came to pass, that after three days he called together those that were the chief of the Jews: and when they were come together, he said unto them, I, brethren, though I had done nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans: who, when they had examined me, desired to set me at liberty, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had aught whereof to accuse my nation.*

The first three days were probably spent in setting the rented house in order. Luke and Aristarchus likely led in making the proper arrangements. Luke did not relate how the rent and incidental expenses were covered, but there can be hardly any doubt that the expense was borne by the brethren in Rome. The house apparently was quite spacious.

Paul had been in contact with his Christian brethren from the time of his journey from Puteoli to Rome. After three days, he sent for the chief Jews—or the leading Jews from each of the synagogues. Paul began with an introduction of himself together with an explanation of how that he came to be in bonds. He understated his case, especially when he said: "I had done nothing . . . against the customs of our fathers." Actually, he was observing a custom—a fast—when he was arrested. An understatement is always to be preferred to an overstatement.

Paul was careful to explain that his appeal to Caesar was not an effort to accuse his nation. Actually, he would have been justified in laying charges against the Great Sanhedrin, but this he had not done, and this fact he emphasized to his Jewish brethren. The purpose of his appeal, he explained, was simply in order that he might be granted his rightful freedom.

Paul then concluded by saying that "for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." The thrust of his statement was that he was declaring his knowledge of and

faith in the resurrection of Christ. The Pharisees believed in the doctrine of the resurrection, but the Sadducees rejected it. The sect of the Sadducees was confined primarily to Palestine. The leaders of the Jews at Rome believed in the doctrine of the resurrection.

### The Jews Respond (Acts 28:20-24)

*For this cause therefore did I entreat you to see and to speak with me: for because of the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. And they said unto him, We neither received letters from Judaea concerning thee, nor did any of the brethren come hither and report or speak any harm of thee. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against. And when they had appointed him a day, they came to him into his lodging in great number; to whom he expounded the matter, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.*

Those leading Jews were well impressed with Paul's approach and sincerity. They informed him that they had received no communication from the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem: and further, they explained that no incidental brethren, while visiting Rome, had taken occasion to report or speak any harm of him. Their statement relative to their not having heard anything concerning Paul must have been limited to the matter which he had related relative to his visit to Jerusalem, his arrest, and his imprisonment; for they did confess that they had heard of "this sect" and that "it is everywhere spoken against"—that is everywhere among the Jews for it was not everywhere spoken against among the Gentiles. Those Jews could hardly have heard so much of "the sect" without having heard of its great leader among the Gentiles as well as the Jews, the peerless apostle Paul.

The information presented from those leading Jews would indicate that the Christians in Rome had not

been engaged in a clash with those of the synagogues of the Jews. In about A.D. 50, Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome—that is from the city of Rome. There were some 20,000 Jews in Rome at the time of the expulsion. Claudius died in A. D. 54, and after his death the Jews began a return to the city. The deportation of the Jews from Rome may account in part for the fact that there had been no clashes between the Christians and the Jews, but one is left to conjecture that for the most part the church in Rome was the result of believers having gotten together in a rather quiet way. Without the presence of apostles and evangelists, the church had grown by means of the leaven, which is after all a very solid way for a church to grow.

A day was appointed, and those Jews came to Paul's lodging in great numbers. Upon Paul's expounding and testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets; some believed and some disbelieved. Paul's quotation from Isaiah 6:9-10 was not a charge against his Jewish brethren who were present. Paul's persuasion was based on the law and prophets of the Old Testament, and Paul's reference to Isaiah was intended to warn any who might react as their fathers had reacted.

Assuming that one-half of that number believed, the kingdom was certainly set to experience a tremendous growth from and among

the synagogues of the Jews. Thus Paul in a very real way, had borne the name of Jesus to the Gentiles, to kings, and to the children of Israel. (Acts 9:15.)

### Paul Continues in Rome for Two Whole Years

(Acts 28:30, 31)

*And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.*

Luke's history ends while Paul was still a prisoner, but Paul expressed in his letter to the Philippians—A.D. 61—his hope of immediate release. He said: "I trust in the Lord that I myself also shall come shortly." (Phil. 2:24.)

During Paul's two-year confinement in Rome, he received all that went in unto him. He preached and taught the kingdom of God with all boldness. No one forbade him. Unlike his former years, he experienced absolutely no persecution as a result of his preaching Christ. The Roman empire literally provided police protection for him while he preached Christ to the Jews and to the Gentiles, including Caesar's own household, and all of this was taking place in the city of Rome, the great capital of the world. Paul's imprisonment in Rome was in keeping with the announcement by both the Lord and an angel as to how that he (Paul) "must stand before Caesar."

## Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

### Introduction

What journey had Paul planned even before he left Ephesus?  
What scripture references point up this fact?  
How was the church first established in Rome?  
Had any apostle been at Rome up to this time?  
Why did Paul especially want to go to Rome?  
How long had Paul preached?  
Who was placed in charge of the prisoners being sent to Rome?  
What two churches did Paul visit on his journey to Rome?  
What warning did Paul give when the company was in port at Fair Havens?

Why did the owner of the vessel not want to winter at Fair Havens?  
Describe the storm which arose on the high sea.  
Where did the ship crash?  
Discuss Paul's stay on the island of Melita.  
Where and under what circumstances did brethren meet Paul?

### The Golden Text

Who told Paul that he must stand before Caesar?  
Would all lives be saved?  
What would happen to the ship?

### Paul Enters Rome

What is especially indicated by the kindly treatment that Paul received from the imperial officer in Rome?  
What kind of guard was Paul under?  
What kind of chain did he wear?  
What two men probably dwelt with Paul?



What may we judge were the emotional reactions of Paul on entering Rome as a prisoner? On what basis?  
How often was the guard changed?  
Discuss how such an arrangement could turn out for the welfare of the gospel.  
When Paul wrote the Philippians a year later what had he come to see?  
How had the gospel been carried to Caesar's household?

#### Paul Contacts the Jews

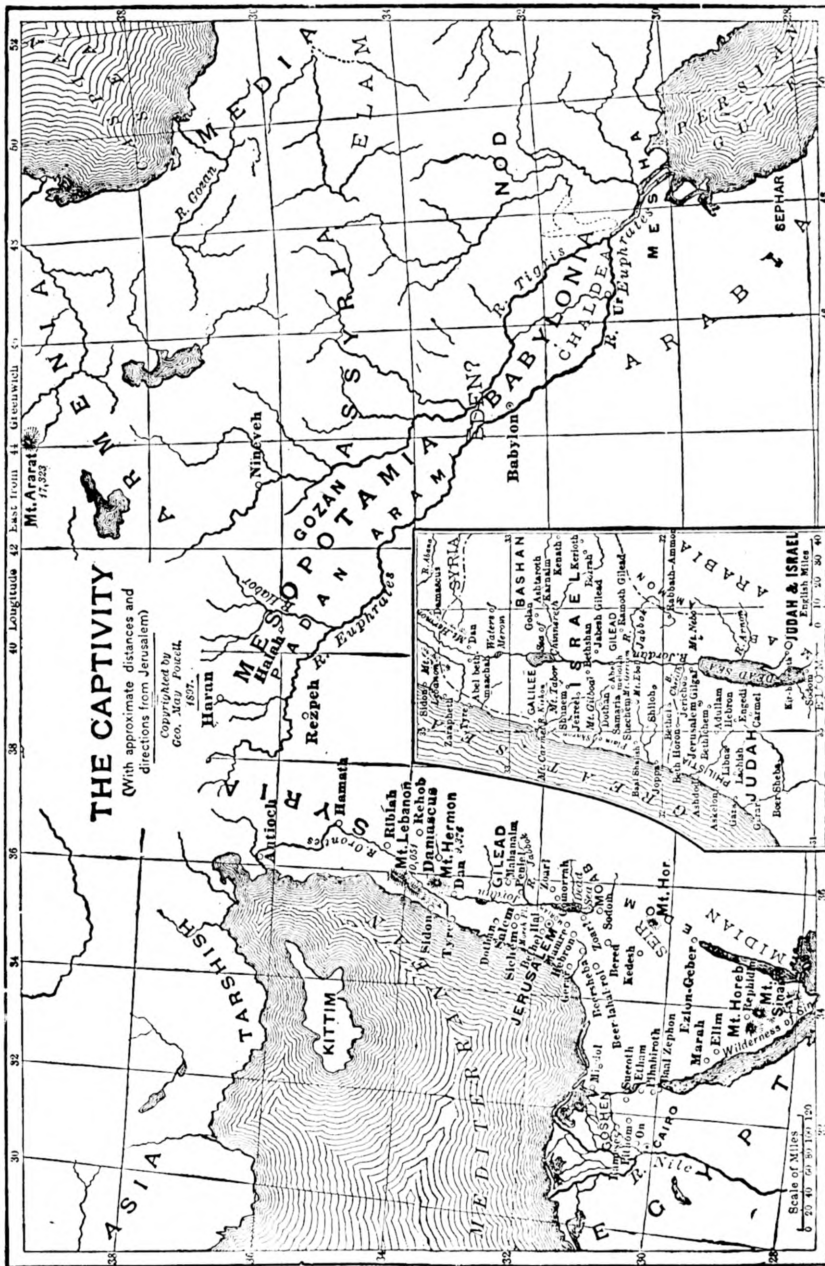
What is meant by the chief Jews?  
How many days had passed when Paul sent for the chief Jews?  
Discuss Paul's approach in speaking with the Jews.  
What did he especially emphasize with respect to his nation?  
Why was Paul bound with a chain?  
How did the "hope of Israel" embrace the gospel of Christ?

#### The Jews Respond

Had the Jews any knowledge of those things which had befallen Paul?  
Had they heard of "the sect"?  
Had they ever heard of Paul, as such?  
Discuss the expulsion of the Jews from Rome.  
Had there been any clashes between the Christians and Jews in Rome?  
How many Jews came to Paul's lodging place? What was the occasion?  
How did Paul persuade those Jews?  
What was their reaction?  
Discuss how that the providence of God was involved in all of this.

#### Paul Continues in Rome

How may we know that Paul expected to be immediately released from prison?  
How long had he been a prisoner at Rome?  
Had his imprisonment turned out to be a blessing? Explain.



**THE CAPTIVITY**  
 (With approximate distances and directions from Jerusalem)

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Scale of Miles  
 0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200

English Miles  
 0 10 20 30 40

SECOND QUARTER  
ISRAEL'S PERIOD OF CONQUEST  
(Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel)

AIM.—To study some of the outstanding events recorded in the books of Joshua, Judges, First Samuel and Second Samuel; to observe the actions of the people, good and bad, who participated therein; and to find in these historic occurrences lessons applicable to us today.

Lesson I—April 6, 1975  
JOSHUA, SUCCESSOR TO MOSES

Lesson Text

Josh. 1:1-11

1 Now it came to pass after the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah, that Jehovah spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses.

4 From the wilderness, and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border.

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

6 Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them.

7 Only be strong and very cou-

rageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate thereon day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

11 Pass through the midst of the camp, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye are to pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which Jehovah your God giveth you to possess it.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might." (Eph. 6:10.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Deut. 31:14-23.

Daily Bible Readings

- March 31. M.....New Leader Selected (Josh. 1:1-9)
- April 1. T..... Joshua's Consecration (Num. 27:15-23)
- April 2. W..... Joshua's Commission (Deut. 31:14-23)
- April 3. T..... Joshua's Warning to Israel (Josh. 1:12-18)
- April 4. F..... Joshua's Faithfulness (Num. 32:6-12)
- April 5. S..... Joshua and Moses (Deut. 34:1-9)
- April 6. S..... Joshua's Parentage (1 Chron. 7:20-27)

TIME.—About B.C. 1408. Only approximate dating is possible in this period of history. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia gives the Exodus from Egypt, as led by Moses, the date of B.C. 1602, based on

long consecutive numbers; and it gives the date of B.C. 1448, based on shortened numbers which allow for synchronisms and overlappings.

PLACE.—Plain of Moab and immediately east of the Jordan River across from the city of Jericho.

PERSONS.—Jehovah, Joshua, the officers and the people.

### Introduction

Across the centuries men have charged that the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites as led by Joshua was characterized by extreme brutality and inhumane cruelty—the very grossest form of barbarity. Voltaire and Paine, together with a long roster of others, have asserted that the conquest was so cruel and unjust that it was and is shocking and offensive to heathen morality—that it is wholly inconsistent with the concept of goodness and mercy.

"How," infidels ask, "could a good and benevolent God give a decree that would call for the complete and total massacre of all the people of a tribe or nation, including innocent children, weak women, and aged men?" Rabbinical and Christian writers, in recognition of the continuing severity of the charges, have sought to cast the conquest of extermination in a more humane light by asserting that Joshua first offered peace to those people devoted to destruction, that the peace was predicated upon the people's renouncing their idolatry and upon their becoming subservient to the Israelites, and that only when the offer of peace was rejected were the people to be utterly destroyed.

Now, Joshua was authorized to proclaim peace to the surrounding nations, but he was not allowed to offer peace to those nations devoted to destruction—namely: the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite. Concerning those nations, Joshua was commanded: "Thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth." (Deut. 20:10-18.)

The defense of the Rabbinical and Christian writers against the infidels, through efforts to allay the severity and tone down the harshness of the divine decree, will not stand the test. Jehovah decreed the complete destruction against those devoted cities, and he appointed the Israelites as his rod of judgment and punishment. In like manner in

centuries later, God appointed Assyria as his battle-axe—his rod of anger—against Israel, and still later he appointed Babylon as his washing pot—his caldron—against Judah.

The proper defense against the infidels' attacks lies in the very nature of God, himself. God is a god of mercy and love, but he is also a god of justice and righteousness. The foundation of his throne is righteousness and justice. (Psalms 97:2; 89:14.) Justice is the giving to every person that—and all of that—to which he is entitled. It is also the giving to every person that to which he is entitled without partiality or favor, whether it be good or bad. God shows no partiality to any being, whether angel or man. As a righteous and just God, no demand of violated justice is allowed to go unrequited. If God should pass over a single unrequited demand of justice, he would at that point cease to be a righteous and just God. Justice and righteousness demand that the evil and wicked shall be punished. While God is longsuffering toward the sinful and disobedient, he will not clear the guilty. (1 Pet. 3:9-10; Ex. 34:7.)

The decree that the Canaanite peoples should be destroyed was the result of the righteous determination of a just and sovereign God. Those people were possessed of the disease of idolatry, and it had progressed to the point where it was incurable. There had been a long period of time when they could have availed themselves of a cure. God had stationed two of the greatest men of all the earth—Melchizedek and Abraham—within their midst as examples and exponents of righteousness. In a vision, Jehovah revealed to Abraham that his seed would in time possess the land of Canaan, but not until the fourth generation, "for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full." (Gen. 15:12-16.) At the time of Abraham the iniquity of the Canaanites had already gathered to such a lead that

there was little or no hope of their turning back.

Further, those Canaanites knew of the show of God's power—the opening up of the Red Sea—but only Rahab the harlot profited by that stupendous miracle. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness to the south of those Canaanites for forty years as if to give them an extended period of grace, but this was of no avail. Further, when "the cup of iniquity" of the cities of the plain—Sodom and Gomorrah—was full, God rained the fire of complete destruction upon them, but the Canaanites took no warning from that destruction.

The cup of the Canaanites' iniquity was top full. They had reached the point of idolatry and iniquity of all sorts and forms from which there was no return. The innocents had no future except to grow to maturity and take on the iniquitous character of their elders. Their destruction while in innocence was, under the prevailing circumstances, an act of divine mercy.

Like Sodom and Gomorrah, there was not a sufficient number of righteous people among them to preserve them from complete destruction. Like the people before the flood, their violence and filth and slime demanded their destruction.

Prior to the flood, Noah feared God, and prior to the destruction of the Canaanite cities, Rahab the harlot believed.

The destruction of the Canaanites was no more inhumane than the destruction of the world by the flood. It was no more inhumane than the destruction of the cities of the plain by fire, or the destruction of the Israelites at Baal-peror by their judges, or the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, by the Roman army. In reality, the destruction of the Canaanites cannot possibly be compared in severity to the punishment that will come upon the infidels and all wicked and sinful persons at the second coming of Christ. They will be cast into the lake of fire to suffer there for time without end. (Rev. 21:7-8.)

No apology or explanation need be offered for the complete destruction of the Canaanites. The destruction was an act of the righteous judgment of God upon an idolatrous nation whose cup had come to be top full of iniquity. God is good and benevolent and merciful toward man, but his mercy can rejoice against his judgment only when men believe and turn to him with penitent and obedient spirits.

### The Golden Text

*"Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might."* The apostle Paul was in prison in Rome when he wrote to the Ephesians and urged them to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. No man on earth at that time was better qualified to so admonish those Ephesians than Paul, and this they knew. Paul had formerly been in their midst for a period of two years and three months, and they had seen him persevere under great trials and hardships.

The well-armed soldier has little to offer if he is weak at heart. The true Christian must be stout-hearted. His real strength must ever rest in the Lord. If he relies upon his natural courage and strength, he will be characterized by cowardice and weakness when in the thick of battle. Paul wrote Timothy: "For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love and discipline." (2 Tim. 1:7.)

### The Text Explained

Joshua Succeeds Moses  
(Josh. 1:1, 2)

*Now it came to pass after the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah, that Jehovah spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this peo-*

*ple, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.*

Joshua, the son of Nun and successor to Moses, died when he was one hundred ten years of age. Calculating from his death backward through the wars and settlement of the land together with the

period of the wilderness wanderings, Joshua must have been born about the time that Moses fled Egypt. He was about forty years of age when Moses returned to Egypt and brought the ten plagues upon the Egyptians. Joshua witnessed those plagues, and he was among that great company of Israelites who went out of Egypt with a high hand. From the position of a slave in the brick pits of Egypt, Joshua rose to the command and leadership of a nation that was destined to shape and influence mankind until time shall be no more upon this earth. Like Joseph and Daniel and John the Baptist, he was one of the few men of Bible history whose character was not stained with some sin or disobedience.

An overview of matters pertaining to Joshua up to the time that he succeeded Moses included the following:

1. Joshua's name first appears in history when the Israelites were forced to fight against Amalek at Rephidim. Moses chose Joshua to command the army. (Ex. 17:9.)

2. Joshua was the minister of Moses and the last to see him as he went forth unto the mount. (Ex. 24:12-13.)

3. Joshua was the first to meet Moses when he came down from the mount. He reported to Moses the noise that he heard in the camp. (Ex. 32:15-20.)

4. Joshua was chosen as one of the twelve who were commissioned to spy out the land. (Num. 13:17.)

5. Joshua and Caleb gave Moses a favorable but minority report as to how they had faith that the Israelites could take the land. (Num. 14:6.)

6. Joshua was chosen by Jehovah to succeed Moses, and Moses was charged to so anoint Joshua and set him before Eleazar. (Num. 27:18-23.)

7. Moses, on the occasion of his 120th birthday, announced that Joshua would succeed him. (Deut. 31:1-3.)

8. Moses charged Joshua publicly to be strong and of good courage. (Deut. 1:7-8.)

### Jehovah Sets the Boundaries of the Promised Land

(Josh. 1:3, 4)

*Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses. From the wilderness, and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border.*

The time was at hand for the Israelites to cross the Jordan River and take the land which God had promised them, and thus Jehovah laid out for Joshua the boundaries of that land. Those boundaries were from the wilderness and Lebanon even to the great river, the river Euphrates, and unto the great sea, the Mediterranean. The earnest student will take opportunity to trace out the boundaries by means of maps, and in more detail as the boundaries came to be established.

### Jehovah Charges Joshua to be Strong

(Josh. 1:5-9)

*There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate thereon day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*

Jehovah assured Joshua that he would be with him as he had been with Moses. "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all

the days of thy life," Jehovah declared to Joshua.

Jehovah stressed that Joshua should be strong. "Only be strong and very courageous," Jehovah said. Then Jehovah laid out for Joshua the specific matters necessary for the great strength that would be required for Joshua's successful leadership of that great people. The specifics were:

1. Observe to do all the law which Moses commanded thee.
2. Turn not from the law to the right hand or to the left.
3. Let not the book of the law depart out of thy mouth.
4. Meditate on that law day and night.
5. Be strong and of good courage.
6. Be not affrighted.
7. Be not dismayed.

Through the observance of those specifics, Jehovah promised to be with Joshua whithersoever he went. Jehovah assured Joshua that if he did so observe and obey that his way would prosper and that he would have good success. Joshua gave heed to Jehovah's instructions and encouragement, and his work as the leader of God's people was crowned with success.

### Practical Observations

1. Jehovah was with Joshua, and he will be with every Christian who follows in the steps of Joshua.

2. Joshua was instructed to respect the law, meditate upon it, and keep it. Christians cannot afford to do less today.

3. Joshua and the Israelites were appointed by Jehovah to serve as

### Joshua Charges the Officers of the People (Josh. 1:10, 11)

*Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, Pass through the midst of the camp, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye are to pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which Jehovah your God giveth you to possess it.*

Those Israelites must have experienced a tremendous wave of excitement when the officers went through the midst of the camp with the message that in three days they were to cross over the Jordan. For almost forty years the Israelites had wandered in the wilderness. The original company had died off one by one. Those who were to go in and take the land had been a long time in that wilderness, and many had been born there. They had for a long time longed for that promised land—that beulah land. Like a woman heavy with child, they were with much excitement and anticipation awaiting the hour when they should be delivered.

his rod of judgment and punishment. Christians are now God's instrument for the setting forth of righteousness in the earth.

4. Jehovah by nature is first of all righteous and just. Christians must study to be just and righteous in all matters of life.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

What are some of the charges that skeptical critics have made concerning the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites?

How have some Rabbinical and Christian writers tried to answer their charges?

What instruction did God give his people concerning those nations that were far from them? (Deut. 20:10-15.)

What were they to do with the nations that were in the land of Canaan? (Deut. 20:16-18.)

Name the nations that were devoted to destruction.

Why did God decree the complete destruction of those nations?

What is the proper defense against the attacks of the infidels in this matter?

What are the requirements of justice?

Would God be just and righteous if he did not punish the wicked?

What opportunities had the Canaanite people had to know of God and his power?

What effect did the demonstrations of God's power have on them?

Was the destruction of the Canaanites any more inhumane than was the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70?

How was the destruction of the Canaanites an act of mercy to the innocent children?

How can God's mercy rejoice against severe judgment? (Rom. 11:20-23.)

#### The Golden Text

Where was Paul when he wrote Ephesians?

What great trial did Paul endure while

he was at Ephesus? (Acts 19:23-41; 2 Cor. 1:8-9.)  
 What is the source of a Christian's strength?  
 What kind of spirit does God give every faithful Christian?

#### Joshua Succeeds Moses

About how old was Joshua when God brought the ten plagues upon the Egyptians?  
 In what way can Joshua be compared to Joseph and Daniel and John the Baptist?  
 What is the first mention of Joshua's name in the history of the Israelites?  
 Discuss some of the important things about this great man.

#### Jehovah Sets the Boundaries of the Promised Land

Trace the boundaries of the Promised Land.

#### Jehovah Charges Joshua to be Strong

How did God assure Joshua that he would be with him?  
 What specific things did God command Joshua to do as the leader of his people?

#### Joshua Charges the Officers of the People

What command did Joshua give the officers of the people?  
 How do you suppose that the message was received by the people?

#### Practical Observations

What are some of the practical analogies of this lesson for us today?

## Lesson II—April 13, 1975

# ISRAEL CROSSES THE JORDAN

### Lesson Text

#### Josh. 3:5-17

5 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves; for tomorrow Jehovah will do wonders among you.

6 And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

7 And Jehovah said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

8 And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, ye shall stand still in the Jordan.

9 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of Jehovah your God.

10 And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Hivite, and the Perizzite, and the Girgashite, and the Amorite, and the Jebusite.

11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into the Jordan.

12 Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, for

every tribe a man.

13 And it shall come to pass, when the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of Jehovah, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, even the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand in one heap.

14 And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over the Jordan, the priests that bare the ark of the covenant being before the people;

15 And when they that bare the ark were come unto the Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (for the Jordan overfloweth all its banks all the time of harvest),

16 That the waters which came down from above stood, and rose up in one heap, a great way off, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan; and those that went down toward the sea of the Arabah, even the Salt Sea, were wholly cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.

17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel passed over on dry ground, until all the nation were passed clean over the Jordan.



GOLDEN TEXT.—*“Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.”* (Josh. 4:22.)  
 DEVOTIONAL READING.—Josh. 4:1-18.

Daily Bible Readings

- April 7. M.....Israel’s Land Promise (Gen. 15:18-21)
- April 8. T.....Enjoyment of the Land Conditional (Deut. 4:26, 27)
- April 9. W.....A Land of Great Promise (Num. 13:25-33)
- April 10. T.....Jehovah’s Promise to Protect (Isa. 43:1-7)
- April 11. F.....Heathen Occupants (Deut. 7:22-24)
- April 12. S.....Characteristics of the Land (Josh. 11:1-9)
- April 13. S.....Number Who Entered (Num. 26:21-62)

TIME.—About B.C. 1408, but sometime later than the prior lesson.

PLACES.—Both the east and west sides of the Jordan River and just east of the city of Jericho.

PERSONS.—Joshua, the people, Jehovah, and the priests.

Introduction

Joshua and the Israelites passed over the Jordan on dry land, and therein lay their hope of success. God made the Jordan River bed dry, else they could not have crossed on dry land, and God provided the means of their conquering their enemies, else they could never have conquered them.

The land of Canaan was not merely an unoccupied territory with a few barbaric or savage tribes located at long distances from each other. The known pieces of the history of Canaan date as early as B.C. 2500. The Canaanites were in the land when Abraham (B.C. 1921) moved there from Haran. They were the descendants of Canaan, the son of Ham, and Ham was one of the three sons of Noah. (Gen. 9:18; 10:6.) They consisted of a number of different peoples who spoke similar languages. To the north of them, the region of Mesopotamia, were the Summerians.

The Canaanites of Moses’ day were characterized by a rather high degree of culture, by libraries, by archive chambers, and by schools. The people were engaged primarily in agriculture, but there were artisans who were skilled in wood and stone, and smiths who were skilled in iron and metals. They had developed a system of law and order and had established leagues of chiefs and kings. They lived in cities surrounded by high and well-fortified walls. As a means of defense as well as for commercial considerations, they had horses and also chariots of iron.

Trade by way of caravans and commercial travelers from Cappa-

doxia, Babylonia, and Egypt, into Canaan was quite common or routine during the Mosaic age. Asia Minor exported to Canaan bronze, silver, lead, painted ware and horses; Cyprus exported copper; Crete exported richly chased vessels of the precious metals, and Egypt exported corn. Canaan, on the other hand, exported to Babylonia and to other nations limestone, alabaster, and naphtha—a form of petroleum, a solvent.

The Hebrews, under the command and leadership of Joshua and after four decades of wandering in the wilderness, were to enter upon a conquest of the Canaanites. They were to enter upon the promise that God had made to Abraham some four centuries before.

The Canaanites were skilled in warfare. They had an organized and trained militia—a militia equipped with horses, chariots, and every then modern device for war. To the converse of the Canaanites, the Hebrews were a people with only a crudely armed militia—a people whose army moved by foot only without military training, and without the then modern implements for war.

The Canaanites held every human advantage. They were familiar with every part of their country—the entire terrain. They knew all of the vantage points of the mountains, hills, valleys, gorges, and streams. Further, they would be fighting for their homes, for their country, and for their gods. The Israelites, however, believed that God was their commander and that Joshua was his chosen representa-

tive. Those Israelites believed that they were an instrument in the

hand of God, and so they proved to be.

### The Golden Text

*"Israel came over this Jordan on dry land."* These were the words of Joshua. The priest, in keeping with Jehovah's instructions, had borne the ark of the covenant to the brink of the out-of-bounds water of the Jordan River, and when they dipped their feet in the brink of the water it stood and rose up in one heap, and the waters below were wholly cut off. The Israelites then crossed the river on dry land. This crossing of Jordan was attended by a miracle that was comparable to the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea.

Joshua then commanded: "Take you twelve men . . . out of every tribe a man . . . take you hence out of the midst of the Jordan . . . where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones . . . and lay them down in the lodging-place, where ye shall lodge this night." (Josh. 4:2, 3.) The Israelites lodged that night at Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. Joshua thus set up those twelve stones in Gilgal, and he

said: "When your children shall ask . . . , What mean these stones? then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land." (Josh. 4:21.)

Without miraculous intervention, the Israelites could not have crossed the Jordan on dry land at any season of the year, but the thought of their crossing the Jordan under the prevailing circumstance of the overflowing Jordan, in the absence of a miraculous intervention of Jehovah, was a physical impossibility. The barley harvest season (April) was on; the snow was melting on the mountains of Lebanon; the spring rains were falling in abundance; and the Jordan River was overflowing its banks. The Canaanites recognized that the overflowing Jordan was impossible to cross. The Israelites, a very great company of more than two million people, crossed the Jordan on dry land! The twelve stones erected at Gilgal made for a great memorial to an all-powerful God.

### The Text Explained

#### The People Sanctify Themselves (Josh. 3:5, 6)

*And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves; for to-morrow Jehovah will do wonders among you. And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.*

Joshua called for the people to sanctify themselves, for "to-morrow Jehovah will do wonders among you," he said. They were to enter the holy land, and they needed to be clean. They were to sanctify their bodies by legal purifications and their minds to holy meditation and prayer. In short, the people were to wash their bodies, and their garments, and they were to abstain from all matters that would prevent them from giving full attention to a miracle that God would perform on the following day. Joshua's promise that God would do wonders among them was a means of preparing them for their observation

and keen appreciation of the divine intervention which would take place in their behalf. Such a stupendous miracle as they would behold and experience was calculated to increase their faith and confidence in Jehovah and also to increase their respect for Joshua as their new leader and commander.

#### Jehovah Magnifies and Instructs Joshua (Josh. 3:7, 8)

*And Jehovah said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, ye shall stand still in the Jordan.*

Like Moses at the crossing of the Red Sea, Joshua would be God's representative in the miraculous crossing of the Jordan. Joshua's exalted position with God was to be the more signally magnified and es-

tablished among the people. Joshua's instructions and foretelling beforehand of when and how the Israelites would cross the Jordan would serve to show that he was Jehovah's representative in the very real sense that Moses had been. The people would be impressed with the fact that God was with Joshua just as he had formerly been with Moses.

Jehovah informed Joshua that he was to give commandment to the priests that when they came to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, they were to stand still in the Jordan. Thus by this instruction, the priests were to be the first to know and appreciate how and to what great extent God had communicated to Joshua prior to the crossing.

### Joshua Instructs the People

(Josh. 3:9-13)

*And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of Jehovah your God. And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Hivite, and the Perizzite, and the Girgashite, and the Amorite, and the Jebusite. Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into the Jordan. Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, for every tribe a man. And it shall come to pass, when the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of Jehovah, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the unifers of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, even the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand in one heap.*

After having instructed the priests, Joshua called unto the people to assemble and hear the word of Jehovah. Through the words of Jehovah, spoken by Joshua, the people would know that Jehovah was among them; and further, they would know that God would drive out before them the peoples of the land of Canaan, namely: the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites. The Israelites would necessarily un-

dergo heavy trials and hardships. Their faith would be severely tried again and again. They were certain at times to become discouraged, fainthearted, and often downright fearful. They needed to know and understand full-well that Jehovah was with them as long as they were with him. Jehovah would rest the waters of the Jordan, and that miraculous act would testify to them the fact that he would deliver the Canaanites into their hands. When their faith was weak, they could take renewed strength by remembering their crossing of the Jordan River.

The ark of the covenant of the Lord of the earth was to pass over before them into the Jordan. Already, Joshua had given instruction regarding the ark of the covenant. Normally, the Kohathites of the tribe of Levi carried the ark of the covenant, but now it was to be carried by the priests. All priests were Levites, but not all Levites were priests.

A point of emphasis is the fact that the ark of the covenant was to be the guide for those Israelites all of the way to their destination, Canaan. They were not to touch it, not even to come near it, a distance of two thousand cubits was to stand between the ark and the people. There was a reason for their following so carefully the ark of the covenant, and at such a distance, and the reason was, "Ye have not passed this way before."

The ark of the covenant and its connection with the crossing of the Jordan furnishes one of the great type and antitype lessons of the Old and New Testaments, as follows:

1. The Israelites had a great destination, Canaan; and just so the Christians have a great destination, heaven.
2. The Israelites had a guide, the ark of the covenant; and just so the Christians have a guide, the Bible.
3. The Israelites had a "caution" connected with their guide, "Do not touch or come near the ark of the covenant"; and just so the Christians have a "caution" connected with their guide, "Do not add to or take from the Bible."
4. The Israelites had a reason for the pronounced "caution," they had not passed that way before; and

just so the Christians have a reason for their pronounced "caution," they, too, have not passed this way before.

Joshua commanded the people to elect twelve men—one from each tribe. The work of these men, apparently, was to serve the people, not the priests. They seem to be the ones who took the twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan and erected them as a memorial at Gilgal. (Josh. 4:1-2.) Joshua further explained to the people how that when the feet of the priests that bore the ark of the covenant came to rest in the waters of the Jordan the waters of the river would be cut off.

### The Waters Rose up in One Great Heap (Josh. 3:14-16)

*And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over the Jordan, the priests that bare the ark of the covenant being before the people; and when then that bare the ark were come unto the Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (for the Jordan overfloweth all its banks all the time of harvest), that the waters which came down from above stood, and rose up in one heap, a great way off; at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan; and those that went down toward the sea of the Arabah, even the Salt Sea, were wholly cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.*

The time had come to go over the Jordan. The people folded up tents, and the priests led ahead with the ark of the covenant. When their feet were dipped in the brink of the water, the waters which came down from above stood and rose up in one great heap a great way off at Adam, and the waters

that went down toward the sea of the Arabah were wholly cut off. The location of Adam is uncertain. It is not elsewhere mentioned in the Scriptures. The chief emphasis is the division of the waters—a miracle which cannot be explained on natural grounds. The crossing over of such a great host on dry ground—men, women, and children—was incredible. In many ways the crossing of the Jordan surpassed the crossing of the Red Sea. In the passage of the Red Sea a strong east wind—a natural agent used supernaturally—separated the waters, but in the crossing of the Jordan there was no agent of nature mentioned. The very rapid flowing river of the Jordan was moved back to its source without any visible agency.

Without doubt, the miraculous crossing struck terror to the hearts of the Canaanites, but it established faith in the hearts of the Israelites. The Israelites passed clean over the Jordan.

### The Priests Stood Still in the Jordan (Josh. 3:17)

*And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel passed over on dry ground, until all the nation were passed clean over the Jordan.*

When the priests that bore the ark of the covenant rested their feet in the brink of the Jordan, the waters rose up in one heap. This was an instantaneous miracle. The priests then moved to the midst of the river, and there they stood until all the people—600,000 men besides the women and children—had passed over. The priests showed great faith as they stood firm in the midst of the Jordan.

### Practical Observations

1. When the Israelites were in the act of crossing the Red Sea, they were in a state of frustration and fear. They complained against Moses and against Jehovah. When they were in the preparation and act of crossing the Jordan, they were calm, resolute, and anxious. They had no criticism for Joshua or Jehovah.

2. The study of the deliverance of the Israelites under the leadership of Joshua involves a series of types and antitypes. Lessons or sermons on types and antitypes are not taught and emphasized in this second half of the twentieth century as they were in the first half.

3. The Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea answers to the Christian's

crossing from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God. The Israelites were delivered from their enemy, the Egyptian army, when they were baptized in the cloud and in the sea unto Moses. (1 Cor. 10:2.) The Christian "put off" his

enemy, sin, when he was baptized into Christ. (Gal. 3:27.)

4. The Israelites' crossing of the Jordan River into Canaan land answers to the Christian's crossing through death into the heavenly home.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

What kind of territory was the land of Canaan at the time of conquest by the Israelites?  
Discuss some of the important things about the nations of people that were in Canaan.  
Compare the military capabilities of the Hebrews with those of the Canaanites.

#### Golden Text

By whom, and when were the words of the golden text spoken?  
What was the time of the year when the Israelites crossed the Jordan River?  
What are characteristic of the Jordan at this time of the year? (Josh. 3:15.)  
Were the Canaanites expecting the Hebrews to cross over the Jordan?  
At what place did the Israelites lodge the first night after they crossed the river?  
What kind of memorial did they set up? Why?

#### The People Sanctify Themselves

What did Joshua command the people to do the day before they crossed the Jordan?  
How did they sanctify themselves?  
What did he tell the priests to do?  
What did God intend that his divine intervention should do for his people?

#### Jehovah Magnifies and Instructs Joshua

How did God magnify Joshua in the sight of all Israel?  
How were the people impressed with the fact that God had exalted Joshua to a great place of leadership?

#### Joshua Instructs the People

What did Joshua tell the people concerning how they would cross the Jordan?  
Why was this miraculous crossing to be a source of encouragement to them?  
Why were they instructed to choose twelve men?  
Who carried the ark of the covenant on this occasion?  
Who usually carried the ark?  
Explain the statement, "All the priests were Levites, but not all Levites were priests." (Num. 4:1-16; 7:1-11; 16:8-11.)  
The destination of Canaan by the Israelites compares to what destination of Christians?  
What served as a guide for the Hebrews as they journeyed into the land of Canaan?  
What is the guide for Christians today?

#### The Waters Rose up in One Great Heap

When, and how were the waters of the Jordan cut off?  
Compare the miraculous crossing of the Jordan with the crossing of the Red Sea.

#### The Priests Stood Still in the Jordan

What did the priests do while the people passed over the Jordan?  
How did this manifest great faith on the part of the priests?

#### Practical Observations

Compare the spirit manifest by the people when they crossed the Jordan with their spirit when they crossed the Red Sea.  
Discuss the need for lessons and sermons based on the types and antitypes of the Old and New Testaments.

## Lesson III—April 20, 1975

# THE RECORDING AND READING OF THE LAW

### Lesson Text

Deut. 27:2-8; Josh. 8:30-35

2 And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over the Jordan unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster:

3 And thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over; that thou mayest go in unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, as Jehovah, the

God of thy fathers, hath promised thee.

4 And it shall be, when ye are passed over the Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaster them with plaster.

5 And there shalt thou build an altar unto Jehovah thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt lift up no iron tool upon them.

6 Thou shalt build the altar of Jehovah thy God of unhewn stones; and thou shalt offer burnt-offerings thereon unto Jehovah thy God:

7 And thou shalt sacrifice peace-offerings, and shalt eat there; and thou shalt rejoice before Jehovah thy God.

8 And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.

30 Then Joshua built an altar unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, in mount Ebal,

31 As Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of unhewn stones, upon which no man had lifted up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto Jehovah, and sacrificed peace-offerings.

32 And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses,

which he wrote, in the presence of the children of Israel.

33 And all Israel, and their elders and officers, and their judges, stood on this side of the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, as well the sojourner as the home-born; half of them in front of mount Gerizim and half of them in front of mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of Jehovah had commanded at the first, that they should bless the people of Israel.

34 And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

35 There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the sojourners that were among them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Keep all the commandments which I command you this day.” (Deut. 27:1.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Deut. 27:9-26.

### Daily Bible Readings

April 14. M.....	Moses' Commandment (Deut. 27:1-7)
April 15. T.....	Joshua Carries Out Moses' Command (Josh. 8:30-35)
April 16. W.....	Another Example of Reading the Law (Neh. 8:1-8)
April 17. T.....	Delight in the Law of God (Psalm 119:33-40)
April 18. F.....	The Blessed Man (Psalm 1:1-6)
April 19. S.....	Freedom Through Law (Rom. 8:1-8)
April 20. S.....	Timothy's Instruction in the Law (2 Tim. 3:15-17)

TIME.—For Deuteronomy, about B.C. 1409; for Joshua, about B.C. 1408-1406.

PLACE.—Between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim in Palestine.

PERSONS.—Moses, Joshua, and the people.

### Introduction

The Samaritan woman, on conversing with Jesus at Jacob's well, said, “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” (John 4:20.) The “this mountain” to which the woman made reference was Mount Gerizim, and her reference to that mountain introduced the fact of a long and bitter debate between the Samaritans and the Jews which had raged for centuries. In order to bolster or shore up their case for Mount Gerizim as the God-appointed place for worship, the Samaritans made some strong but erroneous contentions; namely, (1) that Mount Gerizim was the place where

Melchizedek met Abraham and blessed him; (2) that Mount Gerizim was the place where Abraham offered his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice; (3) that Mount Gerizim was the place where Joshua inscribed in stone the law of Jehovah; and (4) that Mount Gerizim was the place where Joshua built the altar. The Samaritan Pentateuch (Deut. 27:4) has been corrupted so as to read “Gerizim” instead of “Ebal.”

The background history involving the Samaritans is quite involved, and it extended over a period of centuries. Only an overview is possible for the space at hand. The history of the Samaritans has its roots in the rending of the kingdom

of Israel in about B. C. 940. With this rending there came to be two nations—Israel and Judah. Jeroboam, the first king of Israel, immediately changed the place of worship, the object of worship, the time of worship, and the priesthood, and he chose Bethel and Dan as the places where his people should worship.

In time—about B.C. 734—Pekah, king of Israel, entered his nation into a confederacy with its old and long time enemy, the nation of Syria. The pressing reason for the confederacy was the growing and aggressive power of Assyria. Jotham was king of Judah at the time, and naturally looked to Jehovah for deliverance. He did not join the confederacy. Jotham died—probably within the years of the formation of the confederacy—and his son Ahaz came to the throne.

Ahaz was a very wicked king. He sacrificed his sons to the fire and God sent the nations of Israel and Syria to punish him. Israel and Syria moved upon Judah with limited forces, but they inflicted heavy punishment. They were not able to take Jerusalem, but they did take many captives.

After the two nations had withdrawn from Judah, Ahaz received the report that "Syria was confederate with Ephraim"—that is, Syria was leaning upon the arm of Ephraim, or the army of Syria remained in the territory of Israel, Ahaz trembled at the news, and he resolved to send to Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, for military support. In an effort to deter Ahaz from his course, the prophet Isaiah announced that within three score and five years Ephraim would be broken in pieces so that it would not be a people. (Isa. 7.)

Israel was carried into Assyrian captivity in the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah—or about B.C. 721—but some of the people were left in the land, and they retained their identity as Israelites for an extended period of time. The king of Assyria brought men from Babylon and other cities and settled them in Samaria. (2 Kings 17.) In 536 B.C. Cyrus, the conqueror of Babylon, made a decree that the captive Jews in Babylon might return to their home land. Thus Ze-

rubbabel led a company of Jews to Judea with a commission to rebuild the temple. When the work had begun, the Samaritans said to Zerubbabel: "Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as ye do; and we sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, who brought us up hither." (Ezra 4:1-2.) Esarhaddon, who reigned in Assyria from B.C. 680-669, repopulated the old territory of Israel. Lions devoured the newcomers to the land, and the king of Assyria dispatched a priest of the captivity of Israel to Bethel to "teach them the law of the god of the land." (2 Kings 17:24-41.) These were the circumstances wherein the Israelites lost their identity. Sixty-five years had intervened from the time of Ahaz—B.C. 734-718—to the time of Esarhaddon—B.C. 680-669.

Zerubbabel received a commission to restore the temple. Some eighty years later, Ezra received a commission to restore the law, and thirteen years later Nehemiah received a commission to restore the city. After twelve years in Jerusalem, Nehemiah returned to King Artaxerxes. He remained with the king for a time—how long is not known—and then he returned to Jerusalem. On his return he found that a grandson of the high priest, Eliashib, had married a Samaritan, the daughter of Sanballat, and Nehemiah chased him away. (Neh. 13:6-8, 28.) The time was about B.C. 408.

According to Josephus, Eliashib's grandson went to his father-in-law, Sanballat, and told him that he loved his wife but that he could not afford his being deprived of his sacerdotal dignity on her account; whereupon Sanballat insisted that he should keep his wife. Sanballat promised, in turn, to build his son-in-law a like temple upon Mount Gerizim, which, he said, is the highest of all the mountains in Samaria. Josephus recorded that in the time of Nehemiah's second visit there was a great disturbance among the people—including priests and Levites—and they all revolted to Manasseh—Sanballat's son-in-law—at Mount Gerizim. In short, the "church" in Jerusalem split, and a rival "church" was established on Mount Gerizim.

According to Josephus, Sanballat

requested Alexander the Great—B.C. 332—to build a temple for his son-in-law, which thing Alexander agreed to do. Josephus' account is confused for Alexander marched his forces to Jerusalem some seventy years later. The likelihood is that an altar and a crude building or tabernacle was built on Mount Gerizim in time of Sanballat and that the actual temple was built in the time of Alexander the Great. Josephus further stated that at times the Samaritans said that they

were Jews and at other times they said they were not.

Thus two temples stood—one at Jerusalem and one on Mount Gerizim—for more than two and one-half centuries. John Hyrcanus, the Maccabean, destroyed the temple on Mount Gerizim in B. C. 129. It was not rebuilt. The foundation of that old temple can be traced out until this day. The woman at the well, along with all the Samaritans, believed that Mount Gerizim was the place where men ought to worship.

### The Golden Text

*"Keep all the commandments which I command you this day."* The command of this text proceeded not from Moses only but also from the elders of Israel as well. The command was repeated (verse 9) by Moses and the priests and the Levites. The authority of the command, therefore, demands to be emphasized.

Moses was then an old man, and his death was imminent. The priests and Levites (all priests were Levites but not all Levites were priests) might very well have been

charged with promoting the "commandments" as a means of furthering their trade, or profession, and their livelihood, but the elders were from the practical everyday walks of life. In order to give the most serious emphasis to the necessity of the peoples' keeping "all of the commandments," Moses caused the elders of Israel, as well as the priests and Levites, to join with him in the authority that accompanied the command. The people were reminded that "this day thou hast become the people of the Lord God."

### The Text Explained

#### Moses Gives Instruction for the Public Proclamation of the Law in Canaan (Deut. 27:2-8)

*And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over the Jordan unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster: and thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over; that thou mayest go in unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, as Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath promised thee. And it shall be, when ye are passed over the Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in Mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaster them with plaster. And there shalt thou build an altar unto Jehovah thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt lift up no iron tool upon them. Thou shalt build the altar of Jehovah thy God of unhewn stones; and thou shalt offer burnt-offerings thereon unto Jehovah thy God: and thou shalt sacri-*

*fice peace-offerings, and shalt eat there; and thou shalt rejoice before Jehovah thy God. And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.*

Moses was delivering one of his six farewell addresses, all of which were delivered within a forty-day period of time immediately prior to his death. The law was to be publicly proclaimed in Canaan, and Moses proceeded to give detailed instructions of where and how it was to be proclaimed and also where and how an altar was to be erected whereupon the people might make atonement for their sins by sacrifices. The specifics or details were:

1. A monument on which the words of the law were to be written was to be erected.

2. The monument was to be erected on Mount Ebal.

3. The monument was to be made of rough unhewn stone with only plaster thereon—not refined or embellished.

4. All of the words of the law—very likely the cursings and bless-



ings as per chapters 27 and 28—were to be written very plainly thereon. (Deut. 27:2-4, 8; Josh. 8:32-35.)

5. An altar for burnt offerings and for peace offerings was also to be erected on Mount Ebal. (Deut. 27:5-7; Josh. 8:30-31.)

6. The altar was to be constructed of unhewn stone with plaster thereon—no iron tool was to be used.

#### The Law Was Recorded and Read at Mount Ebal (Josh. 8:30-35)

*Then Joshua built an altar unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, in mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of unhewn stones, upon which no man had lifted up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto Jehovah, and sacrificed peace offerings. And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote, in the presence of the children of Israel. And all Israel, and their elders and officers, and their judges, stood on this side of the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, as well the sojourner as the home-born; half of them in front of mount Gerizim, and half of them in front of mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of Jehovah had commanded at the first, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the sojourners that were among them.*

The war against the complete extermination of the Canaanites was being very successfully prosecuted. Jericho and Ai had fallen already, but at the very time when opportunity seemed to dictate that the war should continue to be prosecuted with all haste, Joshua assembled the Israelites for the public proclamation of the law of God. The affairs pertaining to the physical well-being of the Israelites were not allowed to take precedence over their spiritual worship and responsibility.

Moses had given the instructions for the public proclamation of the law, and Joshua was faithful to carry out the terms thereof. To summarize, Joshua proceeded as follows:

1. He assembled all Israel, including the women, the children, and the sojourners among the Israelites.

2. He built an altar of unhewn stones unto Jehovah in Mount Ebal as Moses, the servant of Jehovah, had previously commanded the children of Israel.

3. He erected a monument of stones with plaster applied for the very plain writing of the law thereon.

4. He wrote on the monument in the presence of all the children of Israel a copy of the law of Moses.

5. He stationed the tribes as Moses had directed, six toward Mount Gerizim and six toward Mount Ebal.

6. He positioned the ark of the covenant of Jehovah—which contained the rolls of the law—in the midst of the valley between the two mountains.

7. He read all the words of the law. The blessings of the law were resounded from Mount Gerizim, and the cursings of the law were resounded from Mount Ebal.

#### Practical Observations

1. The book of Joshua affirms (verse 31) that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. This statement stands as an affront to those who are proponents of the documentary hypothesis of the Pentateuch—the theory that the Pentateuch is a patchwork of a number of authors extending over a period of time.

2. The fact that the blessings of

the law were delivered from Mount Gerizim and the cursings of the law were delivered from Mount Ebal was quite fitting inasmuch as Mount Gerizim is covered by springs, gardens, orchards, and verdure; whereas, Mount Ebal has no covering and towers naked and barren.

3. The naked barrenness of Mount Ebal in contrast to the plant

life of Mount Gerizim would, by analogy, answer to the barrenness of the law of death of the Old Testament in contrast with the law of life of the New Testament.

4. The fact that the monument with the law inscribed thereon and the altar were erected on the same mountain—Mount Ebal—was also quite fitting since the law entailed primarily the curse of sin and since the curse of sin could be expiated only by animal sacrifices and offerings.

5. Jehovah spoke to those Israelites through the law written on the monument. The Israelites in turn spoke to Jehovah through their sacrifices and offerings made upon the altar. Thus, there was communica-

tion between Jehovah and the Israelites.

6. In the initial period of the successful prosecution of the war against the Canaanites, the Israelites took out time to assemble, to hear the law read, and to sacrifice. Often men today defer their time, their money, and their dedication to the Lord until they have had time to get ahead in the world. The way to real prosperity is to begin with a commitment to God.

7. Though the Israelites were in enemy territory when they assembled to hear the law and to make sacrifices, they were absolutely safe. God was their protector, and he is now the protector of all who love and fear him.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

What religious question did the Samaritan woman ask Jesus?  
What mountain was she referring to when she said, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain"?  
How did the Samaritans try to prove that they were worshipping in the right place?  
Did the place of worship make any difference at the time of this discussion?  
Review some of the background history of the Samaritans.  
When did the first company of Jews return to Jerusalem from Babylon?  
What did the Samaritans offer to do when the Jews started rebuilding the temple after the Babylonian captivity?  
Why was their offer rejected by Zerubbabel? (Ezra 4:1-6; Neh. 4:1-6.)  
Why did Nehemiah, on his second return from Babylon, chase away the grandson of the high priest Eliashib? (Neh. 1:1-8, 28.)  
What did Josephus say about Eliashib's grandson?  
How long did the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim stand?

#### The Golden Text

Who joined Moses in giving the words of the golden text? Why?

#### Moses Gives Instruction for the Public Proclamation of the Law in Canaan

At what time did Moses give the words of the lesson text?

Why did he need to give instruction about the proclamation of the law?  
In what mountain were they to set up the altar?  
For what was the altar to be used?

#### The Law Was Recorded and Read at Mount Ebal

At what time did Joshua and the people carry out the commands that had been given by Moses?  
What lesson should we learn from their good example?  
How were the people stationed for the reading of the law? (Deut. 27:11-14.)  
How much of the law was read publicly? (Deut. 27:11; 29:1.)  
Is there a need for more public reading of God's law today? (Neh. 8:1-12.)  
Why is there so little public reading of the Scriptures in the average congregation today?

#### Practical Observations

Who wrote the Pentateuch?  
What is the theory of "documentary hypothesis"?  
What is the contrast between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim?  
How did Jehovah speak to the Israelites?  
Under what circumstances did the Israelites take out time for worship?

## Lesson IV—April 27, 1975

## COURAGE AND FAITHFULNESS OF CALEB

## Lesson Text

Josh. 14:6-13

6 Then the children of Judah drew nigh unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that Jehovah spake unto Moses the man of God concerning me and concerning thee in Kadesh-barnea.

7 Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of Jehovah sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in my heart.

8 Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed Jehovah my God.

9 And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy foot hath trodden shall be an inheritance to thee and to thy children for ever, because thou hast wholly followed Jehovah my God.

10 And now, behold, Jehovah hath kept me alive, as he spake, these forty and five years, from the time that Jehovah spake this word unto Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old.

11 As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, and to go out and to come in.

12 Now therefore give me this hill-country, whereof Jehovah spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakim were there, and cities great and fortified: it may be that Jehovah will be with me, and I shall drive them out, as Jehovah spake.

13 And Joshua blessed him; and he gave Hebron unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Caleb . . . wholly followed Jehovah, the God of Israel.” (Josh. 14:14.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 15:1-5.

## Daily Bible Readings

April 21. M.....	Caleb's Ancestry (Num. 13:1-6)
April 22. T.....	Caleb, As A Spy (Num. 13:17-24)
April 23. W.....	Caleb's Favorable Report (Num. 13:25-33)
April 24. T.....	The People's Response (Josh. 14:1-10)
April 25. F.....	Caleb At Eighty-five (Josh. 14:8-15)
April 26. S.....	Caleb and His Possession (Josh. 15:13-20)
April 27. S.....	Blessings of Faithfulness (Psalm 1:1-6)

TIME.—About B.C. 1403.

PLACE.—Gilgal, a city north of the valley of Achor which formed the border between Judah and Benjamin in Palestine.

PERSONS.—The children of Judah, Joshua, and Caleb.

## Introduction

When the Israelites had moved from Mount Sinai to Hazereth and from Hazereth to the wilderness of Paran, Jehovah instructed Moses that he should send men to spy out the land of Canaan. Twelve men—one out of each tribe—were selected: (1) of the tribe of Reuben, Shammua; (2) of the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat; (3) of the tribe of Judah, Caleb; (4) of the tribe of Issachar, Igal; (5) of the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea (or Joshua); (6)

of the tribe of Benjamin, Palti; (7) of the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel; (8) of the tribe of Manasseh, Gad-dis; (9) of the tribe of Dan, Ammiel; (10) of the tribe of Asher, Sethur; (11) of the tribe of Naphtali, Nashbi, and (12) of the tribe of Gad, Gevel. The student should observe here that no spy was sent forth from the tribe of Levi. There were at that time thirteen tribes. Jacob adopted Joseph's sons and they—Ephraim and Manasseh—in-

herited land grants as if they had been sons of Jacob. (Gen. 48:1-7.)

The spies were gone for forty days. Upon their return, they reported that the land "surely floweth with milk and honey," but they complained that the people that dwelt in the land were strong, that their cities were well fortified and very great, and that the children of Anak—giants lived there. Caleb, of the tribe of Judah, stilled or quieted the people before Moses and said: "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." (Num. 13:30.) Hoshea, or Joshua, of the tribe of Ephraim, joined Caleb in his good, but minority report; whereas, the ten spies of "the grasshopper complex" filed their evil and majority report. "We were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight," those of the majority report said. The congregation of Israel became very emotional. "Our wives and our little ones will be a prey," they cried as they wept. To one another they proposed: "Let us make a captain," or dispose of Moses and Aaron, "and let us return into Egypt." Jehovah was very angry with the people. "I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a nation greater and mightier than they," Jehovah declared. Moses prayed Jehovah: "Pardon, I pray thee, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of thy loving kindness," and Jehovah replied: "I have pardoned according to thy word . . . but . . . all those men that have seen my glory, . . . shall not see the land . . . but my servant Caleb."

Jehovah then spake unto Moses and Aaron saying: "Surely as ye have spoken in my ears, so will I do unto you: your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered with you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, that have murmured against me, surely ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swear that I would make you to dwell therein, save Caleb . . . and Joshua. . . . But your little ones, that ye said would be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have rejected. But as for you, your dead

bodies shall fall in this wilderness.

. . . After the number of days in which ye spied out the land, even forty years, for every day a year, shall ye bear your iniquity, even forty years." (Num. 14:26-34.) Thus the statement, "Only Joshua and Caleb of that multitude of Israelites of twenty years and above entered the land of Canaan," is certainly true from the scriptures' frame of reference (Num. 26:64-65), but the statement has at least one exception. To illustrate, Aaron had four sons and they were all old enough to be consecrated to minister at the sanctuary when the tabernacle was first erected at Sinai—Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. Nadab and Abihu died before Jehovah and only Eleazar and Ithamar were left to minister in the priests' office in the presence of Aaron their father. (Num. 3:1-5.)

When the Israelites had journeyed from Kadesh to Mount Hor, Jehovah spoke to Moses and Aaron of how that Aaron "should be gathered to his people." Moses was instructed to take Aaron, his own brother who was three years his senior, up unto Mount Hor and strip him of his garments, and put them on Eleazar. Moses carried out Jehovah's instructions, and Aaron died on the top of Mount Hor. Eleazar, the new high priest, descended the mount along with Moses, and the people knew that Aaron was dead. They wept for him thirty days. (Num. 3:23-29.)

Now this same high priest, Eleazar, assisted in the inauguration of Joshua, after the death of Moses; and further, after the conquest of Canaan, he participated with Joshua in the distribution of the land grants. When Eleazar died, the leaders of Israel buried him in the field of Phinehas his son, which was given him in the hill country of Ephraim. (Josh. 14; 24-33.) The fact of the matter is simply that the Levites were not numbered with the other twelve tribes, and they were exempted, therefore, from the number upon whom was passed the sentence of death in the wilderness, except for those who may have participated in the rebellion raised by the majority report of the ten spies.

Moses in his speeches during the forty-day period prior to his death,

and prior to the river crossing, said: "Jehovah our God made a covenant with us in Horeb . . . with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day. Jehovah spake with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire." In another speech he said, "Your eyes have seen all the great work of Jehovah which he did." (Deut. 5:1-5; 11:1-7.) Now, the harmony or explanation that is usually given regarding the statements is that Moses was saying to the people assembled before him in the land of Moab that God had made the "covenant with us," that is the "us" were the immediate parents that represented us and covenanted for us. Liberals, however, often comment that the covenant was made with the fathers

at Horeb—if the record is to be accepted at face value, they say—and that therefore, the fathers who were at Mount Horeb were, thirty-eight years later, among the assembly in the land of Moab. The liberals then ask if the writer in this place knew of the tradition concerning the generation that died off in the wilderness. There is an assured answer for the liberals' quibbles. While Moses no doubt was in a manner speaking of the fathers of those who stood before him at that moment, the fact remains that these were those before him at that moment who had been at Horeb and heard Jehovah, and they in turn crossed into the Canaan land. They consisted of certain Levites to be sure and perhaps some women also.

### The Golden Text

*"Caleb . . . wholly followed Jehovah, the God of Israel."* King Saul said to Samuel, "I have performed the commandment of Jehovah," but Saul had fallen far short of obedience. Caleb, on the other hand, at age eighty-five could truthfully say, "I have wholly followed the Lord." Jehovah bore record of the faithfulness of Caleb: "Surely," he said, "they," the ten spies with the grasshopper complex, "shall not see the land which I swear unto their fa-

thers, neither shall any of them that despised me see it: but my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereunto he went: and his seed shall possess it." (Num. 14:23.) How much longer Caleb lived after he received his inheritance is not known, but he dislodged and drove out the giants, and to his end, he no doubt wholly followed Jehovah.

### The Text Explained

#### Caleb Reminds Joshua of Moses' Promises at Kadesh-barnea

(Josh. 14:6-9)

*Then the children of Judah drew nigh unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that Jehovah spake unto Moses the man of God concerning me and concerning thee in Kadesh-barnea. Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of Jehovah sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in my heart. Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed Jehovah my God. And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy foot hath trodden shall be an inheritance to thee and to thy children for ever, because thou hast wholly followed Jehovah my God.*

In order to understand and appreciate Caleb's request for the land which Moses promised him, a brief consideration must be given as to the how and when of the distribution or division of the Canaan land between the twelve tribes, and excluding the tribe of Levi. In the divisions of the land, certain prior determined factors had to be taken into consideration. For one thing Jacob, in his capacity as a prophet, had foretold; (1) that the tribe of Joseph—Manasseh and Ephraim—would receive the birthright or a double portion; (2) that the tribe of Judah would be a ruling tribe for the Messiah would come forth from it—"the scepter shall not depart from Judah . . . until Shiloh [Christ] come," and (3) that Moses, when at Kadesh-barnea, had made commitments to Caleb and Joshua as to specific portions of the land which they individually would re-

ceive, namely Hebron and Timnath-serah, respectively. (Gen 49:22-26; Josh. 14:6; 24:29-30.)

The specific commitments of Moses to Caleb and Joshua were made as a reward for their courage and faithfulness in stating their conviction of how that Israel should rise up and possess the land of Canaan. The fact that Caleb and Joshua were from the two outstanding tribes — Judah and Ephraim — was fitting, indeed. Moses' commitments to Caleb and Joshua as to their personal portions of the land of Canaan predetermined the general area or locations of those two respective tribes, since Moses would not have those two men to be separate from their brethren. Caleb's coming forth to claim his personal portion was certainly in order—first because the claim was his right, and second because his making it before the distribution of the land would avoid misunderstandings or questions that would have inevitably arisen should he have waited to file his claim after the divisions and distributions had been made.

With some reflection, the student will take note of the fact that there were only nine and one-half land divisions to be made. Moses had already granted the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and one-half of the tribe of Ephraim to settle beyond Jordan on the east side, in the lands of Jazer and Gilead. (Num. 32; 34:73.) Further, in reality, there were only seven and one-half divisions to be made since the claims of Caleb and Joshua, respectively, predetermined the general area or location of the tribes of Judah and Ephraim, even though no exact survey of the land had been made at that time. In the final determining of boundaries two factors demanded attention: (1) Judah was the largest tribe; and (2) Joseph (Manasseh and Ephraim), was to receive a double portion.

As for the means of determining the divisions or land grants, Moses had already established a general rule of equity. He said:

1. To the more thou shalt give the more inheritance.
2. To the fewer thou shalt give the less inheritance.
3. "Ye shalt inherit the land by lot." (Num. 33:50-54.)

Relative to the determination "by lot," the specifics are not set forth in the Scriptures. A reading from the Proverbs seems to shed light on the matter. The reading is, "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of Jehovah." (Prov. 16:33.) This would suggest that the prudence of man was coupled with the providence of God.

Matthias was chosen by lot as an apostle to take the place of Judas. Peter set forth the qualifications necessary for the apostleship. The brethren determined that two of their number met the qualifications. They prayed for guidance in choosing between the two, and then they cast lots. (Acts 1:15-26; Lev. 16:8.) They probably wrote the names of the two men on two different markers, put them in a pot, and shook the pot until one was thrown out of the pot, or a blindfolded person may have drawn one of the names from the pot. (Lev. 16:8.) The outcome was considered to be by divine choice.

Joshua made application of Moses' instructions as follows:

1. He caused the remaining seven tribes to select three men each as their respective representatives.
2. He sent those men forth to walk through the land, and describe it—to survey it—according to their inheritance.
3. Those twenty-one men in conjunction with each other (here the prudence of man in the system "by lot" was involved) were to describe the land into seven different portions.
4. Joshua then cast lots for the tribes before Jehovah. (Josh. 18:1-7.)

The lots were to be as equitably divided and described as was humanly possible, and the "by lot" system would determine which tribe would get which lot of land. Brothers and sisters often take a similar approach in the division of a farm left to them by their parents. After platting the farm into divisions where each division will be worth substantially as much as each of the other divisions, then each division is numbered, then the numbers are placed in a container, the container is shaken, and each member from the oldest to the

youngest—or vice versa—draws therefrom, and the lot each person draws becomes his property.

Jehovah had told Moses to take one prince from each tribe—in addition to Joshua and Eleazar—to divide the land for inheritance. The men named would assist in the final distribution after all the land had been as it were “surveyed.” Caleb was the prince named as the representative for the tribe of Judah. (Num. 34:19.) The children of Judah, the distinguished men of the tribe, accompanied Caleb when he appeared before Joshua to set forth his personal right of inheritance. Their presence demonstrated the esteem they held for their veteran servant of Jehovah together with their willingness that he should have the choice portion which had been previously promised him.

The great character that Caleb was is reflected in the statements which he made to Joshua, and they may be itemized as follows:

1. He spoke of Moses as “the man, or servant, of God,” and he thereby showed the high esteem and the great respect that he held for Moses.

2. He declared that on his return from spying out the land of Canaan he brought Moses “word as it was in his heart.” This means that he acted out of a heart of full conviction, and not merely to please Moses.

3. He further declared that he had wholly followed Jehovah his God. In short, he had firmly believed that God would keep his promise and drive out the Canaanites before Israel.

4. He spoke to Joshua in a matter-of-fact sort of way. He did not flatter or patronize Joshua, but instead, he said simply, “Thou [Joshua] knowest the thing that Jehovah spake unto Moses the man of God concerning me and concerning thee in Kadesh-barnea.”

### Joshua Grants Caleb's Request

(Josh. 14:10-13)

*And now, behold, Jehovah hath kept me alive, as he spake, these forty and five years, from the time that Jehovah spake this word unto Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old.*

*As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, and to go out and to come in. Now therefore give me this hill-country, whereof Jehovah spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakim were there, and cities great and fortified: it may be that Jehovah will be with me, and I shall drive them out, as Jehovah spake.*

*And Joshua bless him; and he gave Hebron unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance.*

Caleb appeared before Joshua in his eighty-fifth year, and perhaps on his birthday. He had been preserved for forty-five years after he had urged the people to rise up and possess the Canaan land—thirty-eight years in the discomfitures of the wilderness wanderings and seven years in the perils of war in Canaan. He was as strong as he had been the day that Moses sent him out with eleven other men to spy out the land. He avowed that he was physically strong for war. This avowal was in contemplation of the fact that the Anakims, the giants, were still in that country.

“Now give me this hill-country,” Caleb entreated, and Joshua gave him Hebron. The less is blessed of the greater, and Joshua in blessing Caleb extended to him his prayers and best wishes. He commended Caleb for his courage, dedication, and faithfulness.

1. Caleb did not say, “By my strength, and courage, and might, I will drive out the Anakims.” He said instead: “It may be that Jehovah will be with me, and I shall drive them out, as Jehovah spake.” James said: “Ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that.” (James 4:13-15.)

2. Caleb was eighty-five years of age, but he was ready to drive out the giants from Hebron by the help of Jehovah. The shelving of men in their sixties and seventies as is customary in this country—including preachers and elders in the church of the Lord—is a tragedy. The current emphasis on and worship of youth has undermined the integrity, the morals, and the stability of the American society, and it has had its evil influence upon the church.

3. Caleb, with respect to his re-

port after he had returned from Canaan, stated: "Nevertheless, my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people to melt." Ten men caused the Israelites to turn from the promises of Jehovah. They even sought to displace Moses and Aaron and to choose a captain that would lead them back to Egypt. Much turns

on the would-be leaders of a church. A few fearful brethren can retard the work of almost any church.

4. Joshua was a real prince in Israel—without jealousy, hypocrisy, or unholy ambitions. He was and is a great example for people of all races, ages, and climes. He is a type of Christ.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give the time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

Where were the Israelites encamped when God told Moses to send spies into the land of Canaan?

Which tribe did not send a spy? Why?

What kind of report did the spies bring back concerning the land?

What did they report concerning the cities and the people?

What were the three evil and false statements made by ten of the spies? (Num. 13:31-33; Josh. 2:9-11.)

What did Caleb and Joshua try to get the people to do?

What did the people do after hearing the majority report?

What did God tell Moses that he would do about their rebellion? (Num. 14:11-12.)

How did Moses intercede for the people? (Num. 14:13-19.)

What did God decree after Moses' prayer of intercession?

Who entered Canaan along with Joshua and Caleb?

What are some of the critical comments that liberals have made concerning what they regard to be contradictions relative to those who did and did not enter Canaan? (Deut. 5:1-5; 11:1-7.)

What is the correct answer for their quibbles?

#### Golden Text

By whom, and where, were the words of the golden text spoken?

How old was Caleb when he was sent to "spy out the land"?

How old was he when he appeared before Joshua?

What was the condition of his health?

Had he continued to be faithful to God?

#### Caleb Reminds Joshua of Moses' Promises at Kadesh-barnea

What commitments concerning land had Moses made to Caleb and Joshua? Why?

Why was Caleb's request of Joshua at this time in order?

Of what tribe was Caleb? Joshua?

How many land divisions were yet to be made when Caleb made his request?

What rules of equity had Moses set forth concerning the division of the land?

What is probably meant by the statement, "Ye shall inherit the land by lot"?

What instruction did Joshua give concerning the surveying and dividing of the land?

God had told Moses to choose what man out of the tribe of Judah to assist in dividing the land?

How did Caleb show great respect for Moses on this occasion?

What did he tell Joshua about the report that he had given Moses?

Did he flatter Joshua in any way?

#### Joshua Grants Caleb's Request

Why did Caleb want "this hill-country"?

What does this show concerning Caleb's faith?

#### Practical Observations

On what basis did Caleb hope to drive out the giants?

Why is Caleb such a great example for us today?

## Lesson V—May 4, 1975

### JOSHUA'S LAST DAYS AND DEATH

#### Lesson Text

Josh. 24:14-29

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.

16 And the people answered and said, Far be it from us that we should forsake Jehovah, to serve other gods;

17 For Jehovah our God, he it is that brought us and our fathers up



out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and that did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the peoples through the midst of whom we passed;

18 And Jehovah drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites that dwelt in the land: therefore we also will serve Jehovah; for he is our God.

19 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve Jehovah; for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgression nor your sins.

20 If ye forsake Jehovah, and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you evil, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve Jehovah.

22 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you Jehovah, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses.

23 Now therefore put away, *said he,*

the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto Jehovah, the God of Israel.

24 And the people said unto Joshua, Jehovah our God will we serve, and unto his voice will we hearken.

25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

26 And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and he took a great stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of Jehovah.

27 And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us; for it hath heard all the words of Jehovah which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness against you, lest ye deny your God.

28 So Joshua sent the people away, every man unto his inheritance.

29 And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Jehovah, died, being a hundred and ten years old.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah.” (Josh. 24:15.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Josh. 23:1-16; 24:31.

### Daily Bible Readings

April 28. M.....	Making the Right Choice (Josh. 1:2-6)
April 29. T.....	God's Choice of Joshua (Josh. 24:14-21)
April 30. W.....	Results of Disobedience (Judges 2:1-5)
May 1. T.....	Israel Assembled (Josh. 24:1-13)
May 2. F.....	Choices Important (Matt. 6:24-29)
May 3. S.....	Choice of Life or Death (Ezek. 33:11-16)
May 4. S.....	Value of the Right Choice (Psalm 119:1-8)

TIME.—About B.C. 1378.

PLACE.—Shechem, a city of the territory of Ephraim and on the boundary of Manasseh in Palestine.

PERSONS.—Joshua; and all the tribes of Israel.

### Introduction

There are matters of a somewhat general nature which deserve notice in this lesson on Joshua and his last days and death. For one thing the book of Joshua is to the Old Testament what the book of Acts is to the New Testament. The five books of Moses laid the foundation for the kingdom of Israel, and the book of Joshua is a history of where and how that nation was settled throughout the land of Canaan. The four gospel records laid the foundation for the kingdom of Christ, and

the book of Acts is a history of where and how that kingdom was established and spread throughout the world.

For another thing, three men against whom not one sin was charged were buried in relatively close proximity of each other: in the hill country of Ephraim, namely: Joseph, the faithful prophet (Gen. 50:25; Josh. 24:32); Eleazar, the faithful high priest (Josh. 24:33); and Joshua, the faithful ruler of the host of Israel. These three

men were blameless and by analogy they could be said to foreshadow another man of God—the Christ—who would arise as a whole of the former three, a faithful prophet, priest, and king.

For still another thing, Joshua is a type of Christ. ' An earnest study of the types and shadows of the Old Testament will prove valuable for any individual person or for any church. There seems not to be as much attention given to the study of "types and shadows" now as in the decades of the thirties, forties, and fifties. Some preachers seem to lean away from such studies, and if such is the case, it is unfortunate.

A study of the subject, "Joshua a Type of Jesus, the Christ," may very well include the following:

1. The name "Joshua" is a contraction of Jehoshua and means the saviour. The name "Jesus" is a further contraction of Jehoshua and means the saviour:

2. Joshua, not the lawgiver Moses, was set to lead his people through the Jordan and through the conquering conquest of Canaan. Jesus, not God the lawgiver, was set to lead his people through the Jordan of baptism and through the conquering conquest of the life on earth. (Matt. 3:13-15.)

3. Moses departed—died—in order that Joshua might become the leader of the Israelites. The law of Moses departed—was abolished—in order that Jesus might become the leader of righteousness. (Heb. 10:9.)

4. At the Jordan River, Jehovah magnified Joshua as the captain of the salvation of the Israelites. At the Jordan River, God magnified Jesus as the captain of the salvation of men today. The Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove, and God announced from heaven.

"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:13-17; John 1:33-34.)

5. Joshua took twelve stones from the Jordan River to be evermore witnesses to the Israelites of their great deliverance. Jesus took twelve men from their baptism of John in the river Jordan to be witnesses of his great deliverance from sin. (Acts 1:21-26.)

6. Joshua stood as a great military leader on the field of blood. Jesus is represented as a military leader arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood and with the armies of heaven following him. (Rev. 19:11-16.)

7. Joshua had a great zeal for God. Jesus had such a zeal for God that he turned over the tables of the money changers and drove the animals from the temple. (John 2:13-17.)

8. Joshua had great deference for the law of Jehovah. Jesus, when tempted by Satan, gave to the word of God the very highest sense of authority by replying to each temptation in the words, "It is written." (Matt. 4:1-11; Deut. 8:3; 6:16; 6:13.)

9. Joshua was characterized by a deep humility and self-forgetfulness as if he were standing before Moses. Jesus, when on the cross and in deep humility and suffering, prayed to the Father, "Forgive them for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34.)

10. Joshua, just prior to his departure, called to him on the mountain of Timnath-serah the heads of the twelve tribes and set before them their obligation to serve Jehovah. Jesus, just prior to his ascension, called to him on a mountain in Galilee his apostles, and charged them to go teach all nations. (Matt. 28:16-20.)

### The Golden Text

*"As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah."* After having admonished those before him in the words, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," Joshua then set forth his positive choice. He would serve Jehovah, and he would encourage those of his house—children, servants, and all others—by both word and example to serve Jehovah. Service to God must always stem from a serious and deliberate choice

of the individual person. While a person can encourage and urge others to the service of God, in the final analysis the choice can only be made by each individual person.

Joshua said, "I will serve Jehovah." There is a remarkable determination reflected in his positive statement, and he certainly did not regard his determined choice as being an abridgment of his own personal liberties. In his choice, he

put God and family above all other affairs of life. A choice such as Joshua made will stand the test of conscience. It will stand the test of

death and the judgment; whereas wealth, dignity, and honor, and earthly pleasures will count for nothing in that final test.

### The Text Explained

Joshua Calls upon the Leaders of Israel to "Choose whom ye will serve"  
(Josh. 24:14-15)

*Now therefore fear Jehovah, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt; and serve ye Jehovah. And if it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah.*

At the time of this lesson Joshua was old and well stricken in years. He said to the leaders before him: "Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth."

Under the sentence of imminent natural death, Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem for a re-ratification of the covenant which he called the statutes and ordinances. Moses on two occasions had ratified the covenant between God and Israel—once at Mount Sinai, and at the close of his life in the plains of Moab. (Ex. 24; Deut. 29:1.) Joshua had ratified the covenant at Mount Ebal, and he was about to ratify it again at Shechem and that pursuant to his death.

In calling upon those Israelites to fear and serve Jehovah in sincerity and truth, he called upon them to put away the gods which their fathers had served beyond the River and in Egypt. The gods beyond the River, the Euphrates, were the gods that Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor, had served. (Josh. 24:2.) The gods of Egypt were those to whom the Israelites were exposed while they were slaves in Egypt. Some of the Israelites, while apparently not then worshipping those gods, were keeping in secret places small images and hand-made deities which had been passed on to them by their ancestors. "Put them away," Joshua urged.

"If it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah," like those today who rise

up against Christianity, "choose you this day whom ye will serve," Joshua said. Such people had two other alternatives, they could serve the gods of antiquity beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose lands they then dwelt.

A forced loyalty or obedience was and is of no value, and Joshua, therefore, called upon those Israelites to choose whom they would serve. They were free-moral agents, and the decision or deliberate choice—as is in every case today—lay with them.

Joshua then stated his resolve. As for himself and his house—his children and those of his household—they would serve Jehovah. He and his house would set a godly example for the whole nation. Church leaders and their families should set righteous examples for the rank-and-file of the church to follow.

### The Response of the Leaders of Israel was Positive (Josh. 24:16-18)

*And the people answered and said, Far be it from us that we should forsake Jehovah, to serve other gods; for Jehovah our God, he it is that brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and that did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the peoples through the midst of whom we passed; and Jehovah drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites that dwelt in the land; therefore we also will serve Jehovah; for he is our God.*

The response of those leaders of Israel was positive and reassuring. "Far be it from us," they said, "that we should forsake Jehovah to serve other gods." They recounted the great signs that God had done in their sight, and then they said: "Therefore we also will serve Jehovah; for he is our God." The very positive result of their choice to serve Jehovah is reflected in the fact that "Israel served Jehovah all

the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua." (Josh. 24:31.)

### Joshua Called upon those Israelites to Put Away their Gods

(Josh. 24:19-24)

*And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve Jehovah; for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgression nor your sins. If ye forsake Jehovah, and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you evil, and consume you, after that he hath done you good. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; hut we will serve Jehovah. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you Jehovah, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses. Now therefore put away, said he, the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto Jehovah, the God of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, Jehovah our God will we serve, and unto his voice will we hearken.*

Joshua's statement to the people "Ye cannot serve Jehovah," must necessarily be understood in light of the gods which their fathers had served beyond the River. They could not serve God and retain in secret their handmade gods which had been passed on to them by their ancestors. Further, they could not serve God with a thoughtless spirit—the reason being that God is holy and righteous and jealous, and he will not tolerate sin and idolatry.

### Joshua Made a New Ratification of the Covenant

(Josh. 24:25-27)

*So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and he took a great stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of Jehovah. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us; for it hath heard all the words of Jehovah which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness against you, lest ye deny your God.*

As in the case of Moses, who called for a re-ratification of the

covenant between Israel and Jehovah in the plains of Moab just prior to his death, just so Joshua, in the face of death, made a re-ratification of the same covenant between Israel and Jehovah at Shechem, and he set for the people "a statute and an ordinance." He took a great stone as a memorial and set it up under the oak that was by the sanctuary of Jehovah. The memorial stone would be visible and the covenant, therefore, could be the more readily called to mind. The people of God—in whatever dispensation—need to be refreshed, or renewed, as to their prior commitments. Paul wrote: "Though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day." (2 Cor. 4:16.) The preaching and re-emphasizing of truth that is already known is a great utility to such an end. The Lord's supper is a memorial that also answers for such an end.

The placing of the memorial stone under the oak by the sanctuary probably had reference to the holy place under the oak where Abraham had formerly built an altar and worshipped and where also Jacob had worshipped. The oak may have chanced to be the same oak, or it may have grown up where the former oak stood.

Joshua wrote the words in the book of the law of God—that is he wrote the whole ceremony of the re-ratification of the covenant in the form of a document—and entered them in the law book of Moses. Like Moses of former years, Joshua publicly brought to mind the conditions on which the Israelites enjoyed their inheritance, and the basis on which they might continue to enjoy God's favor.

### Joshua Dismissed the People

(Josh. 24:28, 29)

*So Joshua sent the people away, every man unto his inheritance. And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Jehovah, died, being a hundred and ten years old.*

Joshua had fulfilled his mission, and the time of his departure was at hand. Like Paul of later centuries, he had fought a good fight. He did not formally lay down his office for it to be resumed by another. There was no immediate God-appointed

successor. Israel was to be ruled and governed by the elders and judges. Thus Joshua sent the people away, or dismissed them, every man unto his inheritance.

Soon after the dismissal of the people to their own respective inheritances, Joshua died. Like his

blameless ancestor Joseph, he died at the age of one hundred and ten years. He was buried at Timnath-serah, the possession promised him of Moses at about the time he and Caleb made the minority report concerning the taking of the Canaan land.

### Practical Observations

1. The people of Israel remembered that God had brought them and their fathers up out of the land of Egypt, how that he had done great signs—such as the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea and of the Jordan River—in their sight, how that he had preserved them in all the way, and how that he drove out before them all the peoples, even the Amorites. Christians today should reflect on the marvel of Christ, the establishment and growth of the church, the labors and sacrifices of such peerless men like Paul, and the labors and sacrifices of the pioneers who blazed the trail for New Testament Christianity on this North American continent.

2. Joshua emphasized to the people of Israel that if they should forsake Jehovah and serve foreign gods, then he would turn and consume them. God is the same holy and righteous and jealous God today that he was then. Any idol—whether money, fleshly lust, or sens-

ual pleasure, or godless evolution—will cause any man to be consumed. An idol may be defined as any person or object or state of passionate devotion which is preferred and served above God almighty.

3. Joshua said to the people: "Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you Jehovah, to serve him." The meaning is that the people understood the terms of the contract. There was a legal "meeting of the minds." Joshua had appraised the people of the trials and obstacles which they would face. He had reminded them of God's righteousness, and he had warned them of their own tendencies and weaknesses. If those people failed to serve God, their covenant to serve him would witness against them. Every responsible person who has been baptized into Christ has entered into a covenant relationship with Christ, and that covenant will witness against any Christian who departs therefrom.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?

Repeat the golden text.

Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

What is the relationship of the book of Joshua to the Old Testament?

Discuss the three great men that were buried in the hill country of Ephraim.

What is the meaning of the name "Joshua" and the name "Jesus"?

What are some of the comparisons that can be made of Joshua and Jesus?

#### Golden Text

By whom, and when, were the words of the golden text spoken?

What must true service to God always stem from?

In what ways had Joshua encouraged his brethren to serve God?

Why will a choice like Joshua's stand the test of conscience, death, and the judgment?

#### Joshua Calls upon the Leaders of Israel to "Choose whom ye will serve"

Why did Joshua assemble all the tribes of Israel to Shechem for a re-ratification of the covenant?

What choice did he ask them to make?

To what was he referring when he said, "and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River"?

Were the people publicly worshipping the gods of Egyptians?

Discuss some of the things about Joshua that we need to imitate.

#### The Response of the Leaders of Israel was Positive

How did the people respond to the pleas of Joshua?

How long did they serve Jehovah?

What does this show us about the power of a good example?

#### Joshua Called upon those Israelites to Put Away their Gods

What is the meaning of Joshua's statement, "Ye cannot serve Jehovah"?

Compare the preaching of Joshua on this occasion with that which is not popular today.

#### Joshua Made a New Ratification of the Covenant

What memorial did Joshua set up? Why?

Why do we need to be stirred up or renewed in regard to our commitments?

What conditions did Joshua bring to their remembrance?

Joshua Dismissed the People

Did God appoint a successor to Joshua like he did to Moses?

How were the people ruled after his death?

About how long had Joshua courageously led the people of Israel?

Practical Observations

Why did the people of Israel need to call to remembrance many things about their past history?

Do we need to do the same today?

What will happen if we do not?

What did Joshua emphasize about their relationship with God?

What is the meaning of Joshua's statement, "Ye are witnesses against yourselves"?

What should his statement remind us of?

Lesson VI—May 11, 1975

JUDGES APPOINTED

Lesson Text

Judges 2:6-18

6 Now when Joshua had sent the people away, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

7 And the people served Jehovah all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of Jehovah that he had wrought for Israel.

8 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Jehovah, died, being a hundred and ten years old.

9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill-country of Ephraim, on the north of the mountain of Gaash.

10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, that knew not Jehovah, nor yet the work which he had wrought for Israel.

11 And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and served the Baalim;

12 And they forsook Jehovah, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the peoples that were round about them, and bowed themselves down unto them: and they provoked Jehovah to anger.

13 And they forsook Jehovah, and served Baal and the Ashtaroth.

14 And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that despoiled them; and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of Jehovah was against them for evil, as Jehovah had spoken, and as Jehovah had sworn unto them: and they were sore distressed.

16 And Jehovah raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those that despoiled them.

17 And yet they hearkened not unto their judges; for they played the harlot after other gods, and bowed themselves down unto them: they turned aside quickly out of the way wherein their fathers walked, obeying the commandments of Jehovah; *but* they did not so.

18 And when Jehovah raised them up judges, then Jehovah was with the judge, and saved them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented Jehovah because of their groaning by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah." (Judges 3:7.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Judges 2:19-23.

Daily Bible Readings

- May 5. M.....Conditions in Israel (Judges 1:22-36)
- May 6. T.....Disobedience of the People (Judges 2:1-5)
- May 7. W.....Apostasy Following Joshua's Death (Judges 2:6-22)
- May 8. T.....Condition of National Blessing (Psalm 33:12-22)

May 9. F..... National Wickedness Punished (Ezek. 5:1-9)  
 May 10. S..... Deliverance Under Ehud (Judges 3:15-30)  
 May 11. S..... Pray for Rulers (1 Tim. 2:1-7)

TIME.—About B.C. 1378-1376.

PLACES.—The tribes of Israel in their several land grant territories throughout Palestine.

PERSONS.—Jehovah, the people, and judges which God gave them.

### Introduction

Joshua led the Israelites through the conquest of Canaan and the division of the land among the twelve tribes, and he then seemingly retired to his personal inheritance at Timnath-serah. He thereby concluded his closing years in a state of semi-privacy. He claimed no official position or rank for himself or his family. After the lapse of years, and when through the natural course of time his death was imminent, he gathered together the leaders of the respective tribes, and more as an elder or patriarch than a commander, he urged the Israelites to renew their covenant with Jehovah. At the conclusion of that very solemn meeting, he announced no successor; but rather, "he sent the people away, every man to his inheritance."

Jehovah, through Moses his law-giver, had given the Israelites a body of religious and civil laws, but he had given no basis or foundation for a political constitution or order. At the death of Joshua, the successor to Moses, there remained no central or supreme ruler.

Each tribe was independent and each village or town was essentially as independent as were the respective tribes. Except in times of emergencies, there were no communications or bonds between the tribes. Those Israelites maintained no diplomatic relations with other nations, no commerce or manufactory, no public enterprises, no standing army, and no professional soldiers. They had no functionaries, no banking systems, no court houses, no magistrates or judges to dispense justice, no police to guard the law, no legislature to enact new laws, and no lawyers to argue the law. Decisions of justice were made by the elders at the gate of each village or town. Except for the tithe to the Levites, the Israelites paid no duties and no taxes, and they had no class society—no working or lower class.

Each tribe was self-contained, and each family was also self-contained. The people lived on the produce of the fields, vineyard, and flocks. They wore home spun clothes and self-made sandals. There were no grocery stores, no shoemaker shops, no baker shops, no butcher shops, no guilds in the skills or trades, and no guilds of arts and crafts. There were only farmers and shepherds.

Patriotism in an acceptable sense did not exist. Each man did that which was right in his own eyes. Only when oppression became unbearable was a cry heard for united action on the part of a particular tribe, or on the part of several tribes, or on the part of all the tribes. The unbearable oppressions always came as a result of the people's unfaithfulness, and particularly their worship of idolatrous gods.

Fortunately, the decentralized state of the Israelites in the period of the judges was a deterrent to their wholesale apostasy. If a village, or town, or even a whole tribe were lured into apostasy, other villages, or towns, or tribes—as the case might be—were not necessarily forced or influenced to move also into that state of apostasy. The apostasy of one village, or town, or tribe might very well stir others to examine themselves and to take action against the creeping tendencies among themselves that would also in time lead them into apostasy. The case of the autonomy of the local church is somewhat analogous to the circumstances which prevailed in the decentralized state of the Israelites in the period of the judges.

There were several constant factors which tended to lead the Israelites into apostasy. Three of the more prominent factors were as follows:

1. The rich inheritance of Canaan land with cleared and terraced

lands; vineyards, orchards, houses, and walled cities—all these the labors of others—caused the people to desire strongly to settle down and enjoy their relative ease and luxury of life. The people had been so long in the wilderness, and they were eager to settle and be done with the pitching and the folding of their tents. Like preachers and their families who have “wandered” from one church to another until they have reached the point of a strong desire for a home of their own, a certain dwelling place, those Israelites had long dreamed of their settling down in quiet to enjoy their certain dwelling places.

2. The gradual cultivation of acquaintances with the isolated communities of Canaanites who were not driven out of the land, encouraged intermarriage. “They [the Israelites] took them daughters [the Canaanite women] to be their wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons and served other gods.” (Judges 3:6.)

3. The ever present longings of man, including men of the present time, for a god like unto himself—

the longing for a material and visible god, for a god that communicates directly to one or all of his five senses, for a god that can be seen and heard, and felt—was not absent in the hearts of the Israelites. The gods of the Canaanites, therefore, were strong competitors with Jehovah for the souls of the Israelites. An invisible god who demanded strict loyalty, and that through testimony, often did not hold for the Israelites the strong appeal that Baal held for them. The worship of Baal, a god that could be seen and touched—with all of the sensual passions and proclivities that attended—held a very strong appeal for those second and third generation Israelites. Then, too, the Canaanite wives, like magnet fields, drew the men among the Israelites to the multitudes of altars dedicated to the worship of Baal. Only the strong and spiritual men of Israel evaluated and contrasted the purity of the religion of Jehovah with the corruption and depravity of the religion of Baal. Thus the Israelites were led again and again into idolatry.

### The Golden Text

*And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah.”* In their evil doings, the Israelites fraternized with the Canaanites and married their women. Further, they forgot their God, Jehovah, and served the Baalim and the Asheroth. The worship of Baal and the Asheroth was in reality the worship of natural phenomenon—the sun and the moon. With the Ammonites the sun god was known as Moleck; with the Moabites, he was known as Chemosh and with the Canaanites, he was known as Baal. His worship was known for its cruelty and ferocity. The moon god was regarded as the consort of the sun god, and she was known as

Astarte or Astaroth.

These gods—the sun god and the moon god—were associated with sex. The sun or fire god denoted generative powers and was associated with the generative powers of the male; whereas, the moon god—later the queen of heaven—was associated with the productive powers of the female. Thus the worship of Baal and his consort, the Ashtoreth, plural, involved the most impure and licentious sex rites. To the groves where such sex rites were held, the Israelites resorted to engage in fornication, of all forms and passions, with the Canaanite women, the virgins of the goddess, Ashtoreth.

### The Text Explained

A Tribute to Joshua and  
the Elders that Outlived Joshua  
(Judges 2:6-9)

*Now when Joshua had sent the people away, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land. And the people served Jehovah all the days*

*of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had been all the great work of Jehovah that he had wrought for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Jehovah, died, being a hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in*



*the hill-country of Ephraim, on the north of the mountain of Gaash.*

There is really no way to put a value or estimate on a godly life. Joshua had wielded a tremendous influence for righteousness upon the Israelites, especially upon the elders, and thus the writer of the book of the Judges recorded how that "the people served Jehovah all the days of Joshua, and all of the days of the elders who outlived Joshua." What an accomplishment this was! What great faithfulness and righteousness issued from the Israelites as a result of its righteous leaders! What a high tribute the writer of the Judges paid those men, and especially Joshua!

### The Plight of Second and Third Generation Israelites

(Judges 2:10-13)

*And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, that knew not Jehovah, nor yet the work which he had wrought for Israel. And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and served the Baalim: and they forsook Jehovah, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the peoples that were round about them; and bowed themselves down unto them: and they provoked Jehovah to anger. And they forsook Jehovah, and served Baal and the Ashtaroth.*

There arose a new generation, following the death of Joshua and the elders, who knew not Jehovah. They had not seen all of the great works—like the Red Sea crossing and the Jordan River crossing—that Jehovah had wrought in Israel, and their leaders had failed to teach and to set a righteous example as Joshua had done. Thus the children of Israel wrought evil and served the Baalim. They adopted the gods of the peoples around them.

The people of the second and third generations "bowed themselves down" to the gods about them. The figure of speech is striking, harsh, crude, and shocking, but a more revealing and justified figure could not be found. Jehovah was married to the Israelites, but

instead of the Israelites' being loyal to him, as her husband, the people were "bowing down," or lying down—and that uncovered—to commit prostitution with the gods of the Canaanite people.

Nicholas Murray Butler (1862), when writing concerning the American society, described it to be "often but three generations from shirt sleeves to shirt sleeves." The burden of the epistle to the Hebrews was the burden of second and third generation Christians. They had need that someone teach them again "the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God." (Heb. 5:12.)

Every generation is charged with the obligation to teach and to train its coming generation. When such teaching and training is not done, the end results are bound to be tragic. Let parents beware! Let elders of the church beware! Let preachers and teachers beware! What will the oncoming children be like in their generation? What will the church be like? While reading the signs of the heavens, the economy, politics and energy needs of the nation, are Christians failing to read the signs of the times? What humbling questions arise from the second and third generations of Israelites during the period of the Judges?

### The Judgment of Jehovah upon the Israelites

(Judges 2:14, 15)

*And the anger of Jehovah kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that despoiled them; and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. Whithersoever they went out, the hand of Jehovah was against them for evil, as Jehovah had spoken, and as Jehovah had sworn unto them: and they were sore distressed.*

Jehovah is righteous and he is jealous. He will not clear the guilty, nor will he suffer his position and his name to be defamed. If he should fail to punish the guilty, he would cease to be a righteous God, and righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne. (Psalm 89:14.)

Thus the anger of Jehovah was kindled against those Israelites, and he delivered them into the hands of the spoilers—the Canaanites that remained within Israel's borders. The Canaanites thereby spoiled—heaped punishment upon—the Israelites. Jehovah sold those Israelites into the hands of the very people that the Israelites were commanded to drive out of the land. Jehovah's hand was against Israel for evil. Moses and Joshua had warned the people of how that Jehovah's hand of judgment would be upon them. The people had not obeyed, and thus they were sore distressed.

### Jehovah's Deliverance— the Judges

(Judges 2:16-18)

*And Jehovah raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those that despoiled them. And yet they hearkened not unto their judges; for they played the harlot after other gods, and bowed themselves down unto them: they turned aside quickly out of the way wherein their fathers walked, obeying the commandments of Jehovah; but they did not so. And when Jehovah raised them up judges, then Jehovah was with the judge, and saved them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented Jehovah because of their*

*groaning by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.*

When the Israelites came to be surely punished, distressed, and spoiled at the hands of the spoiler, Jehovah heard, or gave ear to, their groanings, and it repented Jehovah because of their groanings. God is said to repent when he undergoes a change of mind or purpose toward a person or nation that has changed. There must first be a change on the part of the disobedient person before God will change favorably with respect to him. If, on the other hand, a righteous person turns from his righteousness, God will repent, change, in an unfavorable way with respect to him.

When the Israelites turned back to Jehovah, then Jehovah turned in his attitude toward them. He in turn raised up for Israel judges who saved them from their enemies. Those judges were not civil magistrates who spent their time in the area of administration and adjudication; but rather, they were deliverers and were often endued with the Spirit of God. The period of the Judges was, therefore, a period wherein the people time and again apostatized, but as often as they turned to Jehovah, he saved them by a judge, or a deliverer. The period of the Judges is a demonstration of the love and longsuffering of Jehovah toward his people.

### Practical Observations

1. When the Israelites forsook God, God forsook them. When they returned to God, God turned to them. God is merciful and forgiving, but as a just and righteous God, his mercy and forgiveness can rejoice against his righteousness and judgment only as men will turn to him.

2. Joshua was a blameless man in the eyes of Jehovah, and he wielded a tremendous influence upon the lives of a nation of people. The hope of America does not lie in its Navy, Army, and Air Force, or in its atomic bombs, or in its men in political positions. The hope lies in its having men like Joshua, who set the example of righteousness.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

What did Joshua do after the conquest of Canaan and the division of the land?  
How were the people governed after the death of Joshua?  
Discuss the political and economic condition of the nation of Israel at this time.  
What good safeguards were there in a decentralized government?  
Discuss the prominent factors which

tended to lead the Israelites into apostasy.

#### The Golden Text

When were the words of the text spoken?  
What did the people of the nation, that were left in the land, encourage the Israelites to do?  
Why were these people left in Canaan?  
Discuss the worship of Baal and Asherth.

A Tribute to Joshua and the Elders that Outlived Joshua

How long did the children of Israel serve God after the death of Joshua?
What lesson should we learn from Joshua's good leadership?

The Plight of Second and Third Generation Israelites

What is said about the new generation that followed the death of Joshua and the elders?
What generation of people is spoken of in this passage?
What is meant by the statement, "and bowed themselves down unto them"?
What are some of the great dangers of second and third generation Christians?
What responsibility do the adults of each generation have?
Is the present generation doing a good part in measuring up to this responsibility?

The Judgment of Jehovah upon the Israelites

Why did God deliver the Israelites into the hands of their enemies?
What warning had both Moses and Joshua given them concerning this?

Jehovah's Deliverance—the Judges

How did Jehovah go about saving them after they were humbled by their enemies?
What is meant by the statement, "for it repented Jehovah"?
What was the primary role of the Judges that God raised up?
Did the people remain faithful to God during the period of the Judges?
What does this period tell us about the character and nature of God?

Practical Observations

Discuss how that God is both a merciful and forgiving God, and also a jealous and severe God.
Where lies the hope of America today?

Lesson VII—May 18, 1975

GIDEON AND THE THREE HUNDRED

Lesson Text

Judges 7:2-8, 19-22

2 And Jehovah said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

3 Now therefore proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and trembling, let him return and depart from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

4 And Jehovah said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and Jehovah said unto Gideon, Every one that lapped of the water with his tongue, as a dog lapped, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men: but

all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 And Jehovah said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thy hand; and let all the people go every man unto his place.

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets; and he sent all the men of Israel every man unto his tent, but retained the three hundred men: and the camp of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

19 So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outermost part of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch, when they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake in pieces the pitchers that were in their hands.

20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the torches in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands wherewith to blow; and they cried, The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon.

21 And they stood every man in

his place round about the camp; and all the host ran; and they shouted, and put *them* to flight.

22 And they blew the three hundred trumpets, and Jehovah set every

man's sword against his fellow, and against all the host; and the host fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zerah, as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabboth.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts.” (Zech. 4:6.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Judges 7:9-18.

### Daily Bible Readings

- May 12. M..... Hardship in Israel (Judges 6:1-10)
- May 13. T.....Gideon's Call (Judges 6:11-24)
- May 14. W..... Gideon's Faithfulness (Judges 6:25-32)
- May 15. T..... Gideon's Faith Strengthened (Judges 6:33-40)
- May 16. F..... Gideon and the Three Hundred (Judges 7:1-25)
- May 17. S..... Faith's Triumph (Psalm 27:1-6)
- May 18. S..... Source of Strength (Psalm 2:1-9)

TIME.—About B.C. 1211.

PLACE.—Mount Gilead, one of a range of mountains in the highlands of Eastern Palestine.

PERSONS.—Jehovah, Gideon, and his army.

### Introduction

#### *Jehovah Revokes Covenant with Israel*

Jehovah covenanted with the Israelites that he would drive out before them the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, he would perform the work, and the Israelites would serve as his instrument. Through Moses, Jehovah had previously said: "I will not drive them [the inhabitants of Canaan] out from before thee in one year, lest the land become desolate, and the beasts of the field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out before thee until thou be increased and inherit the land." (Ex. 23:29-30.) During the conquest of Canaan as led by Joshua, Jehovah drove out as many inhabitants of the land as was necessary for the comfortable settlement of the respective tribes. He did not, however, expel all of the inhabitants hastily—or at once. In this way the land was protected against wild growth, or waste, and the wild beasts were not permitted to multiply excessively.

The covenant which Jehovah made with the Israelites to drive out before them the inhabitants of Canaan, was predicated upon the people's continued faith, trust, and obedience, and the people served Jehovah all of the days of Joshua and all of the days of the elders that outlived Joshua. After the

death of those elders, "there arose another generation after them that knew not Jehovah, nor yet the work which he had wrought in Israel," and they prostituted themselves—bowed themselves down—to other gods. They openly and flagrantly breached the covenant which they had entered into between themselves and Jehovah. Thus, the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel. He sent an angel from Gilgal to Bochim to ask the people, "Why have ye done this?" The angel reminded the people that Jehovah had previously said: "I will not drive them out before you ... if you covenant and consort with the inhabitants of the land, but they shall be as thorns in your sides." On hearing the testimony of the angel, the people lifted up their voices and wept, but their running history was, that as often as Jehovah raised up Judges to deliver them from their enemies, just that often they forsook him and bowed themselves down to other gods.

The apostasy of the Israelites was the reason why Jehovah did not completely expel the Canaanite nation from the Canaan land. On the basis of the people's idolatry—their bowing down to other gods—Jehovah said: "I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of thy nations that Joshua left

when he died; that by them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of Jehovah to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not." (Judges 2:21.) After this manner, the inhabitants of the land were left in the land, in order that Israel might be proved by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah. Thus the children of Israel dwelt among the inhabitants of the land, and "they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons and served their gods." (Judges 3:1-6.)

### *Gideon Raised up as a Judge*

At the point of today's lesson Gideon had been raised up as a judge to deliver the Israelites, especially the tribes of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Ephraim, from the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east. There had been, already, three servitudes of the Israelites, namely:

1. The Mesopotamian servitude for a period of eight years. Othneil was raised up to deliver the people, and the people had rest for a period of forty years. (Judges 3:7-11.)

2. The Moabite servitude for a period of eighteen years. Ehud and Shamgar were raised up to deliver Israel, and the people had rest for eighty years, perhaps including the forty years of Othneil's administration. (Judges 3:12-31.)

3. The Jabin servitude for a period of twenty years. Deborah and Barak were raised up to deliver the people, and the people had rest for forty years. (Judges 4:1-3.)

In the case of Gideon and the Midian servitude, Israel's past history was being repeated. Israel did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and Jehovah delivered them in the hands of Midian for seven years. The Amalekites and the children of the east joined the Midianites and came up against Israel. They destroyed the increase of the earth and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. The Israelites made for themselves dens in the mountains, and caves, and strongholds. When those Israelites had been so greatly impoverished, they cried unto Jeho-

vah, and he sent a prophet among them who reproved them for their not having obeyed the voice of Jehovah.

Under those prevailing circumstances, an angel of the Lord appeared unto Gideon and said: "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." Gideon, not suspecting that the man with the stall, as if he were a traveler, was an angel in disguise, inquired: "Why then is all this befallen us if Jehovah is with us?" The angel, speaking for the Lord, looked upon him and said: "Go in thy might, and save Israel from the hand of Midian: have I not sent thee?" "Wherewith shall I save Israel?" Gideon inquired. "My family is the poorest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house," he protested. Gideon was convinced that Jehovah had chosen him only after signs were given him, the miracle of the fleece, dew, and dry ground, and after he had learned that the man with the staff who spoke to him was actually an angel of the Lord.

Like Abraham's father who served other gods, Gideon's father was an idolater, and the public altar to Baal and the Asheroth were erected on his property. The angel instructed Gideon to throw down the altar of Baal which his father had. Gideon feared his father's household, and he feared the men of the city. He waited until night, therefore, and he took ten of his servants and broke down the altar of Baal and cut down the Asheroth. He then built an altar unto Jehovah, and offered the second bullock thereon.

The men of the city were enraged when they learned the fate of Baal and the Asheroth. They immediately suspected Gideon because he had not bowed down to Baal, and they demanded of Joash, Gideon's father, that he bring out Gideon so that he might be put to death. The attitude of Joash was most wholesome and in keeping with the normal reaction of a father toward a son. "Will ye contend for Baal?" he asked and then added, "If he be a god, let him contend for himself, because one hath broken down his altar." In just this way Gideon, having been chosen to deliver and

put down idolatry, began his early work as a Judge and deliverer of Israel.

Upon Gideon's successful return from the hot pursuit of the Midianites and the slaughter of Jebah and Zalmuna, the men of Israel said to him: "Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son

also; for thou hast saved us out of the hand of Midian." (Judges 8:22-23.) Gideon, though, was a true man of God, completely free of selfish and unholy ambitions. He replied: "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; Jehovah shall rule over you." (Judges 8:22-23.)

### The Golden Text

*"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, said Jehovah of hosts." In the first year of Cyrus, Zerubbabel led a company of Jews in a return from Babylon to Jerusalem. Zerubbabel had a commission from Cyrus to restore the temple. The Jews entered heartily upon the work of laying the foundation for the temple, and they expected that the work would proceed with haste to its completion. In a short time, however, the work was opposed by the Samaritans, and in time Artaxerxes ordered the work to be stopped.*

The work of rebuilding the temple was so great an undertaking for such a small band of people, and the opposition from the adversaries was so stiff and exasperating that the Jews ceased from their labors. After the passing of sixteen years,

God raised up the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to stir the people to rise up and complete the temple.

This golden text is in reality a message of assurance which an angel of the Lord communicated to Zechariah to be delivered to Zerubbabel. The point of the message was that Zerubbabel was not to wait for a time when the Jews would seemingly have sufficient might and power to complete the temple, but rather the temple would be rebuilt "by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts." In every age God's people can, through faith, accomplish the work which God has set for them to do regardless of the enormity of the work and the strength and determination of the opposition. Gideon and the three hundred is a case in point.

### The Text Explained

#### Gideon Had Too Many Troops (Judges 7:2)

*And Jehovah said unto Gideon, the people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.*

Gideon had issued a call to arms and to war against the Midianites, and thirty-two thousand men had volunteered to his call for troops. The enemy had marshalled together one hundred thirty-five thousand men. (Judges 8:10.) What a contrast this was! The ratio was four to one, and yet Jehovah said: "The people that are with thee are too many." Imagine! Jehovah called upon Gideon to reduce his troops in order to prevent the Israelites from vaunting themselves against him by saying: "Mine own hand hath saved me." The principle involved has been specifically defined by Paul in his letter to the Corinthians. He wrote: "God chose the foolish

things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong ... that no flesh should glory before God." (1 Cor. 1:26-29.)

#### The Fearful Were Told to Go Home (Judges 7:3)

*Now therefore proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and trembling, let him return and depart from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.*

Gideon's troops were not without their fears, and apparently those who had volunteered from Mount Gilead, the eastern part of the tribe of Manasseh, were more fearful than those who volunteered from the western tribes. Anyway, Gideon announced: "Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return home," and twenty-two thousand of

the troops returned to their homes. Only ten thousand were left. The ratio of Gideon's army to the army of the Midianites was then more than thirteen to one! Imagine this! Two-thirds of Gideon's army had gone home.

There was then no place in Gideon's army for the fearful, and just so there is now no place in the Lord's army for the fearful. The "fearful" will have their place in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. (Rev. 21:8.) Only courageous men who are willing to bear heavy burdens, and that at the point of cruel and unfair attacks and criticisms, are really worthy of a place in the Lord's army.

The progress of the kingdom has been impeded and retarded at the hands of supposed church leaders who are "fearful." The quality of courage is a very great need among Christians today. Foolhardiness, however, should never be mistaken for courage. The courageous are calm, deliberate, and resourceful. They do count the cost.

### There Were Still Too Many Men in Gideon's Army (Judges 7:4-8)

*And Jehovah said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. So he brought down the people unto the water: and Jehovah said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down on his knees to drink. And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. And Jehovah said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thy hand; and let all the people go every man unto his place. So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets; and he sent all the men of Israel every man unto*

*his tent, but retained the three hundred men: and the camp of Midian was beneath him in the valley.*

Ten thousand men in Gideon's army were too many though the ratio was more than thirteen to one in favor of the enemy! Think of this!

The ten thousand courageous men who remained were subjected to a "water test." To be courageous was one thing, but to be courageous and also alert and enterprising was quite another thing. Peter wrote: "Be sober, be watchful." (1 Pet. 5:8.) Those who lapped water with their tongues, as a dog lappeth—that is they held the water in their hands and lapped therefrom—were to be separated from those who bowed down to drink. Only three hundred lapped, putting their hand to their mouth. They were the alert ones. No enemy would surprise them for they had their eyes upon his direction. The Lord said to Gideon: "By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you." Contemplate this, by only three hundred men! The ratio stood at four hundred fifty to one in favor of the enemy. The odds were extremely preposterous. Human reason was lost, but "there is no restraint to Jehovah to save by many or by few." (1 Sam. 14:6.) The victor would be Jehovah, and the Israelites would be moved to courage, but the Midianites would be filled with fear.

Some Christians desire to travel with the majority. They fear to be a part of a minority. Jesus said: "Enter in by the narrow gate: . . . that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it." (Matt. 7:13-14.)

### They Cried: "The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon" (Judges 7:19-22)

*So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outermost part of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch, when they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake in pieces the pitchers that were in their hands. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the torches in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands where-*

*with to blow; and they cried. The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon. And they stood every man in his place round about the camp; and all the host ran; and they shouted, and put them to flight. And they blew the three hundred trumpets, and Jehovah set every man's sword against his fellow, and against all the host; and the host fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath.*

Gideon divided his army into three divisions, with one hundred men in each division. Each man was armed with a trumpet, a pitcher, and a torch within the pitcher. (Judges 7:16.) The overconfident Midianites together with the Amalekites and the children of the east were sprawled out along the valley like grasshoppers for multitude. Their confidence lay in their vast majority of men over the Israelites. They had a guard of armed men, but for the majority they were unarmed.

Gideon and the company with him led the attack. The attack was

made at "the beginning of the middle watch," the middle of the night or about midnight. The newly set guard had just arrived, and the men were not settled in their respective positions. There was regularly and quite naturally a short period of confusion and uncertainty during the change of the watch.

Suddenly and without prior warning for the enemy, Gideon gave the signal for attack. Each soldier broke his pitcher, and while the lights from those respective pitchers glared in the middle of the night, the soldiers in simultaneous action blew upon their trumpets, and then they cried in unison, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." This was not a physical military attack, but it was, instead, an attack upon the minds of the enemy.

The overconfident enemy troops were awakened and stirred to a state of riot and confusion—they ran, they cried, and they fled. "Every man's sword was against his fellow, and the victory belong to Jehovah."

### Practical Observations

1. The vast numbers of the Midianites gave them a false sense of security. There is a lesson in this for Christians today. Often the success or failure of a church is evaluated on the basis of numbers.

2. The providence of God is especially reflected in the case of Gideon—particularly his experience in hearing a soldier in the army of the enemy tell his dream, and then his hearing another soldier interpret

that dream. There can be no question—God intervened to effect the dream and also the interpretation. In both, the miracle and providence, God intervenes. A miracle is observable—a sign operating independent of the usual laws of nature; whereas, providence is unobservable, a working through the usual laws of nature—like for instance the dream and the interpretation which Gideon heard.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

What covenant had Jehovah made with the Israelites?  
Why did Jehovah take some time in executing the covenant?  
What change came over the people after the death of Joshua and the elders that outlived him?  
Who ruled the Israelites after Joshua's death?  
What resulted from marriages with the inhabitants of the land?

#### Gideon Raised Up as a Judge

Discuss the three periods of servitude prior to Gideon's becoming judge.  
What miracles were performed to con-

vince Gideon that he was chosen by Jehovah?  
What was his first act in combating idolatry?

#### The Golden Text

How are Jehovah's purposes accomplished?  
What example is given to show how Jehovah does accomplish his purposes?  
Discuss the statement: "By my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts."

#### The Text Explained

Why did Jehovah say that Gideon had too many men?  
What principle did Paul express in 1 Corinthians 1:26-29?

#### The Fearful Were Told to Go Home

How many returned unto the people because they were fearful?



What is the danger of being fearful?  
(Rev. 21:8.)  
Contrast the fearful and the courageous.

They Cried: "The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon"  
Discuss Gideon's battle plan.  
How successful was his plan?

There Were Still Too Many Men  
in Gideon's Army

Practical Observations

Describe the "water test" given to the remaining ten thousand.  
How many were left to do battle?  
Discuss the appeal of the majority.

Why can a church not be truly evaluated on the basis of numbers?  
Discuss the providence of God in the case of Gideon.

Lesson VIII—May 25, 1975

SAMUEL REJECTED

Lesson Text

1 Sam. 8:1-9, 19-22

1 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.

8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I Brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, in that they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

2 Now the name of his first-born was Joel; and the name of his second, Abijah: they were judges in Beersheba.

9 Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit thou shalt protest solemnly unto them, and shalt show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

3 And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted justice.

19 But the people refused to hearken unto the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us,

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah:

20 That we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.

5 And they said unto him, Behold thou art old, thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of Jehovah.

6 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto Jehovah.

22 And Jehovah said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

7 And Jehovah said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I have given thee a king in mine anger, and have taken him away in my wrath." (Hos. 13:11.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Sam. 8:10-18.

Daily Bible Readings

- May 19. M..... Samuel's Birth (1 Sam. 1:12-20)
- May 20. T..... Samuel's Dedication (1 Sam. 1:21-28)
- May 21. W..... Samuel's Vision (1 Sam. 3:1-10)
- May 22. T..... Appointment of Prophets (Ex. 3:1-12)
- May 23. F..... Prophets Speak for God (Deut. 18:15-22)
- May 24. S..... Conditions Under Samuel (1 Sam. 7:1-13)
- May 25. S..... Samuel Speaks to the People (1 Sam. 10:17-24)

TIME.—About B.C. 1049.

PLACE.—Ramah, a city of the hill country of Ephraim in Palestine.

PERSONS.—Samuel, his sons, the elders of Israel, and Jehovah.

## Introduction

If Moses may be designated the founder of the nation of Israel, then Samuel may be designated the saviour of it. Samuel occupied a high position with Jehovah, along with Moses, as is indicated by the fact that when Jeremiah was pleading for Israel, Jehovah said: "Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind would not be toward this people." (Jer. 15:1.) A psalmist made honorable mention of Samuel as being among the number of those who called upon Jehovah. (Psalm 99:6.) Samuel's name appears in the Hebrew writers' "Hall of the Faithful." (Heb. 11:32.)

Samuel was born in the period of the Judges. The first chapter of First Samuel sets forth the peculiar circumstances of his birth. Elkanah, a Levite of the family of Korah of Ramah of the hill country of Ephraim, had two wives—Hannah, and Peninnah. Hannah had no children; whereas, Peninnah had children, and she provoked Hannah sore.

On an occasion when Hannah went up with the family to the house of Jehovah at Shiloh to the annual feast, she prayed for a man-child, and she pledged that if her request should be granted that she would give him to Jehovah. At the turn of the year, Samuel was born. When he had been weaned, Hannah carried him to Shiloh and left him in the care of Eli, the high priest and judge of Israel.

The third chapter of First Samuel records that "the child Samuel ministered unto Jehovah before Eli, and the word of Jehovah was precious in those days." Josephus states that Samuel had just passed his twelfth birthday when Jehovah called him. Jehovah said to Samuel: "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of everyone that heareth it shall tingle. . . . I will perform against Eli . . . the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated with sacrifice nor offering for ever." Eli inquired of Samuel as to what Jehovah had said. "Hide it not from me," he said, and Samuel, though exceedingly fearful, "told him every whit, and hid nothing from him."

"Samuel grew," which means that he grew into manhood, "and Jeho-

vah was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground." In short, Jehovah continued to reveal himself to Samuel, and the result was that "all Israel from Dan to Beersheba came to know that Samuel was established to be a prophet in Israel." Jehovah appeared again to Samuel in Shiloh, and the result of those appearances was that "the word of Samuel came to all Israel."

The fourth chapter of First Samuel gives a history of the complete fall of Israel to the Philistines. God was angry with Israel, and he was especially angry with Eli, Israel's high priest. Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, "were base men." "They knew not Jehovah," and Eli allowed them to make themselves fat with the chiefest of all of the offerings of Israel. Eli remonstrated with those evil sons, but "he restrained them not," that is he allowed them to continue in office though they were exceedingly sinful. Throughout the entire nation there was a prevalence of licentious idolatry, an alarming dissolution of morals.

The outcome of the very first battle with the Philistines was very distressing. Israel was encamped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines were encamped at Apex. When the battle was joined, Israel was smitten. Then the Israelites "fetched the ark of the covenant from Shiloh," and Hophni and Phinehas, the priests, carried it out on the battlefield. The Israelites thought that the ark would, without question, give them the victory. The ark of the covenant had led the Israelites crossing the Jordan River.

When the battle was joined for the second time, the Israelites were again smitten. "They fled every man to his tent." A man of Benjamin out of the army came to Shiloh that same day "with his clothes rent and with earth upon his head." He came to announce to Eli,

1. That the Israelites had fled and turned their backs on the Philistines.

2. That there had been a great slaughter among the people.

3. That Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were dead, and

4. That the ark of God had been taken.

Eli's heart had trembled for the ark when it was first carried out on the battlefield. On hearing that it had been taken by the Philistines, Eli fell off his seat backward and broke his neck. Phinehas' wife, on hearing the news, went into labor, and as she was dying she named her newborn son "Ichabod," for "the glory had departed from Israel."

Shiloh fell to the Philistines. The sanctuary was destroyed, and the ark of the covenant was in the land of the Philistines. Twenty years passed before the Israelites had improved spiritually for God to give them a victory over the Philistines.

When all was dark, Samuel took the place of Eli as judge, as priest, and as prophet. Samuel's training and overall background had destined him to be a reformer. Early in his life he had been separated from the mass of men by his peculiar dress, by his Nazarite vow, and by his being a Levite. With the destruction of the sanctuary at Shiloh and the cessation of offerings, Samuel came to recognize more fully than ever before that a true and pure religion was far more important than the mere formality of worship. Years later he expressed the principle when he said to King Saul: "Behold, to obey is better than sac-

rifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

Samuel's resolve was to arouse a religious reformation in Israel so as to bring the nation again to a state of political independence. Only in this way could a place of worship like Shiloh be re-established. Samuel insisted upon individual repentance among the people. "Put away the foreign gods and the Ash-toreth from among you," he urged.

Samuel had returned to his home city, Ramah, after the fall of Shiloh, and he judged on a circuit, going from year to year to Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpah, and Ramah. During this period of time, he organized "schools of the prophets" for the training of young men in spiritual affairs to assist him in his spiritual reformation. He established schools at Ramah, at Bethel, at Gilgal and at Gibeah. The young prophets preached from town to town, in the country and in the city, in all public places, and especially at the city gate. At the close of the long and bitter twenty-year servitude, Israel had improved spiritually to the point that God gave them a victory over the Philistines at Mizpah. "The Philistines were subdued, and they came no more within the border of Israel: and the hand of Jehovah was against the Philistines all of the days of Samuel."

### The Golden Text

*"I have given them a king in my anger, and I have taken him away in my wrath."* Some outstanding Bible commentators reason that the period of the Judges, when every man did that which right in his own eyes, was provided by Jehovah so as to impress the Israelites with the fact of their need for a national ruler, and further, to condition them to the point where they would willingly give allegiance to and support of—through taxation—such a ruler. Nothing seems further from the truth. God was Israel's king during the period of the Judges. (1 Sam. 8:7.)

When the Israelites demanded a king, Jehovah instructed Samuel to protest solemnly unto the people, and show them the manner of the king that would rule over them. This Samuel did, but the people refused to hearken unto the voice

of Samuel. They said: "Nay; but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations."

Thus Jehovah gave them a king—and herein lies the fact or principle of the free moral agency of man. When the king had been anointed, Jehovah demonstrated his anger at the people for their having asked for a king by sending, during the wheat harvest, a terrifying thunderstorm, and the people greatly feared Jehovah and Samuel. Rain in Palestine during the wheat harvest—May 15 to June 15—was as unusual as a heavy snow would be in Alabama in the month of August.

The text from Hosea denotes repeated action. Jehovah not only gave Saul as king in his anger and took him away in his wrath, but also this was the case with other kings, and especially the kings of the

Northern Kingdom. Jeroboam I changed the place of worship, the object of worship, the time of worship, and the access of worship, and not one king who succeeded to the

throne turned from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who "made Israel to sin." Those kings were one by one taken away in Jehovah's wrath.

### The Text Explained

#### Samuel Makes His Sons Judges over Israel

(1 Sam. 8:1-3)

*And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his first-born was Joel; and the name of his second, Abijah: they were judges in Beer-sheba. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted justice.*

There was no criticism to be laid against Samuel for his having appointed his sons, Joel and Abijah, as judges under him for the territory in Beersheba. Samuel's sons were, no doubt, the best qualified men for the positions, judged from a human point of view. As Samuel's sons, those two men naturally acquired the kind of training and association that would peculiarly prepare them to be judges. With the fall of the Philistines, the territory of Israel was extended to the extreme southern frontier of Judah, and with Samuel's increasing age and cumulating responsibilities, he was wise in appointing judges to serve under him in the extreme areas of the nation. Verse one implies that there had been a long period of peace following the defeat of the Philistines.

Like Eli's sons, except not to the pronounced degree, Samuel's sons had proven themselves unworthy of the positions which they occupied. In order to receive personal gain, they accepted bribes and thereby perverted justice. The sin of bribery is one of the most common and glaring sins of men in high places.

#### The People Ask for a King

(1 Sam. 8: 4-6)

*Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah; and they said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said.*

*Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto Jehovah.*

The people of Israel wanted a king so as to be like the nations about them, and they needed some valid excuses for removing Samuel and putting a king of their choosing in his place. The elders of Israel, therefore, gathered themselves unto Samuel at Ramah and demanded that he make them a king. They charged: "Thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways." Though Samuel had served Israel all his days and had been the saviour of the nations—judge, priest, and prophet—the elders, with a spirit totally lacking in gratitude for his work sake, proposed to eliminate him because of his advanced age. He was then about sixty years of age, but according to them he was too old to serve the nation further. Actually, he continued to live and serve Jehovah for some thirty to forty years longer.

The case of Samuel's evil sons was unfortunate, and if the elders had in all sincerity sought to remove Samuel for the sole reason of his sinful sons, there might have been some justification for their action. This especially would have been true if Samuel had persisted in maintaining them in their appointed positions, which thing Samuel did not do. The real motivating reason for the elders seeking to remove Samuel lay in the fact that they wanted a king so as to be like the nations about them.

#### Jehovah Comforts Samuel

(1 Sam. 8:7-9)

*And Jehovah said unto Samuel. Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, in that they have forsaken me, and serve other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now t h e r e f o r e*

*hearken unto their voice: howbeit thou shalt protest solemnly unto them, and shalt show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.*

Samuel was hurt — s h o c k e d ! sorely grieved! There is little or no doubt but that he spent a restless, sleepless night. All of this is indicated by the statement, "and Samuel prayed unto Jehovah." and by Jehovah's comforting reply: "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them."

Samuel was sorely grieved for two reasons: (1) he knew that the demand of the elders was strictly in violation of the will of Jehovah; and (2) he knew that the demand of the elders was an intimidation, strictly wanting in appreciation, of his life's work in behalf of Israel.

### The People Refused to Hearken unto Samuel

(1 Sam. 8:19, 20)

*But the people refused to hearken unto the voice of Samuel: and they said. Nay; but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king*

*may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.*

Jehovah instructed Samuel to "protest solemnly" unto the people and show them the manner of the king that would rule over them. Samuel proceeded to show the people how that a king would take their sons and daughters for servants of one kind and another—horsemen, captains, plowhands, artisans, perfumers, cooks, and bakers. He also pointed out to them how that the king would take a tenth of their seed, of their vineyards, and of their flocks in order to maintain those who would serve under him; but the people were not to be moved from their resolution. They refused to hearken unto Samuel. "Nay;" they said, "we will have a king over us." They wanted, in fact demanded, a king so that they could be like the nations about them. They wanted a king to go and come before them with all the pomp and ceremony and formality and attendant protocol which belongs to royalty—a king that would fight their battles, as if God had not previously fought their battles for them.

### Practical Observations

1. When Christian parents succeed in passing on to their children their high sense of integrity and morality and humility—a thing that Eli and Samuel failed to do—they have much for which to be thankful. All other matters tend to be minor in the affairs of this life.

2. True, Samuel was of advanced age, but with some thirty-eight years yet to live, he was hardly the "old man" which the elders of Israel depicted him to be. If because of his age he was less able to ride the circuit, he was, because of his

years, the more able to guide the spiritual affairs in Israel.

3. When the people of a nation, or of a state, or of a family, or of a church fail to accord full and due appreciation and respect for their elders—and particularly those like Samuel who contributed so much—they walk the precipice of calamity.

4. Christians who forget the sacrificing of worthy men of faith are of a hard heart and of an ungrateful soul. Without doubt, they, too, shall receive their just reward.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

In what sense may Samuel be designated the saviour of Israel?  
According to Hannah's vow, how was Samuel's life to be spent?  
What complaint was made against Eli, the high priest?  
What significance did the ark of the covenant have for the Israelites?

Relate the circumstances of Eli's death.  
What was Samuel's attitude toward idolatry?  
Discuss the work of the "schools of the prophets."  
Discuss the need for Christian schools in our day.

#### The Golden Text

Was Jehovah favorable to the replacing of the judges with a king?  
What argument did the Israelites make for demanding a king?

Give further proof that Jehovah was not pleased with the kingship.

Samuel Makes His Sons Judges over Israel

What three charges were brought against Samuel's sons?  
 Could such charges be made in governmental circles today?  
 Give reasons for Samuel's appointment of his sons.

The People Ask for a King

What two specific charges did the elders of Israel bring against Samuel?  
 Do you think they were justified in their charges?  
 What was their real reason for wanting a king?

Jehovah Comforts Samuel

Israel's rejection of Samuel was really a rejection of whom?  
 Give two reasons why Samuel was sorely grieved.

The People Refused to Harken unto Samuel

What did Samuel say that a king would do to or for the people?  
 How did the people react to his predictions?

Practical Observations

What should Christian parents endeavor to do that Eli and Samuel failed to do?  
 Discuss retirement for elderly Christians.  
 What lessons may be learned from Israel's rejection of Samuel?

Lesson IX—June 1, 1975

SAUL CHOSEN KING

Lesson Text

1 Sam. 10:17-26

17 And Samuel called the people together unto Jehovah to Mizpah;

18 And he said unto the children of Israel, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed you:

19 But ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saveth you out of all your calamities and your distresses; and ye have said unto him, *Nay*, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before Jehovah by your tribes, and by your thousands.

20 So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken.

21 And he brought the tribe of Benjamin near by their families; and the family of the Matrites was taken; and Saul the son of the Kish was taken: but when they sought him, he could not be found.

22 Therefore they asked of Jehovah further, Is there yet a man to come hither? And Jehovah answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the baggage.

23 And they ran and fetched him thence, and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom Jehovah hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, *Long* live the king.

25 Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before Jehovah. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

26 And Saul also went to his house to Gibeah; and there went with him the host, whose hearts God had touched.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Fear God. Honor the hing.” (1 Pet. 2:17.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Sam. 9:15-21.

Daily Bible Readings

May 26. M.....	The People Demand A King (1 Sam. 8:1-10)
May 27. T.....	Samuel Warns the People (1 Sam. 8:10-17)
May 28. W.....	People Want to Be Like Others (1 Sam. 8:19-22)
May 29. T.....	Saul Chosen (1 Sam. 10:17-27)
May 30. F.....	Saul's Confirmation (1 Sam. 11:1-11)
May 31. S.....	Jehovah's Choice (Deut. 17:14-20)
June 1. S.....	God's Displeasure (Hos. 13:1-11)

TIME.—About B.C. 1049.

PLACE.—Mizpah, a city of Benjamin in Palestine. Here the whole nation assembled to avenge the Levite, and before attacking the Philistines, and to elect Saul as King.

PERSONS.—Samuel; the people; and Saul, the son of Kish.

### Introduction

Samuel solemnly protested the demand of the elders of Israel for a king to rule over them, but to no avail. The elders persisted in their demand for a king, and Jehovah said to Samuel, "Hearken unto the voice of the people." Samuel, acquiescing to the instruction from Jehovah, said to the elders, "Go ye every man unto his city." The thought is that he informed the elders that a king would be appointed to rule over them, and then he dismissed them. In reality the desire of the Israelites for a king was not new. In the time of Gideon—about one hundred twenty-five years before—men of Israel said: "Rule over us, both thou and thy son and thy son's son."

The people had demanded a king, and Jehovah granted their demand. The principle involved is the free moral agency of man. God does not coerce men to serve him; rather, every man is left to choose for himself for or against Jehovah. In the parable of the prodigal son, as set forth by Jesus the Christ, the younger son demanded the inheritance that fell to him, and the father divided to the two sons his living. The young prodigal then took his journey into a far country where he wasted his substance in riotous living. (Luke 15.) The parable reflects the continuing principle of the free moral agency of man.

The word that Israel would have a king spread from countryside to countryside and from city to city. Samuel, having been informed by Jehovah that Israel could have a king, accepted the decision and waited for Jehovah to direct him, in Jehovah's own good time, in the appointment of the king.

In the meantime a man by the name of Saul and his servant had come to the land of Zuph, of which Ramah was a city, in search of his father's asses. This Saul was tall and handsome. He stood head and shoulders taller than other men.

He was at least thirty years of age (his age is a matter of debate among the scholars), a family man and father of three sons of whom Jonathan, then at least a teenager, was the oldest. His father was Kish. In true patriarchal style Saul had remained under the paternal authority of his father. During the patriarchal period a son attained to a position of authority only after his father was dead.

In despair of finding the asses, Saul proposed to his servant that they return home lest his father be more concerned about them than he was about the asses. The servant suggested that they call on the Seer, thinking thereby that he could divine some means of locating the asses. Saul did not know the Seer.

"What shall we bring the man?" Saul asked, and the servant replied: "I have the fourth part of a shekel of silver." Now, Samuel had been informed the day before that the new king would come to him. A sacrifice had been set for the next day, at which time Samuel was scheduled to bless it. On being informed that the new king would come to him, Samuel prepared to honor him in a reserved sort of way.

Saul and his servant approached the city of Ramah, and on meeting young maidens, they inquired: "Is the seer here?" "He is," they replied, and they stated that Saul and his servant should make haste for "he is come today into the city; for the people have a sacrifice to-day in the high place." As Saul and his servant went up to the city gate, Samuel came out, and as the men met face to face, Jehovah revealed to Samuel that Saul was the man to be made king. When Saul inquired of Samuel as to the location of the seer's house, Samuel answered: "I am the seer." Then Samuel said to Saul, "Go up before me unto the high place, for ye shall eat with me to-day: and in the morning I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is

in thy heart. And as for thine asses . . . they are found." Then Samuel asked: "And for whom is all that is desirable in Israel? Is it not for thee, and for all thy father's house?" The full conversation likely is not here recorded, but one thing is certain, namely, Samuel's words were from the first very strange and unusual.

The word was out that Israel was to have a king, and Saul must have soon associated the guarded intimations of Samuel with the fact that a king was to be appointed. Saul was certainly apprehensive and embarrassed, for he said: "Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore then speakest thou to me after this manner?"

Samuel walked with Saul and his servant up to the high place where the sacrifice was to be made, and he ushered them into the guest chamber, made them sit in the chief places, and summoned the cook to set before Saul the portion of the thigh—the portion which had been prepared by the prior instruction of Samuel. After the sacrificial meal, the three men came down from the high place and Samuel communed with Saul on the housetop at his home—the flattop houses of that day were used as places of private conversations and for sleep. Saul and his servant slept on the housetop that night.

At about the spring of day, Samuel called to Saul on the housetop. "Up, that I may send thee away," he said. As Samuel walked with Saul and his servant to the end of the city, or gate of the city, Samuel said to Saul: "Bid the servant to pass on before us."

Then Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it upon Saul's head and kissed him. The record does not give the conversation which ensued, but a very natural response would have been for Saul to ask, "What meaneth this?" Anyway, Samuel said: "Is it not that Jehovah hath

anointed thee to be prince over his inheritance?" Samuel then proceeded to give Saul assurance that Jehovah had selected him to be prince over Israel. He foretold four things that would come to pass as Saul made his way back home. The four events would be for signs or confirmations so that Saul might know of a certainty that Jehovah had selected him to be the prince over Israel.

1. *Sign 1.* "Thou shalt find two men by Rachel's sepulchre," Samuel related, "and they will say unto thee. The asses which thou wentest to seek are found."

2. *Sign 2.* "When thou shalt come to the oak of Tabor," Samuel continued, "there shall meet thee there three men going up to God to Bethel," that is going up to sacrifice, one would be carrying three kids, another three loaves of bread, and another a bottle of wine. "They will salute thee, and give thee two loaves of bread," Samuel added.

3. *Sign 3.* "Thou shalt come to the hill of God," or Gibeah of Benjamin—"thou shalt meet a band of prophets coming down from the high places . . . and they will be prophesying," Samuel explained.

4. *Sign 4.* "And the Spirit of Jehovah will come mightily upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man." Saul would be inspired and changed from his former narrow modes of living, interests, and aspirations to a broader and higher course of life.

Samuel then said: "Let it be. when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do as occasion shall serve thee," or as the circumstances would indicate, "for God is with thee." Saul saw all of these signs as he returned home, but he quite prudently refrained from mentioning. even to his uncle, the words which Samuel spoke concerning Jehovah's selection of him to be the prince, or king, over Israel. Saul's silence concerning the selection stemmed from a spirit of humility and perhaps want of ambition.

### The Golden Text

*"Fear God. Honor the king."*

First Peter was written in about A.D. 65. Nero reigned as Emperor of Rome from A.D. 54-68. In A.D.

64, a large section of the city of Rome burned. Emperor Nero was charged with having caused the conflagration. To clear himself,



Nero declared that the Christians had set off the fire, and he caused a terrible region of persecution to be waged against them. Many Christians were tortured, slain, and burned at the stake. The fact that Peter wrote, "Honor the king" during the period of Nero's persecution is significant. The Christian is under obligation to obey and respect the ordinances of men and the powers that be. (Rom. 13: 1-8; 1 Pet. 2:13, 14.)

The Christian is also under divine obligation to "fear God." To hono-

the king is to accord him, or any person in authority, due respect and honor, but to fear God is to hold him in reverence and awe. If the king's ordinances are found to be in conflict with God's laws, the Christian must obey God. (Acts 5:29.) When Peter and John were charged not to teach in the name of Jesus, they replied: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard." (Acts 4: 18-19.)

### The Text Explained

#### Samuel Assembled the People to Mizpah

(1 Sam. 10:17-19)

*And Samuel called the people together unto Jehovah to Mizpah; and he said unto the children of Israel. Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed you: but ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saveth you out of all your calamities and your distresses; and ye have said unto him. Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before Jehovah by your tribes, and by your thousands.*

Mizpah was the place where Samuel had previously assembled the people for their deliverance from the bitter twenty-year servitude of the Philistines. There at Mizpah the people confessed their sins of idolatry and renewed their allegiance to Jehovah, and there Jehovah discomfited and broke the power of the Philistines by a terrifying thunder storm. The Philistines were sorely defeated, and "they came no more within the border of Israel," during the time that Samuel was judge. Samuel's summons of the people to Mizpah again was not, therefore, without its special signification.

Samuel spoke to the people in the name and authority of Jehovah. He rehearsed how that Jehovah had brought up the Israelites out of Egypt and had saved them from the hands of all the kings that had oppressed them. Then he said, "But ye have this day rejected your

God," by declaring, "Nay, but set a king over us."

#### The King Was Chosen by Lot

(1 Sam. 10:20, 21)

*So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken. And he brought the tribe of Benjamin near by their families; and the family of the Matrites was taken; and Saul the son of Kish was taken: but when they sought him, he could not be found.*

The people had demanded a king, thereby rejecting the rule of Jehovah. They were to have that which would later be to their grievous oppression and chagrin. The king was to be formally chosen by casting lots.

The first lot was to determine the tribe, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken. The next lot was to determine the family of the tribe of Benjamin, and the family of Matrites was taken. The third lot was to determine which son of Kish of the family of Matrites, and Saul was taken. When the people sought for the man who had been taken, he could not be found. Saul knew from the beginning of the casting of lots that the final lot would fall on him, and through humility, modesty, and embarrassment he hid himself from the people.

#### Saul Was Hid Among the Baggage

(1 Sam. 10:22, 23)

*"Therefore, they asked of Jehovah further, Is there yet a man to come hither? And Jehovah answered. Behold, he hath hid himself among the baggage. And they ran and fetched him thence; and when he*

*stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.*

The people cried to Jehovah, "Is there yet a man to come hither?" Then Jehovah answered: "Behold, he hath hid himself among the baggage." The baggage were the travelling effects of the people who had gathered from distances throughout Israel. The people's wagons and carts were probably arranged somewhat in a circle for protection, and their effects were probably stacked within the circle.

On receiving the information the people "ran and fetched" Saul. When he stood among them, "he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward." There he stood, a handsome, perfect physical specimen of a man. He had no need for a platform. He was majestic in countenance, graceful in action, and stately in demeanor. Samuel addressed the people: "See ye him whom Jehovah hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people," he said. Saul was just what the people had requested. "All the people shouted, and said. Long live the king."

### Samuel Sent the People Away

(1 Sam. 10:25, 2(5))

*Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before Jehovah. And Samuel sent all the people away every man to his house. And Saul also went to his house to Gibeah; and there went with him the host, whose hearts God had touched.*

"Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom," that is, apparently he set forth certain limits and bounds to the king's prerogatives. Even though Israel then had a king,

there was to be a certain balance between the legislative, executive, and judicial powers which ace somewhat inherent in every form of government. In Israel in that period of time there was the office of the high priest with the Urim-Thummin and the office of the prophet, Samuel, who spoke for Jehovah; and the office of the king, Saul, who commanded the people. Having explained to the people the manner of the kingdom, Samuel wrote it in a book. He drew up a legal contract or document stating the terms thereof, and he laid it up before Jehovah.

Samuel then sent all the people away, every man to his own house. The convention of the tribes of Israel had accomplished its purpose. A king had been appointed with attendant solemnity. There was no further business, and so Samuel declared the convention adjourned.

Saul went to his house in Gibeah, and there accompanied him "the host whose hearts God had touched." Those who accompanied Saul must have been his close friends, relatives, and home town acquaintances, not a military band of soldiers.

There were many qualities about Saul that deserve to be commended, namely:

1. He did not suddenly become ashamed of his simple relatives and friends, and thereby hold himself aloof from them.

2. He returned to his home city Gibeah where there was no palace, no throne, and no court. He would raise his own city to a position of honor—a royal city.

3. He returned to his agricultural pursuits and waited upon Jehovah's word and providence to direct him in the first step of his new office.

### Practical Observations

1. God gave Israel a king, contrary to his will and his plan of government. He did not coerce the people to continue under his rule, but instead, he respected the principle of the free moral agency of man. When writing of Satan, his power, his signs, and lying wonders; the apostle Paul said: "And with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth,

that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie; and that they all might be judged who believed not the truth; but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. 2: 10-12.) Men today must respect God's truth, else the outcome will be fatal for them.

2. The humility and want of unholy ambition, characteristic of

Saul at the time of his appointment as king over Israel, is striking and most commendable. Saul, however, soon "waxed fat and forgot God." Men in positions of leadership, including positions in the church of the Lord, must be careful to access themselves regularly. The desire for power is like a fast growing malignant tumor. The man who is possessed thereby tends to lose all rational faculties, and his unholy end is certain.

3. The choice of Saul from the little tribe of Benjamin is a case of the divine economy of God's providence. If the choice for a king had been made from either of the two outstanding tribes—Ephraim or Judah—the jealousy and ire of the other would have been stirred. Ambitious Ephraim had furnished its own women to bring the tribe of Benjamin back to life, and Benjamin lived as the next-door neighbor to Judah. (Judges 19-21.)

Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson? Repeat the golden text. Give time, place, and persons.

Introduction

- What was Samuel's first reaction to the demand of the elders for a king? Why did he finally yield to their desires? Was this the first time that the people of Israel had desired a king? Did their demand please God? Why did God permit them to have a king? How did Saul first come in contact with the prophet Samuel? What did Samuel tell Saul on this occasion? What was the response of Saul to the statements of Samuel? About how old was Saul when he was anointed by Samuel? What four things did Samuel tell Saul that would come to pass as he made his way back home? What was the purpose of these signs? Did Saul tell his family all about the unusual experiences?

The Golden Text

- Who was reigning as king when Peter wrote the words of the golden text? What is the meaning of the commands given in the golden text? What should a Christian do when civil ordinances are contrary to God's law?

Samuel Assembled the People to Mizpah

- On what previous occasion had Samuel assembled the people at Mizpah? How did God break the power of the Philistines on the previous occasion? What did Samuel tell the people about their desire for a king?

The King Was Chosen by Lot

- How was the king formally chosen? Did Saul know that the lot would fall on him?

Saul Was Hid Among the Baggage

- Who told the people that Saul had hid himself among the baggage? Why, do you suppose, did Saul hide himself from the people? What outstanding physical features did Saul have? How did the people respond to the choice that God had made for them?

Samuel Sent the People Away

- What did Samuel tell the people before he dismissed them? Where did Saul go after the assembly was adjourned?

Practical Observations

- What instruction should we learn from this lesson about the free moral agency of man? What commendable characteristics did Saul have at the time that he was appointed as king over Israel? Why, do you suppose, did God choose a king from the small tribe of Benjamin?

Lesson X—June 8, 1975

SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

Lesson Text

1 Sam 12:12-25

13 Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have asked for: and, behold, Jehovah hath set a king over you.

14 If ye will fear Jehovah, and serve him, and hearken unto his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of Jehovah, and both ye and also the king that reigneth over

you be followers of Jehovah your God, well:

15 But if ye will not hearken unto the voice of Jehovah, but rebel against the commandment of Jehovah, then will the hand of Jehovah be against you, as it was against your fathers.

16 Now therefore stand still and

see this great thing, which Jehovah will do before your eyes.

17 Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call unto Jehovah, that he may send thunder and rain; and ye shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of Jehovah, in asking you a king.

18 So Samuel called unto Jehovah; and Jehovah sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared Jehovah and Samuel.

19 And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto Jehovah thy God, that we die not; for we have added unto all our sins *this* evil, to ask us a king.

20 And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have indeed done all this evil; yet turn not aside from fol-

lowing Jehovah, but serve Jehovah with all your heart:

21 And turn ye not aside; for *then would ye go* after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain.

22 For Jehovah will not forsake his people for his great name's sake because it hath pleased Jehovah to make you a people unto himself.

23 Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Jehovah in ceasing to pray for you: but I will instruct you in the good and the right way.

24 Only fear Jehovah, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you.

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“We have added unto all our sins *this* evil, to ask us a king.” (1 Sam. 12:19.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Sam. 12:1-5.

### Daily Bible Readings

June 2.	M.....	Samuel's Record (1 Sam. 12:1-5)
June 3.	T.....	Samuel's Admonitions (1 Sam. 12:6-18)
June 4.	W.....	The Peoples' Response (1 Sam. 12:19-25)
June 5.	T.....	God's Goodness and Severity (Rom. 11:1-22)
June 6.	F.....	Paul's Farewell At Miletus (Acts 20:22-35)
June 7.	S.....	Paul's Last Days (2 Tim. 4:1-22)
June 8.	S.....	A Life of Integrity (Psalm 26: 1-8)

TIME.—About B.C. 1049.

PLACE.—Gilgal, a city of Ephraim in Palestine where the Tabernacle was first pitched.

PERSONS.—Samuel, Saul, and the people.

### Introduction

An overview of the life of Samuel would not be complete without taking note of the fact that he was the father and founder of the Schools of the Prophets.

When Samuel had taken a vial of oil and suddenly poured it upon Saul's head, he said: "Jehovah hath anointed thee to be the prince over his inheritance." As a means of assurance to Saul that Jehovah had selected him, Samuel gave Saul four signs. The third sign was stated as follows: "After that thou shalt come to the hill of God ... it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a band of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a timbrel, and a pipe, and harp, before them; and

they will be prophesying." Now, in just this incidental way the Schools of the Prophets were and are first introduced in the Scriptures. Samuel had organized the Schools for the training of young men in spiritual matters so that they could assist him in his great work for a spiritual awakening and reformation in Israel.

The Old Testament Scriptures nowhere give any specific plan, and/or details for the organization and administration of such Schools. Unlike the plan for and support of the Levitical priesthood, no plan for and support of the Schools of the Prophets had been set forth by Moses in the giving of the law. The Old Testament Scriptures nowhere set forth—except by incidental ref-

erence—anything akin to an aim, or a philosophy, or a constitution for such schools. There are no specifics in the Scriptures as to what the admission policy was, or as to whether or not the students paid tuition, or of what the course of study consisted.

Only through incidental references may one gain an insight into the Schools. In order to observe the incidental reference, the student must move from Samuel to Elijah, to Elisha, and to all the prophets, for that matter. While the student must depend upon incidental references for an understanding of, and an appreciation for, the Schools of the Prophets, the fact remains that those incidental references, when put together, constitute a great body of material. An organization of those incidental references points up the following:

1. Those who attended the Schools of the Prophets were known as "the sons of the prophets." (1 Kings 20:35; 2 Kings 2:3, 15: 4:28; 5:22; 6:1.)

2. Those who attended the Schools of the Prophets were, for the most part at least, young men. (2 Kings 5:22; 6:17; 9:1-4.)

3. Those who attended the Schools of the Prophets lived in communities and ate in common or dining hall style. (2 Kings 4:38-41.)

4. The sons of the prophets were, at least generally speaking, married men. (2 Kings 4:1.)

5. The chief or headmaster of the Schools of the Prophets was called "father," and/or "master." (1 Sam. 10:12; 2 Kings 2:3, a, 12; 4:43; 6:5, 15.)

6. The chiefs or headmasters of the Schools of the Prophets were older and well-known prophets of Israel. (2 Kings 4:38-44; 6:3; 9:1-9.)

7. The sons of the prophets rendered due respect and obedience to their master—they were his ser-

vants or attendants. (2 Kings 4:12; 5:20; 6:3, 15; 19:3.)

8. The "father" or "master" of the Schools of the Prophets showed fatherly care for the sons of the prophets and also for their wives and children. (2 Kings 4:1-7.)

9. The sons of the prophets, on one occasion at least, built a school chapel or house by their own initiative and labor. (2 Kings 6:1-7.)

10. Admission to the Schools of the Prophets seems to have been freely granted on the basis of a young man's desire and spiritual fitness for the office. (2 Kings 6:1-7.)

11. The prophets lived by their own labors in agricultural pursuits and by free will offerings. (1 Kings 19:19; Amos 7:14-15; 1 Sam. 9:7-9; 2 Kings 5:15, 20, 22, 26.)

12. The course of study in the Schools of the Prophets included the study of the law of Moses. (1 Sam. 10:5.)

13. There were Schools of the Prophets at Ramah, at Bethel, at Gilgal, at Gibeah, and at Jericho.

14. The Schools of the Prophets at Gilgal and Jericho had an enrollment each of a minimum of one hundred prophets. (2 Kings 4:38-41; 1:5-7, 16.)

15. The prophets preached from town to town, in the country and in the city—in all the public places and especially at the city gate.

The Schools of the Prophets as founded by Samuel came to be the greatest single spiritual force within the nation of Israel. The prophets were Jehovah's voice—his forthright spokesmen among men. While the prophets appeared from all the social ranks and positions of Hebrew life, they all needed special preparation for the office, and the Schools of the Prophets was one major means of providing for their needs. Samuel served Israel as priest, judge, and prophet, but his greatest and longest service to Israel was as a prophet and as a headmaster of young prophets.

### The Golden Text

*"And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto Jehovah thy God, that we die not; for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king."* The golden text is the sequel of Sam-

uel's address to the elders and people at the "renewing of the kingdom under Saul at Gilgal." Saul had led the Israelites to a great victory over the Ammonites. He had proven himself to be a courageous

and daring prince, and Samuel assembled the people to Gilgal for the second anointing of Saul as king. Saul had been previously chosen by lot and appointed king at Mizpah, but in his great victory over the Ammonites he clearly demonstrated his ability and courage to genuinely serve as Israel's king.

At the great gathering of the people to "renew the kingdom" under Saul as king, Samuel took opportunity to vindicate himself against the innuendoes and charges which had been made against him by the elders when they demanded that he step aside as their judge and appoint a king in his place. Samuel said: "Here I am: witness against me before Jehovah, and before his anointed," the king. The people answered: "Thou has not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither has thou taken aught of any man's

hand." Then Samuel said: "Jehovah is witness against you, and his anointed [king Saul] is witness this day, that ye have not found aught in my hand." The people responded by saying, "He is witness."

Samuel moved on in his address to the people to charge them with "great wickedness" in having asked for a king. He demonstrated the fact of his charge by calling forth of Jehovah a terrifying thunder storm appearing instantaneously out of a clear sky at a season, the time of the wheat harvest, when rain was never known to fall. The people, on witnessing the terrifying storm, greatly feared Jehovah and Samuel. No wonder then, the people cried: "Pray for thy servants unto Jehovah thy God, that we die not; for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask for a king."

### The Text Explained

#### A Foreword to the Text

The title of this lesson, "Samuel's Farewell Address," must be placed in its proper perspective. This was Samuel's last public address to the people of Israel, but it was not by any means his last work in Israel. Samuel was then about sixty years of age. He lived to be about one hundred years of age, and during all of that forty-year period he was active as a prophet, and even a judge in a certain sense, (1 Sam. 7:15), during the remaining years of his life.

Samuel had served Israel in three capacities—as priest, as judge, and as prophet. He was of the tribe of Levi, but he was not of the family of Aaron. His service as a priest in the offering and the blessing of sacrifices grew out of an emergency that arose upon the rejection of Eli's house who was of the descendants of Aaron. (1 Sam. 4:12-32; 22:11-23.) While Samuel continued to offer and bless the sacrifices when the occasion demanded, he never, before Saul's anointment or afterwards, appeared in any association with the priestly tribe. His offering of sacrifices was on the basis of his being a prophet or spokesman for Jehovah.

Samuel did resign or retire from his position as judge, and that he

did in favor of King Saul. In vindication of himself at the time of his retirement as judge, he placed himself before Jehovah, and before his anointed. King Saul, and he called upon the elders and the people who had brought charge." to present their evidence. "Witr.T'ss against me," he said. Further, he said: "My sons are with you," and this statement meant that his sons were no longer judges in Israel in any capacity. Samuel's reference to his sons may have meant that he had with deliberateness removed them as judges on learning of their corruptions in office, or his reference may have been a tacit appeal for mercy in their behalf as he placed them for trial before the king.

Anyway, the student should be impressed with the fact that Samuel only retired as judge. He did not retire as prophet. In fact he said to the people: "Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Jehovah in ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and right way." (1 Sam. 12:23.) Some thirty or more years later, Samuel stood "as head" over a School of the Prophets located at Ramah. (1 Sam. 19:20.) Samuel, therefore, continued his work as a prophet, and he continued to train

prophets in the Schools of the Prophets until the time of his death.

Samuel Calls upon the People  
to Fear Jehovah  
(1 Sam. 12:13-15)

*Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen. and whom ye have asked for: and, behold, Jehovah hath set a king over you. If ye will fear Jehovah, and serve him, and hearken unto his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of Jehovah, and both ye and also the king that reigneth over you be followers of Jehovah your God, well: but if ye will not hearken unto the voice of Jehovah, but rebel against the commandment of Jehovah, then will the hand of Jehovah be against you, as it teas against your fathers.*

At the point of this reading Samuel was moving toward the close of his last public address, and not the end of his life's work for the people of Israel. The kingdom had been renewed, and Samuel emphasized that the king whom they had demanded was now set over them as king. Here, therefore, Samuel was transferring the government of the Israelites from a theocracy to a monarchy. Jehovah had, in his anger, set a king over the people, but the people could have God's approbation providing that they and the king would hearken unto Jehovah's voice and refrain from rebelling at his commandments. If the people and the king should fail to fear Jehovah and hearken to his commandments, then the hand of Jehovah would be heavy upon them, or upon him as the case might be.

Samuel Demonstrates God's Anger  
upon the People by means of a  
Miracle

(1 Sam. 12:10-18)

*Now therefore stand still and see this great thing, which Jehovah will do before your eyes. Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call unto Jehovah, that he may send thunder and rain; and ye shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of Jehovah, in asking you a king. So Samuel called unto Jehovah; and Jehovah sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people*

*greatly feared Jehovah and Samuel.*

Though the Israelites had met with success and prosperity through means of their new king, they had done so through their wickedness, and they needed not, therefore, to think favorably of their sins. Samuel showed them the extent of the wickedness of their sins by means of a miracle. "Stand still and see this great thing which Jehovah will do before your eyes," he said. Then came the miracle—a terrifying thunder storm struck from a clear sky in the very time of the wheat harvest—May 15 to June 15. The pages of secular history since do not record a rain in that country during the wheat harvest.

The people were terror stricken. They greatly feared Samuel as well as Jehovah, and rightly so. A prophet who had such influence and communication with God was a man to be feared by any wicked and sinful people.

The People Ask Samuel to Pray  
For Them  
(1 Sam. 12:11)-22)

*And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto Jehovah thy God, that we die not; for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king. And Samuel said unto the people. Fear not: ye have indeed done all this evil; yet. turn not aside from following Jehovah, but serve Jehovah with all your heart: and turn ye not aside; for then would ye go after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain. For Jehovah will not forsake his people for his great name's sake, because it hath pleased Jehovah to make you a people unto himself.*

The terrified people said to Samuel, "Pray for thy servants unto Jehovah . . . that we die not." In a penitent spirit they confessed their sins. They said: "We have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king." Samuel's thought was not that the terror should frighten the people away from him, 'out rather to them. He, therefore, spoke comforting words to them. "Fear not," he said, but "turn not aside from following Jehovah." This was the lesson that was to be written upon their hearts. Though they had done

wickedly, they could and would be secure if they faithfully followed Jehovah, but if they went after "vain things," idols, they should be reminded that those idols could not deliver them.

**Samuel Sets Forth in Brief the Work of His Remaining: Years**  
(1 Sam. 12:23)

*Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Jehovah in ceasing to pray for you: but I will instruct you in the good and the right way.*

Samuel had served the cause of Israel since he was a child—as a priest, as a judge, and as a prophet. He would serve no longer as a judge, but he would not desist from his labors. He would sacrifice and bless the sacrifice as circumstances demanded, but foremost he would continue as a prophet—a spokesman for Jehovah. As a prophet, he would continue to pray for the people, and he would not fail, as a true and faithful prophet, to instruct them in the good and right way. He would be a voice for righteousness in Israel. A student should not be surprised, therefore, to find later his rebuking Saul for his sins, or offering a sacrifice, or anointing David as king in Saul's place, or occupying some thirty years later the position

of headmaster of a School of the Prophets. (1 Sam. 13:8-15; 15:7-23; 16:5, 13; 19:20.)

**Samuel Concludes with a Final Appeal and Warning:**  
(1 Sam. 12:24, 25)

*Only fear Jehovah, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.*

Samuel concluded his address with a very earnest exhortation for the people to fear Jehovah and to serve him with all of their hearts. Jehovah had done great things for the people of Israel, and he would continue to do great things for them if only they would serve him in sincerity and truth. He warned them, however, that if they continued to do wickedly, as they had done in the past, that Jehovah would consume them—both them and their king. Thus the people were properly and forcibly warned. They were left to choose between good and evil—"good" would bring life, but "evil" would bring death. They chose death. How sad! now much different is the great mass of humanity today? How much different are the people of the church today?

**Practical Observations**

1. In vindication of himself and his reputation before his accusers, Samuel placed himself before Jehovah and before King Saul. Then he called upon the people and the elders "to witness against him." He asked:

- (1) Whose ass have I taken?
- (2) Whom have I defrauded?
- (3) Whom have I oppressed?
- (4) Of whose hand have I taken a ransom to blind my eyes therewith?

Samuel was guilty of not one of those sins. Let every Christian put these questions to himself! How many have allowed their eyes to be blinded to the sins of some prominent "churchman"?

2. As Samuel proceeded to vindi-

cate himself before his accusers, he sought not honor—only justice. Some would-be Christians hold strange and strained views on the matter of honor and justice. Many a preacher has been unjustly sacrificed for the so-called welfare of a congregation. Brethren are sometimes like Caiaphas who gave counsel that "it was expedient that one man should die for the people," that is that it was better for one man, even if innocent to die, and that the whole nation should perish not, or be destroyed. (John 11:49; 18:14.) There are, however, no circumstances that can raise an injustice done to an individual person to a level of moral acceptability in the sight of Jehovah.

**Questions for Discussion**

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

**Introduction**

By whom, and when, were the Schools of the Prophets established?



How were these schools first introduced in the Scriptures?  
 What introduction does the Old Testament Scriptures give concerning those schools?  
 Was the establishing of such schools in harmony with the will of God?  
 In what books are most of the incidental references to the Schools of the Prophets found?  
 In what cities were the schools located?  
 Review some of the important characteristics of the Schools of the Prophets.

#### The Golden Text

On what occasion did the people of Israel speak the words of the golden text?  
 Review the important things that Samuel had said to them prior to their asking him to pray for them.  
 How did God assist in establishing the fact of Samuel's charge against them?

#### A Foreword to the Text

About how old was Samuel when he made his last public address to the people?  
 In what three capacities had Samuel served Israel?  
 Why was he permitted to serve Israel as a priest?  
 Review the works that Samuel did in the last forty years of his life.  
 How did he go about affirming that he was not retiring from his work as a prophet?

#### Samuel Calls upon the People to Fear Jehovah

What was Samuel doing when he spoke the words of this passage of scripture?  
 What warning did he give them?

#### Samuel Demonstrates God's Anger upon the People

What great thing did Samuel ask the people to "stand still and see"?  
 Why did they need Samuel's rebuke, and the miraculous demonstrations?  
 What was so unusual about the thunder and the rain that Jehovah sent?

#### The People Ask Samuel to Fray for Them

How did the people respond to Samuel's rebuke, and the miraculous demonstration?  
 What terrible sin had they committed before they asked for a king?  
 How did Samuel answer their plea for mercy?

#### The Work of His Remaining Years

Could Samuel have retired from serving Israel as a prophet and have been faithful to Jehovah?  
 Did he have any intention of retiring from all of his work?

#### Samuel Concludes with a Final Appeal and Warning

What choice did Samuel put before the people as he concluded his address to them?  
 What was the course of most of them in the near future?

#### Practical Observations

Was it right for Samuel to vindicate himself before the people?  
 What strange views are held by some in the church today on the subject of honor and justice?

## Lesson XI—June 15, 1975

# KING SAUL REJECTED

### Lesson Text

#### 1 Sam. 15:10-23

10 Then came the word of Jehovah unto Samuel, saying,

11 It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And Samuel was wroth; and he cried unto Jehovah all night.

12 And Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning; and it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a monument, and turned, and passed on, and went down to Gilgal.

13 And Samuel came to Saul; and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of Jehovah: I have performed the commandment of Jehovah.

14 And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in

mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto Jehovah thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what Jehovah hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, Though thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel? And Jehovah anointed thee king over Israel;

18 And Jehovah sent thee on a journey, and said, Go, and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and

fight against them until they be consumed.

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of Jehovah, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of Jehovah, and have gone the way which Jehovah sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the

devoted things, to sacrifice unto Jehovah thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim. Because thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, and Jehovah hath rejected thee from being king over Israel."* (1 Sam. 15:26.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Sam. 15:1-9.

### Daily Bible Readings

June 9.	M.....	Saul Chosen King (1 Sam. 10:17-25)
June 10.	T.....	Saul Acts Unwisely (1 Sam. 13:5-13)
June 11.	W.....	Saul Is Rejected (1 Sam. 15:13-23)
June 12.	T.....	Saul Is Rejected (1 Sam. 16:17-23)
June 13.	F.....	Blessings of Obedience (Psalm 40:1-8)
June 14.	S.....	Failure Through Disobedience (Isa. 42:18-25)
June 15.	S.....	Consequences of Disobedience (Heb. 6:1-8)

TIME.—About B.C. 1024.

PLACE.—Gilgal, a city of Ephraim in Palestine.

PERSONS.—Jehovah, Samuel, and King Saul.

### Introduction

A serious reflection on the ultimate outcome of Saul and his in-glorious reign over the kingdom of Israel leaves one sad, depressed, and hopeless. After all, Saul is so typical of the rank and file of humanity. The fact that there are few Samuels in any generation is equally depressing.

Saul had a most promising and glorious future—as Jehovah's vice-regent on earth to his people, Israel. When first introduced to Saul, there is much beauty in him that we should desire him. He is a man above men—tall, strong, brave, handsome, majestic in countenance, graceful in action, and stately in demeanor. His unassuming humility is void entirely of sham pretensions and unholy ambitions. He is in manner very modest, easily embarrassed, and naturally retiring. He has no desire to walk with the great. He is always on the level with and sympathetic for his family and friends.

How could such an admirable man come to such a tragic end?

How could he be in personality and character at the end of his reign the exact opposite of that which he was at the beginning of his reign—self-centered, self-willed, self-exalted, and self-righteous? His early aversion to power had given way to an insatiable desire to rule as an absolute monarch; his early aversion for public recognition and honor had given way to his erection of a stone in the plain of Mount Carmel to his personal glory; his early humility had given way to a haughty pride, and his early conduct of "hiding among the baggage" had given way to a regal dress and royal turban and bracelet of splendor which he wore continually—even in battle on the day of his death. (2 Sam. 1:10.) Saul had made radical and unholy changes, at his end there is absolutely nothing that we see in him for which we would delight in him. How may we account for the predicament of Saul?

Fortunate is the person who remembers how that at best mortal

man is weak. Even at his best, the Christian is an unprofitable servant. (Luke 17:10.) God has cast man in a peculiar role—the role of the spirit of a person housed in a physical body. The flesh is weak and subject to great temptations.

Three major and often controlling lusts common to man are: (1) the lust for the sensual, (2) the lust for wealth and possessions, and (3) the lust for prestige and power. Either of these avenues of lust is exceedingly powerful and devastating, but the lust for prestige and power is the most overwhelming and devastating of all. The position of power and prestige, if not properly controlled, also opens the channels of lust for the sensual and lust for wealth and possessions.

The prestige-struck and power-mad king of Israel actually held no fear of Jehovah. To satisfy and appease his vanity, he preserved the life of King Agag. His fall came through his insatiable craving for prestige and power, and he gave way to the other powerful lusts as well. He saved the fat cattle of the Amalekites to please the people.

Jehovah's command for Saul to destroy utterly the Amalekites actually amounted to a second chance for him. Previously, Saul had presumptuously and foolishly of-

fered a burnt offering at Gilgal when Samuel failed to appear at just the time he expected him to appear. Samuel had charged then that Saul had done foolishly and that his kingdom would not continue, but he gave no specific time for the discontinuance of it. Saul had not then been outright rejected, and he thus had a new opportunity to show fidelity and obedience to Jehovah, but again he disobeyed Jehovah outrightly, and he outrightly lied to Samuel. "Jehovah, therefore, rejected Saul from being king over Israel."

The humiliated king threw himself into the exercise and excitement of war. He undertook by blind passionate zeal to atone for his disobedience. With the valor of a desperate criminal, he entered upon the extermination of the Gibeonites and sorcerers of the land. His conscience suppressed, he grew worse and worse. He caused Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub the son of Phinehas, and all the priests of Nob to be slain. Only one son of Ahimelech, Abiathar, escaped. He sought the life of David, Jehovah's new anointed. In his final battle with the Philistines, he fought with the valor of desperation. On that field of battle he died, in dishonor before God!

### The Golden Text

*"Thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, and Jehovah hath rejected thee from being king over Israel."*

The words of the golden text were spoken by Samuel to Saul. This was the second time Samuel reported to Saul that Jehovah had rejected him from being king. On Samuel's first announcement of Saul's rejection (verse 23), Saul said: "I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of Jehovah, and thy word, because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship Jehovah." Saul demonstrated by the very words of his confession that he really did not comprehend the enormity of his sin. His confession was light, capricious, and partial. "I feared the people, and obeyed their voice," he averred. Thus he sought to excuse himself, to blame

others, and thereby to make his sin as small and insignificant as possible. In substance he was saying to Samuel, "Now pardon my light inadvertent transgression and turn with me that I may get on with my worship of Jehovah."

Samuel then announced again, as per the words of the golden text, "Jehovah hath rejected thee from being king," and he turned about to go away. Saul suddenly became frantic, terrified! He seized the skirt of Samuel's robe, and it tore! Then Samuel said: "Jehovah hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine, that is better than thou." Saul urgently begged: "I have sinned; yet honor me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship Jehovah thy God."

The scene is pathetic. The hum-

bled, frantic king's primary concern was that Samuel might honor him before the elders and the people. His consciousness of guilt did not run deep. He feared public disgrace, and if Samuel left him the

people would know that he had been rejected. "Samuel turned again after Saul; and Saul worshipped Jehovah," but "Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death."

### The Text Explained

#### Samuel's Reaction to Saul's Rejection (1 Sam. 15:10-12)

*Then came the word of Jehovah unto Samuel, saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And Samuel was wroth; and he cried unto Jehovah all night. And Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning: and it was told Samuel, saying, Sard came to Carmel, and, behold, he set up a monument, and turned, and passed on, and went down to Gilgal.*

Upon learning from Jehovah concerning Saul's rebellion. "Samuel was wroth, and he cried unto Jehovah all night." This was at least the second sleepless night that Samuel had endured—the first when he was rejected by the elders, and the second on this the occasion of Saul's rejection.

Samuel was wroth—that is he burned within himself. The strong indication is that he was of a disturbed mind—regretful of Saul's dishonor of Jehovah; disappointed in Saul; apprehensive of the suffering and hardships that would fall upon Israel as a direct result of Saul's disobedience, and a want of an understanding of the providence and sovereignty of Jehovah.

Jehovah repented that he had set up Saul to be king," but "Jehovah is not a man that he should repent." The two statements are not contradictory. On one hand Jehovah does repent in the sense that he changes his mind or purpose toward a person that has himself changed, but on the other hand Jehovah does not repent or change his purposes.

#### Saul's Excuse for Not Honoring Jehovah (1 Sam. 15: 13-16)

*And Samuel came to Saul; and Said said unto him. Blessed be thou of Jehovah: I have performed the commandment of Jehovah. And*

*Samuel said. What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? and Sard said. They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto Jehovah thy God: and the rest we have utterly destroyed. Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what Jehovah hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.*

Saul was glorying over his crushing defeat of the Amalekites, and he took time to set up a monument to his personal glory. His humble retiring nature had vanquished long before. He had conquered through his own might, he thought! There was no place in his vanity for him to pause and thank God for his victory.

Samuel came to Saul at Gilgal, and Saul greeted him with the words, "Blessed be thou of Jehovah: I have performed the commandment of Jehovah." Either Saul was so lacking in spiritual depth that he really thought that he had fully obeyed Jehovah, or else he spoke from a guilty conscience. There is the great likelihood that his comprehension of his position as a representative of Jehovah was so low that he actually felt that he had fulfilled Jehovah's command.

When Samuel inquired: "What meaneth this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?", Saul assured Samuel that the people had spared only the best of the sheep and oxen wherewith to sacrifice and that all the rest had been utterly destroyed, as if that which had been devoted to Jehovah could in turn be sacrificed to him. How spiritually shallow and dense Saul showed himself to be!

#### Samuel's Interrogation of Saul (1 Sam. 15:17-21)

*And Samuel said. Though thou*

*wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel? And Jehovah anointed thee king over Israel; and Jehovah sent thee on a journey, and said. Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of Jehovah, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst that which unis evil in the sight of Jehovah? And Saul said unto Samuel. Yea, I have obeyed the voice of Jehovah, and have gone the way which Jehovah hath sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people look of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the devoted things, to sacrifice unto Jehovah thy God in Gilgal.*

Proceeding to remind Saul of how little he once was in his own sight and how that Jehovah had anointed him king over Israel. Samuel emphasized that Jehovah had specifically commanded: "Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites. . . . Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of Jehovah, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah?"

With striking thickheadedness and imperviousness, Saul explained that he had obeyed the voice of Jehovah. that he had gone the way Jehovah sent him, that he had brought Agag the king, and that he had utterly destroyed the Amalekites. Many today are just as dense, thickheaded, and impervious with respect to God's commands as Saul was then. This, however, is not all with respect to Saul. Excusing himself by blaming the people, he explained that the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the devoted things, to sacrifice unto Jehovah, thy God. The thought conveyed is that the people, not Saul, had transgressed the commandment of Jehovah, but inadvertently, for they had the very highest and most laudable intentions! They intended to offer to Jehovah the very best of the animals which they had spared! Two

things are certain: (1) Saul was spiritually hollow and stupid, and (2) he was a liar and hypocrite.

### Samuel's Announcement of Saul's Rejection

(1 Sam. 15:22, 23)

*And Samuel said. Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim. Because thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*

Filled with righteous indignation, Samuel pointedly asked: "Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as obeying the voice of Jehovah?" The question was cutting to the mark, and certainly deserved. It was calculated to strip Saul of his window-dressed innocence. Samuel did not, by his question, reject sacrifices as if they were worthless or that Jehovah took no delight in them; but sacrifices, in the absence of faith and obedience on the part of the one who offered them, were worthless. The sum of the whole matter is that acceptable worship then began with a spirit of full obedience to the divine command, and just so is the case for Christian worship today.

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim," Samuel announced. The point of emphasis was and is that any conscious disregard for Jehovah's commands, or any conscious and deliberate refusal to obey, or any conscious and willful substitution was idolatry.

Samuel ended his words to Saul with the statement: "Because thou has rejected the word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king." How pathetic this was, and yet how just! Many fall under this same condemnation today. Let every soul—each one of us—search his own heart. Would that there were more Samuels, and no Sauls at all!

### Practical Observations

1. In almost every position of leadership there is the danger that the person occupying the position will be moved to an inordinate craving for more and more prestige and power. Here lies a real danger. One negative qualification for an elder of the church is, "not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil." (1 Tim. 3:5.) An elder or bishop is a shepherd over God's heritage. What a responsibility! The principle is that "the elder shall serve the younger"! There is the very real danger that men will desire the office of an elder, not for the service that they can perform for the welfare of the church but for the position and prestige of the office. When men regard the position and responsibilities of an eldership in the light of directors of a corporation, or of a school, or of an orphans' home, the case is tragic indeed. There is a very real danger here!

2. Saul rationalized that since he had utterly destroyed the Amalekites, except for the trifle of his having spared Agag and the fat animals, that he had really and truly obeyed Jehovah. Men today, including many in the church of the Lord, rationalize respecting their obedience to Jehovah very much as

Saul did. There is a very real danger here!

3. Saul was accustomed to prosperity, and material possessions meant much to him. His father Kish was a wealthy man in his day. Saul could not countenance, therefore, the destruction of the fat sheep, oxen and cattle that belonged to the Amalekites. His sparing the fat animals was actually a gratification of his inordinate lust for more and more possessions. The people of America have enjoyed a long era of prosperity, and the lust for material possessions can be observed on every hand. There is a very real danger here!

4. The elders and people of Israel wanted a mighty king that could deliver them. Samuel, through Jehovah, had preserved them against their enemies, but this was not enough. They wanted to be really delivered with attendant regal and military power. When Saul, the people's chosen deliverer, was dead at the hands of the Philistines, the Israelites were in the most severe bondage of their history. They had trusted in a mighty man. Many today trust their system of religion and faith to the hands of mighty men. (Hos. 10:13.) There is a very real danger here!

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

Why does a serious reflection on the life of Saul leave one sad and depressed?  
Discuss some of the radical and unholy changes that Saul made after he was appointed as king over Israel.  
What should every Christian remember about his relationship with God?  
What will a position of power and prestige do for a man if he does not exercise much control?  
What presumptuous sin had Saul committed at Gilgal prior to the destruction of the Amalekites?  
What was actually included in Jehovah's command for Saul to utterly destroy the Amalekites?  
What are some of the things that Saul did after God rejected him as king over Israel?

#### The Golden Text

On what occasion did Samuel speak these words to Saul?  
Did Saul fully realize the enormity of his sins?

What seems to have been Saul's main concern when Samuel told him that "Jehovah hath rejected thee from being king over Israel"?

#### Samuel's Reaction to Saul's Rejection

How did Samuel react when he learned that Saul had turned back from following Jehovah?

What is the meaning of the statement, "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king"?

#### Saul's Excuse for Not Honoring Jehovah

What did Saul do after Israel had defeated the Amalekites?

What does this tell us about him?

What did Saul say to Samuel when he came to him at Gilgal?

Do you suppose that he actually thought that he had been faithful to Jehovah's command to destroy the Amalekites?

How did Samuel answer him?

#### Samuel's Interrogation of Saul

What direct question did Samuel ask Saul about what he had done?

How did Saul try to excuse himself?

Do many today reason like Saul and the

people of Israel with respect to the commandments of God?

Samuel's Announcement of Saul's Rejection

- What cutting question did Samuel ask Saul about sacrifice and obedience?
- What lesson should we learn from Samuel's questions about acceptable worship?

What should God's rejection of Saul teach us about the mercy and justice of God?

Practical Observations

- What are some of the dangers of a place of leadership in the church today?
- Discuss how that some members of the church rationalize about their obedience very much like Saul did.

Lesson XII—June 22, 1975

DAVID, THE SHEPHERD KING

Lesson Text

1 Sam. 16:1-13

1 And Jehovah said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? fill thy horn with oil, and go: I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite; for I have provided me a king among his sons.

2 And Samuel said, How can I go if Saul hear it, he will kill me. And Jehovah said, Take a heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to Jehovah.

3 And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.

4 And Samuel did that which Jehovah spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, Comest thou peaceably?

5 And he said, Peaceably; I am come to sacrifice unto Jehovah: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

6 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely Jehovah's anointed is before him.

7 But Jehovah said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I

have rejected him: for *Jehovah seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart.

8 Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath Jehovah chosen this.

9 Then Jesse made Shammah to pass t<sup>y</sup>. And he said, Neither hath Jehovah chosen this.

10 And Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Jehovah hath not chosen these.

11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he is keeping the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down till he come hither.

12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon. And Jehovah said, Arise, anoint him; for this is he.

13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I have found David I anointed him." (Psalm 89:20.)

*my servant; with my holy oil have*

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Sam. 16:14-23.

Daily Bible Readings

- June 16. M..... David, Jehovah's Selection (Psalm 89:1-37)
- June 17. T..... Details of David's Selection (1 Sam. 16:1-13)
- June 18. W..... David's Faith in God (Psalm 27)
- June 19. T..... David, A Man of Courage (1 Sam. 17:41-49)
- June 20. F..... David and Jonathan (1 Sam. 18:1-9)
- June 21. S..... David, God's Faithful Servant (Ezek. 34:20-31)
- June 22. S..... God's Covenant with David (Psalm 132:1-11)

TIME.—About B.C. 1024-1023.

PLACE.—Bethlehem of Judea in Palestine.

PERSONS.—Jehovah; Samuel; elders of Bethlehem; Jesse and his eight sons, particularly David.

### Introduction

Following the encounter with Saul at Gilgal regarding his rebellion against Jehovah, Samuel "came no more to see Saul until the day of his death." Samuel, however, continued to mourn for Saul, and in time—how much time is not known but perhaps ten years or longer—Jehovah asked: "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel?" Then Jehovah instructed: "Fill your horn with oil, and go . . . to Jesse the Bethlehemite; for I have provided me a king among his sons."

Samuel protested to Jehovah. "How can I go? if Saul hear of it, he will kill me." The very strong inference is that King Saul, moved by jealousy and suspicion, feared that Samuel might anoint a successor to the throne; and he, therefore, kept the prophet under surveillance at all times. In seeming recognition of Samuel's danger, Jehovah instructed Samuel to take a heifer with him and say, "I am come to sacrifice to Jehovah."

Samuel's journey from Ramah to Bethlehem was a distance of about ten miles. His driving or leading a heifer along was calculated to arouse no suspicion whatsoever. Through the years after sacrifices had ceased to be offered at the central sanctuary at Shiloh and came thereby to be offered at different places, Samuel had turned up at one place and then another to offer sacrifice, to reprove violations and sins, and to punish the wrong doer. When Samuel appeared at Bethlehem, the elders, trembling for fear that the prophet had come to pronounce some judgment of Jehovah against their city, approached the prophet. "Comest thou peaceably?" they inquired of Samuel. "I am come to sacrifice unto Jehovah: sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice," Samuel replied. In turn Samuel privately caused Jesse and his sons, particularly, to sanctify themselves, or wash their bodies and dress with fresh clean garments, so as to be present at the

sacrifice. Jesse and all of his sons were present, except for David.

There was absolutely no equivocation—that is with intent to deceive—in Samuel's statement that he had come to sacrifice. He had come to Bethlehem to sacrifice; he did sacrifice; and he invited the elders of the city to participate with him in the sacrifice. He did not, however, reveal the principal purpose or object of his mission even unto Jesse and his sons, which thing he was under no obligation to do. His withholding of the actual purpose of the sacrifice did not induce anyone to do wrong, nor did it take an unfair advantage of anyone. It did provide a means for his safety, and also a means for the operation of the over-ruling providence of God for the welfare in time of all men of all ages upon the earth.

The custom of the sacrifice was that after the blood of the victim had been poured out and the fat burned, those making the sacrifice then feasted upon the flesh that remained. This was the case for animal sacrifices, except for the whole burnt offering which was to be completely consumed. Samuel managed privately to communicate with Jesse and his sons. This is shown by the fact that Samuel, on being shown by direct inspiration that neither of the other sons that had gathered for the sacrifice was to be chosen, inquired of Jesse as to whether or not there was another son, and on being told that there was—the youngest who was keeping the sheep—he instructed: "Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down." that is we will not sit down to eat the feast, "till he come hither." The sacrificial feast may very well have been eaten at Jesse's house.

Eliab, Jesse's oldest son, struck Samuel's fancy. Eliab was of great height and of good countenance, a man strikingly similar to king Saul, but he was not the man to be anointed as king.

David soon came. He was short



of stature compared to king Saul or to his brother Eliab. but he was strong as steel, and swift as a gazelle. He was ruddy, or of auburn hair and a reddish complexion, comely and beautiful of countenance. He was goodly to look upon. He wore the dress of a simple shepherd. Jehovah said to Samuel, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he." Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed David in the midst of his brethren, but he did not reveal at that time, even to David, his purpose and design for the anointing. David's brothers were left to their several conclusions as to the meaning or design of the anointing. They did not suspect for one moment that David had been anointed king over Israel.

There is the great likelihood that in a short time, even before Samuel left Bethlehem for Ramah, that Samuel communicated to David the meaning of the anointing for "the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward." Samuel also may have communicated the same to Jesse. One thing is certain: the purpose or design of the anointing was held as a carefully guarded secret for years, which testifies to the prudence and self-discipline of David, and for that matter, of his father, Jesse, if he were made a party to the information.

David was a genius. With a special talent for music, both vocal and instrumental, he was known as "the sweet singer in Israel." His sensitive poetical temperament and his fervent religious nature combined and cooperated to produce some of the greatest praise and psalms ever written and sung by mortal man. The twenty-third Psalm is a classic example.

Any man is fortunate who was reared in an agricultural environment. The great impressions that are drawn from nature—from the woods, the fields, the brooks, and the rivers—are really beyond the evaluation and description of a mere man. When a person alone at night gazes into the heavens and beholds the beautiful moon and the myriad of stars, when he contemplates the vastness of God's creation, and when he considers the mystery of the heavenly host of the Spirit world, he can only conclude that there is an all-powerful God who with incomparable design created the heavens and the earth. David had enjoyed all of these experiences, and more also, for that matter. He was truly a son of nature, and a worshipper of Jehovah. The lion and the bear held no fear for him. The canopy of heaven at night was David's great school building and campus.

### The Golden Text

*"I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him."* Psalm 89 is entitled "Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite." There really is no certainty as to when the psalm was composed or the occasion of its composition. The psalm represents the house of David as being dishonored, but it gives no indication that the city of Jerusalem had been destroyed.

The golden text—the twentieth verse of this psalm—speaks of David when he was first anointed by Samuel. He was found, that is he was only a shepherd and entirely

unknown to the public of Israel. The choice of David to be king in Israel was made, therefore, by Jehovah alone who looks not "on the outward appearance . . . but . . . looketh on the heart."

The golden text also speaks of how that Samuel had anointed David with oil. Oil was used especially in setting apart kings. It was literally poured upon the person, and denoted Jehovah's pouring out of wisdom and grace upon him that

<sup>1</sup> had been so anointed—in this case David—to especially qualify him for his office and work at hand.

### The Text Explained

The New King Was to be Chosen  
from the Sons of Jesse  
(1 Sam. 16:1)

*And Jehovah said unto Samuel,*

*How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? fill thy horn with oil, and go: I will send thee to*

*Jesse the Bethlehemite; for I have provided me a king among his sons.*

Since his retirement as judge in Israel, Samuel had made no public appearances. In time Jehovah rebuked Samuel for his longtime mourning for Saul and instructed him to anoint a new king instead.

Samuel had mourned for Saul beyond that time which was normal, but he had not so mourned for his own sons who had been deposed. His continued mourning for Saul indicated more than a personal attachment for the rebellious king. His continued mourning indicated a strong and misgiving anxiety for the nation of Israel, as well. Samuel had great difficulty in reconciling himself to the place of God's providence in the chain of events that had taken place.

The new king was to be chosen from the sons of Jesse, the Bethlehemite. Jesse was at that time an old man, and he had eight sons and two daughters. He was the son of Obed, and Obed was the son of Boaz and the Moabitess, Ruth. Further, his great grandmother was Rahab, the Canaanite. The genealogy is given in Ruth and First Chronicles of the Old Testament and in Matthew and Luke of the New Testament. (Ruth 4:18-22; 1 Chron. 2:5-12; Matt. 1:3-5; Luke 3:32-34.) Jesse was, therefore, the immediate pregenitor of the line of Judean kings, including Christ, himself.

### Samuel Feared Saul

(1 Sam. 16:2-5)

*And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me. And Jehovah said, Take a heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to Jehovah. And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee. And Samuel did that which Jehovah spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, Comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto Jehovah: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.*

Samuel did not fear Saul for

naught. The great likelihood is that Saul, through rejection and fear and jealousy, feared that Samuel would anoint a successor to the throne and that he, therefore, had kept Saul under a certain surveillance for an extended period of time. Jehovah's instructions to Samuel were a tacit recognition that Samuel would be in danger of Saul's wrath and suspicion unless he proceeded cautiously.

Jehovah instructed Samuel to take a heifer and go to Bethlehem to sacrifice, and call Jesse to the sacrifice. A king was to be anointed, and a solemn sacrifice was imperative. Samuel carried along the sacrifice that was to be offered. His having carried the sacrifice along was calculated to allay suspicions and surmising as to his particular mission.

When Samuel appeared at the city of Bethlehem, the elders trembling moved out to meet him. "Comest thou peaceably?" they solemnly and fearfully inquired. They feared that Samuel had come to pronounce some judgment against their city, and there may have been some reason for their fears. Samuel relieved their fears, however, by his explaining that he had come to sacrifice, and further, by his inviting them to participate in the sacrifice.

"Sanctify yourselves," wash your bodies and put on clean raiment, "and come with me to the sacrifice," Samuel urged. Further, he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice. The inference from Jehovah's instructions to Samuel relative to Jesse, the Bethlehemite, would seem to indicate that Jesse and his family were well known to Samuel and that, therefore, Samuel privately caused them to sanctify themselves so as to attend the sacrifice and eat the feast.

A solemn observance was to be made, and though the principal object of the observance was not to be revealed, yet such an observance required a solemn preparation. As a means of preparation, Samuel brought his sacrifice, a heifer, along with him. Centuries later, when the anti-type of David was to be anointed king, he also carried his sacrifice along with him, as is stated by the Hebrew writer: "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he

saith. Sacrifice and offerings thou wouldest not, but a body didst thou prepare for me." (Heb. 10:5.) The "me," Christ, existed before the body. He sacrificed that body on the tree of the cross for the sins of fallen humanity.

Samuel did not reveal the principal purpose or object of his mission but this he was under no obligation to do. His concealment did not induce anyone to sin, and it did not take an unfair advantage of anyone. Secrecy and concealment are one thing, while duplicity and falsehood are quite another. The concealment did provide for Samuel's safety and also for the operation of the over-ruling providence of God. It was a concealment of a good purpose for a good reason, and it was very clearly in order.

#### Eliab Was Saul's Choice

(1 Sam. 16:6-10)

*And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said. Surely Jehovah's anointed is before him. But Jehovah said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have rejected him: for Jehovah seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart. Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath Jehovah chosen this. Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath Jehovah chosen this. And Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Jehovah hath not chosen these.*

Eliab was the oldest and the first son of Jesse to appear before Samuel. Like king Saul, he was tall of stature, manly, and handsome. Samuel thought surely that he was the one to be anointed, but Jehovah said to Samuel: "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have rejected him." Jehovah was certainly justified in his rejection of Eliab as was later indicated by his anger and charges against David at the time that young man volunteered to fight with Goliath. "Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said. Why art thou come down? ... I

know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thy heart." (1 Sam. 17:28-30.) In rejecting Eliab, Jehovah said to Samuel: "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart."

#### Samuel Inquired of Jesse whether there Was Another Son

(1 Sam. 16:11, 12)

*And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said.. There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he is keeping the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon. And Jehovah said, Arise, anoint him; for this is he.*

Seven of Jesse's sons passed in an incidental review, but in each instance Jehovah communicated to the heart of Samuel that this one is not the chosen one. Samuel then inquired of Jesse, "Are here all thy children?" There remained the youngest, David. "Send and fetch him," Samuel instructed. "We will not sit down," that is to eat the sacrificial meal, "till he come," Samuel announced.

David arrived. He was of ruddy, or reddish hair and complexion. He had a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon. Jehovah again communicated to Samuel. This time he said: "Arise, anoint him; for this is he."

#### Samuel Anointed David as King

(1 Sam. 16:13)

*Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.*

Samuel took a horn of oil and anointed David in the midst of his brethren. There seems to be no doubt that Samuel did not reveal to David's brethren the purpose of mission of the anointing of David. Eliab's attitude toward David relative to his fighting with Goliath would necessarily indicate that he nor his brothers knew of the purpose of the anointing.

"The Spirit of Jehovah came

mightily upon David from that day forward." David advanced in wisdom and courage and public concern for the nation of Israel. The likelihood is that Samuel did not leave for Ramah without his revealing privately to David the intent and

purpose of the anointing. Having anointed David as king over Israel, "Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah." This was his last public act, or a better statement would be that this was his last act of a public nature.

### Practical Observations

1. When making a sacrifice and/or participating in a solemn ordinance, the Israelites were required to make solemn preparation, which included the washing of their bodies and the putting on of clean raiment and the clearing of their minds of physical and material considerations and concerns. When Christians approach the first day of the week, they are under heaven's imposed obligation to make solemn preparation for the worship on that day. Every assembly of the church, whether the Lord's day or a gospel meeting during the week days, should be characterized by solemn spiritual preparation on the part of each Christian.

2. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart," Jehovah stated to Samuel. Outward appearances are often quite deceiving. Often the Christian is deceived in his own heart. Solomon wrote: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." (Prov. 4:23.) Happy and secure is the man who examines his heart—who subjects it to the test. The standard for such a measurement or test is the word of God.

3. The elders of the little city of Bethlehem were very fearful when Samuel approached their city. They were afraid that he had come to pronounce some judgment against

them. Men should fear when the pronouncements of Jehovah are set forth. Isaiah, speaking for Jehovah, wrote: "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.)

4. Jehovah's choice from among the sons of Jesse was the youngest in preference to the oldest. In man's arrangement or rule the oldest and/or the older were preferred above the youngest and/or the younger. The oldest received the birthright—a double portion of the inheritance. The student will do well to reflect how often God reversed the rule or order of choice. Isaac the younger was chosen over Ishmael; Jacob the younger was chosen over Esau; Ephraim the younger was chosen over Manasseh; David the younger was chosen over Eliab; and the spiritual man of the New Testament is chosen over the outward man. Paul wrote: "And it was said unto her [Rebecca], the elder shall serve the younger." (Rom. 9:12.) Jesus said: "Whosoever shall be first among you, shall be servant of all." He further said: "So the last shall be first, and the first last." (Mark 10:44; Matt. 20:16.) Paul said: "The children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." (2 Cor. 12:14.)

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give the time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

What criticism did Jehovah make against Samuel?

What did Jehovah instruct Samuel to do?

What was the distance from Ramah to Bethlehem?

Where had the central place of worship been held in former days?

Why was the worship no longer held there?

Where did men worship?

Why was Samuel afraid to go to Bethlehem to anoint a king?

Did God's instructions to Samuel amount to equivocation or deception?

What was the custom of the sacrifice after the blood of the victim had been poured out?

What advantages did David enjoy from his having been a shepherd boy?

#### The Golden Text

Who chose David to be anointed king?  
How was he anointed?

#### The New King Was to be Chosen from the Sons of Jesse

Had Samuel made public appearances since his retirement?  
Who was Jesse?

Was he of Canaanite descent? how? to what extent?  
Why had Samuel continued so long to mourn for Saul?

Samuel Feared Saul

Why did Samuel fear Saul?  
What instruction did Jehovah give Samuel?  
How would a heifer led by Samuel allay suspicious and surmisings?  
What did the elders of the city ask of Samuel? Why?  
What preparation did the people make prior to the sacrifice?  
What was the anti-type of David?

Eliab Was Saul's Choice

Which son of Jesse was Samuel's choice? Why?  
What did God reply?  
How did Eliab show later that he would not have been a good choice?

Samuel Inquired of Jesse whether there Was Another Son

Was there another son? Who?  
Why had he not come to the sacrifice with the others?  
Describe David.

Samuel Anointed David as King

What came upon David upon his being anointed?  
Did David know the reason or purpose of the anointing?

Practical Observations

What preparation should Christians make for their solemn worship?  
Contrast how man looks upon a person with how God looks upon one.  
Discuss the statement: "The elder shall serve the younger."

Lesson XIII—June 29, 1975

NATHAN REBUKES DAVID

Lesson Text

2 Sam. 12:1-10, 13

1 And Jehovah sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds;

3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As Jehovah liveth, the man that hath done this is worthy to die:

6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added unto thee such and such things.

9 Wherefore hast thou despised the word of Jehovah, to do that which is evil in his sight? thou hast smitten Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against Jehovah. And Nathan said unto David, Jehovah also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight." (Psalm 51:4.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 51:1-17.

### Daily Bible Readings

June 23. M.....	David Is Brought to Repentance (2 Sam. 12:1-13)
June 24. T.....	David's Contrite Heart (Psalm 51:1-17)
June 25. W.....	Blessings of Forgiveness (Isa. 55:6-13)
June 26. T.....	Joy of A Contrite Heart (Psalm 32:1-11)
June 27. F.....	God's Loving-kindness (Psalm 103:8-14)
June 28. S.....	God's Promise to David (1 Chron. 17:1-12)
June 29. S.....	The Joy of Salvation (Isa. 12:1-6)

TIME.—About B.C. 1005-1000.

PLACE.—Jerusalem in Judea of Palestine.

PERSONS.—Jehovah; Nathan, the prophet; and King David.

### Introduction

Alas! David, the sweet singer of Israel and the man after God's own heart, succumbed to the lust of the flesh. Saul fell through his lust for power, but David fell through his lust for the sensual—for Uriah's wife.

David's sins were black, criminal, and dastardly! Viewed from a human standpoint, David's sins were worse than Saul's; but, of course, in the sight of God, sin is sin. David was then about fifty years of age. He had reigned in Jerusalem for more than twelve years, and his victories and honors had been many. He was secure on the throne, and in a position to "sit-out" the upcoming war against the Ammonites. He commissioned Joab to take troops from all the tribes of Israel and prosecute the war.

The season was the spring of the year, and David was enjoying his secure position and state of leisure. Arising from his bed, he strolled in the late afternoon on the flat roof of his palace; and there he spied a beautiful woman bathing in her uncovered court.

David was already known for his insatiable sexual appetite. A harem was one of the pompous status symbols of the Oriental kings of that day, and King David had his harem—six wives that he brought from Hebron, and the concubines and wives that he took out of Jerusalem. (2 Sam. 5:13-15.)

David inquired after the woman whom he saw bathing and learned that she was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, one of his heroes, or mighty men. (2 Sam. 23:39.) Bathsheba was another man's wife, but this fact did not slacken the unharnessed sensual desires of David. David sent for Bathsheba but with-

out an exercise of threat or craft, and she came. David committed adultery with her who was another man's wife, and she returned to her house. Lust had conceived and it brought forth sin.

When Bathsheba learned that she had conceived, she told David: "I am with child." Her sin made her liable for the death penalty under the law of Moses. Uriah was a man who very likely might exact it, too. She was in a state of grave fear and anxiety, and David shared that fear and anxiety. He dreaded the shame and disgrace that would attach to him if the sin came to be known.

Sin is serpentine and vicious in its very nature. It is a creeping disease that spreads in all directions at the same time. It grows in clusters. David had committed adultery, but soon he was guilty of the sin of rank duplicity, and then he was guilty of the black sin of murder.

If only he could arrange for Uriah to spend one night at home! Then the adulterous child could be passed off as having been sired by him. So, Uriah was called home on the trumped-up pretext that David wished to inquire how Joab and the people fared and how the war prospered. Though David, after the conference dismissed Uriah with the suggestion that he go to his house and refresh himself, the old soldier spent the night in the guard room with the soldiers and servants. He was concerned more for the welfare of the war than he was for pleasure.

David kept close watch on Uriah's activities for the night, and he was sorely disappointed to learn that Uriah did not spend the night with Bathsheba. The next day

David inquired of Uriah as to why he did not sleep at home. There may have been a couched accusation in Uriah's words when he replied: "The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in booths; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open field; shall I go into my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as my soul liveth, I will not do this thing." What a contrast of the king on the throne and the old soldier back from the battlefield! The former now a sniveling and pretending hypocrite! the latter a dedicated patriot and defender of the honor of his adopted nation and God!

David held Uriah over for the day, and he ate and drank with him and made him drunk. He reasoned that if Uriah were drunk that he would lose his sense of loyalty to his comrades on the battlefield, and would go home to his wife. But

Uriah slept again in the guardroom. David was both bitterly disappointed and completely exasperated. The next day he wrote out Uriah's death warrant and sent it by Uriah. A grave crime of murder had been ordered. Uriah died at the hand of Ammonites, one of the common tragedies of war, David rationalized. Bathsheba mourned for Uriah for the accepted time of mourning. Then David sent for her.

Do all men have clay feet? Is there none that doeth good? How did David, the sweet singer of Israel, stoop to such heinous crimes? How was he better than Saul? The answer resounds: David truly repented, and Saul did not. What devastation of souls is wrought by the compelling power of lust! lust for the sensual! lust for the material! and lust for the power and prestige of the earth! Let every Christian beware!

### The Golden Text

*"Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight."* Psalm 51 was composed by David after the prophet Nathan pointed out to him the heinousness of his acts of adultery and murder. "Thou art the man," Nathan declared, and David confessed: "I have sinned against Jehovah."

The psalm was intended by David, himself, to be a public confession of his crimes, and it has thus been preserved and perpetuated in public view as a warning to men for all ages to come. The major difference between Saul's end on earth and that of David's end, lies in the genuine repentance, confes-

sion, and contrition of David in contrast to the continued rebellion and disobedience of Saul. When studying the life of David, and especially his fall the student should read carefully the entire fifty-first and thirty-second Psalms.

David's statement, "Against thee . . . only have I sinned" meant that he recognized full well that his sin was an offense against the God of heaven and earth. David, of course, recognized that he had offended human laws. He further without question recognized that he had sinned against Uriah—had murdered him and taken his wife—but apart from all of this, he had sinned against God.

### The Text Explained

#### Nathan the Prophet Sent to David

(2 Sam. 12:1)

*And Jehovah sent Nathan unto David.*

Nathan was a prophet. He belonged to the period of David and Solomon and was contemporary with the prophets Ahijah and Iddo. (2 Chron. 9:29.) He wrote a history of the acts of David, as the prophets Samuel and Gad had done before him. (1 Chron. 29:22.) He also wrote a history of the acts of

Solomon, or at least the acts until the time of his death, for he died before Solomon died. He first appears on the pages of history when David, then settled in his palace in Jerusalem, came to hold a strong desire to build a temple for Jehovah. David, to that intent and end, thus counseled with Nathan the prophet. Nathan advised the building of such a temple, but after a vision from Jehovah, he withdrew his counsel. Nathan's next appearance

on the pages of history was when he came forth to condemn David for his crimes.

Nathan Recites a Parable to David  
(2 Sam. 12:1-6)

*And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had brought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As Jehovah liveth, the man that hath done this is worthy to die: and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.*

A year, or thereabout, had intervened since David had committed the crimes of adultery and murder. The child of that adulterous union had already been born. During that period of time David had suffered mental distress, and was under the strong hand of guilt. He later expressed his mental state as follows:

When I kept silence, my bones wasted away

Through my groaning all the day long.

For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me:

My moisture was changed as with the drought of summer. (Psalm 32:3-4.)

Nathan the prophet, in order to accomplish his mission, resorted to the use of an unusual parable drawn from the circumstances of life. The prophet's words were so real that David did not for one moment detect the account of Nathan to be a parable and thus intended for him. On hearing the selfishness, inhumanity, and cruelty of the rich man in his taking of the poor man's

little ewe lamb, David's anger was greatly kindled. "The man is worthy to die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold," he declared with the power and force of a king. David spoke from his earlier and former abiding sense of compassion, honor, and justice. What a pity! David could see and abhor the sin and injustice of the rich man as described by Nathan, but he did not see how that he was no better, much worse in fact, than the rich man. He did not see himself as God saw him. If only every man could see himself as other see him; or better still, if only every man could see himself as God sees him! The latter is certainly what counts.

Nathan Declares: "Thou Art the Man"  
(2 Sam. 12:7-9)

*And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the word of Jehovah, to do that which is evil in his sight? thou hast smitten Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.*

There remained in David from his spiritual background of prior years a lingering righteous pity for the deprived and the wronged. When Nathan saw that David was deeply stirred by the artful contrivances of the parable, he with boldness and timed skill announced abruptly: "Thou art the man." Nathan had taken his life in his own hands. David could have ordered his death. Nathan, therefore, merits one's full admiration for his courage and commitment to God. A prophet of less courage would have withdrawn from his duty and left David in his sins.

"Thou art the man!" What an indictment! What a prophet! Nathan proceeded to point out to David how that Jehovah had anointed him king over Israel, how that he had



given him his master's, Saul's, house. And he had given him the house of Israel and Judah. Further, Nathan said, "And if that had been too little, I would have added unto thee such and such things."

Wherefore—why? on what basis? what reason?—hast thou despised the word of Jehovah, to do that which was evil in his sight? Nathan asked. Like Peter on Pentecost, Nathan charged David with the murder of Uriah which was accomplished by means of the sword of Ammon.

### Nathan Sets Forth the Judgment against David

(2 Sam. 12:10)

*Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.*

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7.) What a fearful thought this is, but on the other hand, what a comforting thought it is to the God-fearing Christian!

David had sown to flesh, and the sword would never depart from his house. Ammon, a son of David, committed adultery with Tamar, his half sister and the full sister of Absalom. In turn Absalom caused his servants to murder Ammon. In time, Absalom rebelled against his father, David, and set himself up as king in Hebron, and David was put to flight from Jerusalem. Absalom then took his father's ten concubines, those that David in his hurried flight had left in Jerusalem, and spread a tent upon the top of

the king's palace and went into those concubines in the sight of all Israel. Then too, when David was old and stricken in years, his then eldest son Adonijah seized the throne. When David was properly advised concerning the matter, he caused Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet to anoint his son Solomon as king over Israel. David must have known that his actions would in reality seal the death warrant of Adonijah.

The sword never departed from the house of David, and no really great feats of David are recorded from the time of his fall till the time of his death. He had sown to the flesh and of the flesh he reaped corruption.

### David Repents and Confesses His Sins

(2 Sam. 12:13)

*And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against Jehovah. And Nathan said unto David, Jehovah also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Upon Nathan's charge, "Thou art the man," David did not raise his hand against Nathan as he might have done! In fact he later named the third son that Bathsheba bore him, Nathan.*

David confessed and said to Nathan: "I have sinned against Jehovah." His repentance was genuine as his thirty-second and fifty-first Psalms so clearly show. Nathan recognized that David had truly repented, and he said "Jehovah hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die," but he added: "The child that is born unto thee shall die."

### Practical Observations

1. One striking characteristic of the word of God is the impartiality with which the sins and follies of the greatest heroes of the Bible are recorded with as much detail as their virtues and good deeds. Men like Noah, Abraham, Moses and Peter are classic examples, and so is the case of David.

2. Women who dress and conduct themselves suggestively not only lay a pitfall for men who may be enticed thereby, but they also walk the precipice that may very well re-

sult in their own fall and dishonor, and which may remain with them for the rest of their lives.

3. David was enjoying his leisure, and leisure answers to leisure. Instead of his being on the battlefield with his army, he was at home on his couch. He had dozed all afternoon in a state of idleness. In the days of his troubles he prayed often—morning, noon, and night. His leisure—his idleness—laid the snare for his downfall! Those who spend their weekends leisurely in-

stead of being up and about the Lord's work and worship should certainly beware.

4. David was guilty of grave crimes—adultery and murder. While the rank and file of men today shudder at the thought of cold-blooded murder, they tend to regard adultery as a very commonplace and relatively innocent sin.

5. Though David's crimes were great, he repented, and God forgave him. This calls to mind the words

of Isaiah: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. 1:18.) God will forgive any person who truly repents and follows his word.

6. Nathan was very likely trained under Samuel in his School of the Prophets. This has strong implication for brethren and churches today.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of the lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

What were David's sins?  
How old was David at the time?  
Who was his general of the army?  
What was the season of the year?  
With what nation was Israel at war?  
When and under what circumstances did David become involved with Bathsheba?  
Who was Bathsheba?  
Did Bathsheba come to David willingly?  
Discuss the nature of sin.  
How did David seek to cover himself from the sin of adultery?  
How and under what circumstances did David's sins grow?  
How and under what circumstances did Uriah die?  
What was Uriah's position in the Army of Israel? (2 Sam. 23:39)

#### The Golden Text

Who composed Psalm 51? When?  
What was the intent of the composer of the psalm?  
Against whom had David sinned?  
What was the difference between Saul's sin and David's sin?

#### Nathan the Prophet Sent to David

Give an overview of the life of Nathan.  
Relate the first two appearances of Nathan on the pages of history.  
What books did Nathan write?

#### Nathan Recites a Parable to David

How much time had intervened since David committed the crimes?  
Had David suffered any mental anguish for his sins? On what do you base your answer?

Relate the parable which Nathan recited to David.  
What was David's reaction?

#### Nathan Declares: "Thou Art The Man"

How did Nathan endanger his own life?  
What excuse was there for David's taking another man's wife?  
In what sense had Jehovah given David the house of Saul?

#### Nathan Sets Forth the Judgment against David

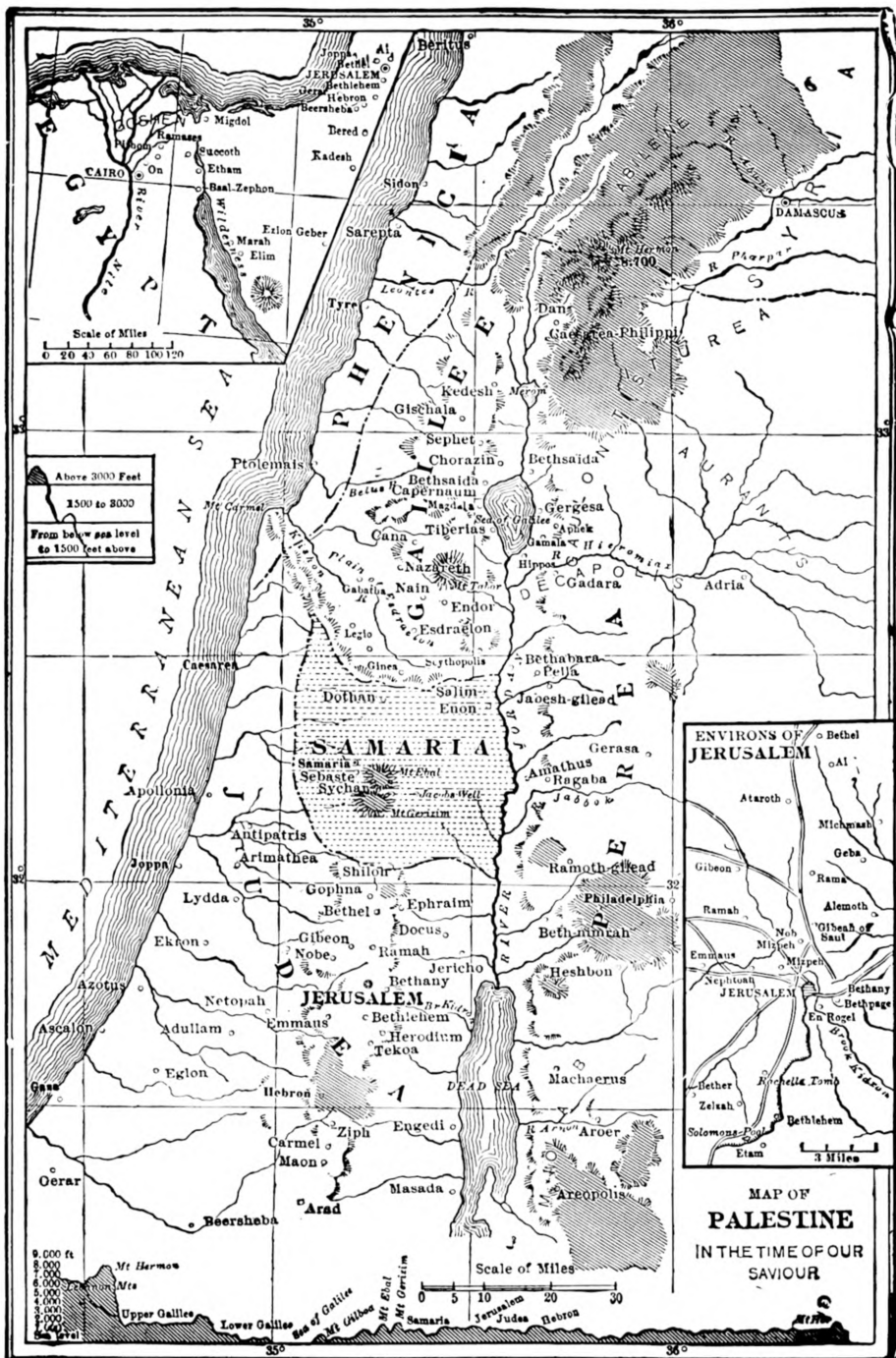
What judgment was laid against David?  
Discuss the matter of sowing and reaping.  
Relate the cases of the adultery and the sword as they came to the house of David.  
Did the sword depart from the house of David?  
How did the sword continue on the house of David even after his death? Relate.

#### David Repents and Confesses His Sins

What was David's reaction to Nathan's charge?  
How did he show his esteem and regard for Nathan?  
Did David repent?  
What two psalms show the depth of David's repentance?

#### Practical Observations

Discuss the impartiality of the word of God.  
May the dress of many women of today be justified?  
What are the dangers of comfort and leisure?  
Discuss the prevalence of adultery and divorce in today's society.  
Discuss repentance and forgiveness.  
Is there a place for Christian schools, colleges, schools of religion, and schools for preachers? Discuss.



Scale of Miles  
0 20 40 60 80 100 120

Above 3000 Feet  
1500 to 3000  
From below sea level  
to 1500 feet above



MAP OF  
**PALESTINE**  
IN THE TIME OF OUR  
SAVIOUR

9,000 ft  
8,000  
7,000  
6,000  
5,000  
4,000  
3,000  
2,000  
1,000  
Sea Level

Scale of Miles  
0 5 10 20 30

Mt Hermon  
Mts  
Upper Galilee  
Lower Galilee

Sea of Galilee  
Mt. Sion  
Mt. Zion  
Mt. Olivet  
Samaris  
Jerusalem  
Judea  
Hebron

THIRD QUARTER  
LIVING FOR CHRIST  
(Part 1)

*AIM.—To study in detail those qualities of heart and characteristics of life which all who profess to be Christians must acquire and exhibit in order to enjoy the approval of our Lord here, and eternal life hereafter.*

Lesson I—July (i, 1975)

LIVING FOR CHRIST

Lesson Text

Phil. 1:12-26

12 Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel;

13 So that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole praetorian guard, and to all the rest;

14 And that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16 The one *do it* of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel;

17 But the other proclaim Christ of faction, not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds.

18 What then? only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this shall turn

out to my salvation, through your supplication and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 According to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death.

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 But if to live in the flesh,—*if* this shall bring fruit from my work, then what I shall choose I know not.

23 But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better:

24 Yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith;

26 That your glorying may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my presence with you again.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ.”* (Phil. 1:27.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Phil. 1:1-11.

Daily Bible Readings

June	30.	M.....	Living for Christ (Phil. 1:12-26)
July	1.	T.....	Suffering with Christ (1 Pet. 2:21-25)
July	2.	W.....	Meeting Temptation Like Christ (Luke 4:1-13)
July	3.	T.....	Following Christ (Luke 9:57-62)
July	4.	F.....	Winning Others to Christ (John 1:40-45)
July	5.	S.....	Praying as Christ Taught (Matt. 6:5-15)
July	6.	S.....	Overcoming Evil (1 John 2:15-17)

TIME.—A.D. 61, toward the close of the year.

PLACES.—Rome in Italy and Philippi in Macedonia.

PERSONS.—Paul and the saints at Philippi.

## Introduction

The general theme for study for the third quarter is entitled: "Living for Christ." The aim of the study is to consider in detail those qualities of heart and characteristics of life which all who profess to be Christians must acquire and exhibit in order to enjoy the approval of our Lord here, and eternal life hereafter.

The lesson for today's study is taken from Paul's epistle to the Philippians. This is one of Paul's prison epistles—that is, Paul was a prisoner in Rome when he wrote the epistles. Four of Paul's epistles—Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, and Philippians—were prison epistles. Three of these epistles—Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians—were written in A.D. 60, and were dispatched by Tychicus to their respective destinations.

Philemon, one of Paul's converts, from either Colossae or Laodicea of the Lycus Valley, was the owner of a slave by the name of Onesimus. This slave wronged Philemon—he probably stole from him—and fled to Rome where he came in contact with Paul and was converted to Christ. Thus both Philemon and Onesimus were Paul's converts. Paul would have cheerfully kept Onesimus, he waited upon Paul, except for two considerations: for one thing, there was the matter of Philemon's legal ownership of Onesimus, and for another thing, there was Onesimus' obligation to make restitution. Paul, however, would not send Onesimus back at the full mercy of his master—being a slave. Onesimus had no legal rights whatsoever—and he, therefore, sent Tychicus along with a brief letter to explain and to intercede with Philemon in behalf of Onesimus. Tychicus and Onesimus would necessarily pass through the cities of Ephesus and Colossae, and Paul took advantage of the situation to dispatch not only the letter to Philemon and to the church in his house, but also the

letter to the church at Ephesus and the letter to the church at Colossae. In those days the means of writing letters to people at a distance was confined to those times when the writer had the opportunity to forward his letters to their respective destinations by his acquaintances who were traveling in such directions.

Paul, having received knowledge from Epaphras of a new error that had cropped up in the church at Colossae—a combination of asceticism, Gnosticism, and Judaism—felt pressed to write the brethren at Colossae. The trip that Tychicus was to make provided him with the opportunity to dispatch the letters to Colossae and Ephesus. The nature of the two epistles, Colossians and Ephesians, suggest that Colossians was written first, since it is directed against false doctrine in a local situation. After having written Colossians, Paul probably wrote Ephesians, a more general epistle, in contemplation of the possible spread of the erroneous doctrine. The Colossian epistle stresses how that Christ is the head of the entire universe; whereas, the Ephesian epistle stresses how that Christ is head over the church. Of special note then is the fact that the three epistles, Philemon, Colossians, and Ephesians, were written at the same time, and this is shown by the references in Colossians to Tychicus and Onesimus, by reference in Ephesians to Tychicus, and by reference in Philemon to Onesimus, thereby making Colossians the link between Ephesians and Philemon. (Col. 4:7-9; Eph. 6:21-22; Phile. 10-12.)

The point of emphasis in this overview is that Philippians, the fourth of Paul's prison epistles, was written about one year later (A.D. 61) than the other three. This is a pertinent point which should be borne in mind as the text for this lesson is considered.

## The Golden Text

*"Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ."* After four years of imprisonment—two years at Caesarea and two years at Rome—Paul had a hearing before

Caesar's Court, and all things had gone well. He expected his immediate release. Soon he would be a free man, and he wrote with delightful anticipation of another visit

to Philippi. He was experiencing great joy; he had high hopes; but he was practical. The verdict could be disappointing! crushing!

"Only," he wrote the Philippians, "let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel . . . of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or be absent [whether the final outcome of the trial be favorable or unfavorable], I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the

gospel." Paul was concerned for the spiritual welfare of his converts. The cares of the churches pressed daily upon him. More than anything else he would have the Philippians and all others, to live in such a way that their manner of life would be worthy of the gospel of Christ. His great desire was that they should be characterized by holiness, commitment, spiritual resourcefulness, and good works.

### The Text Explained

#### Paul and God's Providence

(Phil. 1:12-14)

*Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole praetorian guard, and to all the rest; and that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear.*

Paul was a prisoner at Caesarea for two years during which time no decision was made of his case, and from which, therefore, no appeal would be made. When Festus, the new procurator at Caesarea, proposed, in an effort to please the Jews, that the case be tried in Jerusalem, Paul, in keeping with his rights as a Roman citizen, appealed his case to Caesar at Rome.

Paul had for a long time desired to visit Rome. Three years prior to his appeal to Caesar, he had written a lengthy epistle to the church in Rome as a means of laying a foundation for his visit. No apostle had ever been to Rome. The church had been established by those who heard the gospel on Pentecost, and they had been members of the church much longer than Paul. Paul no doubt knew, or was apprehensive of, certain attitudes among those Jewish brethren at Rome—attitudes such as had been demonstrated among the churches of Galatia—and he wrote his epistle so as to set forth by apostolic authority the fundamentals of Christianity, and that in such a manner as to conciliate, if possible, the antagonistic spirit of the Jewish Christians

toward the Gentile Christians. Some of Paul's own converts had taken up residence in Rome by the time that he wrote his epistle to the Romans.

Though Paul, having no more place in those regions where he had not preached, felt a strong desire to visit Rome, he could not possibly have anticipated that his visit to Rome would be as a prisoner under the supervision of the Roman military. Luke's graphic record of Paul's being carried to Rome under military guard leaves only a hint of the emotional shock which Paul experienced. When the brethren met him as far as the market of Appius and The Three Taverns, "Paul thanked God and took courage," thereby evincing the dread and fears which he had entertained relative to the brethren's possible unwillingness to receive him under the alleged and suspicious circumstances of his being brought to Rome as a criminal. Paul's bonds were humiliating, as they would be to any person of conscience and character. When later he wrote his letter to the Colossians, he was still conscious of those bonds. "Continue steadfastly in prayer, . . . for us," he wrote, "that God may open unto us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak." (Col. 4:2-4.) In short, Paul was looking for and praying for an open door for the gospel!

Very surprising is the fact that to the Philippians a year later, Paul wrote that his bonds had fallen out rather to the progress of the gospel, that Christ had been manifested to the whole praetorian guard, and

that as a further result of the bonds the brethren were more confident and bold to speak the word without fear. Like Joseph, on seeing the working of the providence of God, said to his brethren: "Ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good" (Gen. 50:20), just so the apostle Paul had come to observe the overruling providence of God in his own life.

Paul's bonds consisted of a chain with which he was bound day and night to a Roman guard. The guard was changed every three hours—at least for the waking hours—and no wonder then that Christ was known to the whole praetorian guard and to Caesar's household as well! (Phil. 4:22.)

### Paul and His Enemies

(Phil. 1:15-18)

*Some indeed, preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one do it of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel; but the other proclaim Christ of faction, not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds. What then? only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.*

Paul's apprehension relative to certain Jewish leaders in the church in Rome—as per his epistle to the Romans written some three years before his arrival in Rome—were not unfounded. There were preachers who were jealous of Paul and his position as an apostle. Their jealousy and sectarian spirit, as is the case today among some brethren, generated within them a crusading evangelistic spirit. They preached apparently not from a spirit of love and compassion for souls, but rather with a spirit to excel and outdo the position and work of Paul.

Paul's reaction was positive. He rejoiced that Christ was preached. Such teachers would be the means of salvation for many people who would likely never discern the motives of the preachers.

### Paul and His Body

(Phil. 1:19-21)

*For I know that this shall turn out to my salvation, through your*

*supplication and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earliest expectation and hope, that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

Paul returns to his trial before Caesar. He is confident that he will be delivered from prison. Relying heavily on the brethren's prayers and supplications for his deliverance, and upon the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, which supply comes from obedience of the Word, he expresses the confidence that he will not be put to shame, or disappointed. In keeping with his earnest expectation and hope, he is confident that he will soon be free to take up again the evangelistic trail and with all boldness speak the Word.

Whether before Caesar or otherwise, notwithstanding, Paul had purposed that he would magnify Christ in his body. Whether dead or alive, he would magnify Christ in his body. If allowed to live and thereby to be given his freedom, he would with boldness preach the Word. If not allowed to live, he would die the death of a martyr, thereby confirming the doctrine of Christ.

### Christ in Paul

(Phil. 1:22-26)

*But if to live in the flesh,—if this shall bring fruit from my work, then what I shall choose I know not. But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith; that your glorying may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my presence with you again.*

Christ was Paul's whole life. If allowed to live, he would preach and exalt Christ. If not allowed to live, he would be brought into union with Christ. His death would be his gain! To Paul, death held no horror—no dread! It was

the avenue to a new and glorious life.

Paul, therefore, was in a strait. On the one hand, to die would be his gain, but, on the other hand, to live would be very far better for the souls of men. Through Paul's teaching and influence many souls would be brought to Christ and many Christians would be more fully taught and strengthened in the faith. Paul was prematurely old. He had suffered much hard-

ship. To die then would be for him "very far better."

Paul was confident, however, that he would abide—that he would be set free, and his deliverance would turn out as a blessing to the Philippians. He would teach them, he would encourage them, he would pray for them, and their glorying would abound in that the Spirit of Christ would be manifest to them again through the means of his personal presence.

### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

1. All spiritual blessings are in Christ. (Eph. 1:3.)

2. A person cannot live for Christ until he is first in Christ.

3. Christ is the vine, and no person can bear viable spiritual fruit who is not in and/or does not abide in that vine. (John 15.)

4. The means of entrance into Christ is through obedience to the gospel—faith, repentance, confession, and baptism.

5. Baptism is the consummating

step that puts a person into Christ. (Rom. 6:3.)

6. Baptism is the consummating step that puts a person in contact with the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ. (Rom. 6:3.)

7. The person who has come in contact with the blood may continue under the blood by walking in the light as he (Christ) is in the light. The blood cleanseth—continues to cleanse—such as walk in the light from all their sins. (John 1:6-9.)

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

What is meant by prison epistles?

What were Paul's four prison epistles?

What was the occasion of the epistle to Philemon?

Discuss the problem that had arisen in the church at Colossae.

Who bore the letters or epistles to their respective destinations?

What was the occasion for the trip to the Lycus Valley?

Which was the more general epistle?

How may one establish the fact that the three epistles were written at the same time?

#### The Golden Text

How long was Paul imprisoned, and where?

What was Paul's great desire for the church at Philippi?

#### Paul and God's Providence

Had Paul desired to visit Rome?

Why did Paul write the Roman epistle?

Who established the church at Rome?

Why did Paul thank God and take courage?

What was Paul's request when he wrote the Colossians?

When did Paul write Colossians?

When did he write Philippians?

What change had come over Paul in the meantime?

#### Paul and His Enemies

How did some preach Christ?

For what reason were they preaching?

On what basis could Paul thank God that some were preaching?

Are there similar cases among brethren today?

How did Paul purpose to magnify Christ?

#### Christ in Paul

What was the purpose of Paul?

Did Paul dread death? Why?

Why was Paul in a strait?

#### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

Can a person live the Christian life without first obeying the gospel? Discuss.

How does a person get into Christ?

Discuss.

How does a person continue in Christ?

Discuss.



Lesson II—July 13, 1975

CHRIST OUR LIFE

Lesson Text

Col. 3:1-11

1 If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God.

2 Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth.

3 For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ *who is* our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory.

5 Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry;

6 For which things' sake cometh

the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience:

7 Wherein ye also once walked, when ye lived in these things;

8 But now do ye also put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth:

9 Lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings,

10 And have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." (Col. 3:16.)  
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Col. 3:12-17.

Daily Bible Readings

- July 7. M..... The Christ-Centered Life (Col. 3:1-4)
- July 8. T..... Christ, Source of Life (1 John 5:1-12)
- July 9. W..... Christ, the True Vine (John 15:1-8)
- July 10. T..... Christ, Our Sin-Bearer (1 Pet. 2:21-24)
- July 11. F..... Christ, Our King (1 Cor. 15:20-28)
- July 12. S..... Christ Our Hope in Death (1 Cor. 15:12-19)
- July 13. S..... Changed to Be Like Christ (Phil. 3:17-21)

TIME.—A.D. 60, at about the middle of Paul's two-year imprisonment at Rome.

PLACES.—Rome in Italy and Colossae on the border of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

PERSONS.—Paul and the saints at Colossae.

Introduction

The epistle to the Colossians is one of the most important that Paul wrote. A historical background of the church at Colossae is imperative for a full understanding and appreciation of the scripture selected for today's lesson.

Colossae, located in the southwest region of Phrygia in Asia Minor on the Lycus River, a tributary of the Meander, some twelve miles upstream from Laodicea and Hierapolis, was a city of prestige during its early history. In Paul's day it had been out-ranked and eclipsed by Laodicea and Apameia. In or

about the year that Paul wrote his epistle (A.D. 60), Colossae, along with Laodicea and Hierapolis, suffered a great earthquake.

The entire region was characterized by unusual physical features. Mount Cadmus stood in the background, and the Lycus River, with its pearly white chalky banks, flowed gently from east to west. Hot springs, so common to the area, made for health and vacation resorts, and the great highway or trade route from Ephesus to the Orient ran through the region. The region was quite fertile and well

adapted to the pasturing of great flocks of sheep, which in turn produced a high grade of fleece. The area was a center for the woolen industry. The entire region, especially Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, was prosperous. No wonder that when Christ dictated a letter to Laodicea, he said: "Thou sayest, I am rich, and gave gotten riches!"

The peoples that made up the area of Phrygia consisted of native Phrygians, and Greeks, and Jews. The Phrygians were known for their worship of Bacchus and Cybele, the mother of the gods. In their worship, both sexes participated with all sorts of orgies and lewd rites, and the priests of Cybele, given to delirious fanaticisms as they reeled and whirled and danced to blaring horns and clashing cymbals, claimed a maddening fellowship with the spirit world. Their convulsions and contortions were certain evidence of their inspiration! The Greek disciples of Pythagoras and Plato held that every human being had lived in some pre-existent state in bodies of humans and of brutes and that the government of the world was carried on by beings inferior to their god but superior to man. The Jews—first deported to Phrygia by Antiochus the Great—were wealthy and in the main unorthodox. The Talmud recorded: "The wines and baths of Phrygia have separated the ten tribes from Israel."

Paul did not establish the church at Colossae. He was unknown by face to the brethren there, but he was known to Epaphras, their minister. Epaphras, disturbed by certain problems that had arisen in the church at Colossae, had visited Rome and laid the matter in full

before Paul. Paul sensed immediately the roots of what could, and did, become a very pernicious heresy.

The Colossian heresy was a combination of Judaism, Grecian philosophy, Oriental Mysticism, and Christianity—a combination of ritualism, asceticism, and mysticism. The heresy was in and of the church—a thread of Christianity interwoven into the fabrics of ritualism, philosophy and mysticism. Its chief fault was a failure to place the proper emphasis on Christ. As a result of the heresy, the church was characterized by philosophy and vain deceit; by the observance of meats, drink, feast days, new moons, and sabbaths; and by voluntary humility and the worshiping of angels.

In his epistle to the Colossians, Paul wasted no time in identifying and denouncing the false teachers. Referring to the heresy in general terms, he observed:

1. That prohibitions and ordinances fail to restrain from evil.
2. That asceticism or bodily austerity is of no value against indulgences of the flesh.
3. That philosophy is only an empty delusion—or vain deceit.
4. That the traditions of men are not according to divine revelation.
5. That mysticism has no regard for Christ as head of the church. (Col. 2:16-23.)

In short, Paul emphasized that the Christian is made full "in him"—or in Christ, and nowhere else. The "in him" is accomplished by one's becoming dead to sin and by being baptized into him. There can be no spiritual growth out of Christ. A person must continue "in him" to grow "in him."

### The Golden Text

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Paul's admonition is clear. It should be heeded by every Christian, but let this be remembered: the Word cannot dwell richly in the person who reads it only occasionally or not at all.

Further, the Word cannot dwell richly in the person who fails to contemplate and meditate upon it. Still further, the Word cannot dwell richly in the person who fails to practice it.

### The Text Explained

**Raised with Christ**

(Col. 3:1)

*If then ye were raised together*

*with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God.*

This verse is a kind of conclusion to many things that Paul had already said. The emphasis that Paul makes here, is that the Colossian church should seek the things above where Christ is, and should not worship angels, through their voluntary humility. They had already been baptized into Christ and raised to walk in newness of life, and they were under heaven's imposed obligation to seek him who was seated on the right hand of God. Christ was and is sufficient to meet all human needs, and this fact Paul had already pointed out in the epistle, as follows:

1. Christ is the image of the invisible God. (1:15.)
2. He is the firstborn of all creation. (1:15.)
3. He created all things. (1:16.)
4. He was before all things, and in him all things consist. (1:17.)
5. He is the head of the church. (1:18.)
6. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead. (1:18.)
7. In all things he has the pre-eminence. (1:18.)
8. In him all the fulness dwells. (1:19.)
9. In him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (2:3.)
10. In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (2:9.)
11. In him the Colossians were made full. (2:10.)
12. He made the Colossian Christians alive together with him. (2:13.)

#### Set Affections Above

(Col. 3:2-4)

*Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory.*

Paul thus encouraged the Colossian Christians to so discipline their minds that they would set their affections—their thoughts and desires—on heavenly matters, like faith, humility, righteousness, obedience, and good works. He warned the church there against their setting their affections on things upon the earth, such as the lust for the sen-

sual, the lust for wealth and possessions, and the lust for power.

Paul states the reason for his admonition: "For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God." When they obeyed the gospel, they died to sin and to the practice of sin. This every penitent person does. The Christian is in Christ, and Christ is in God—hence the spiritual life of the Christian is a oneness with Christ and God.

Christ shall be manifested one day, that is he will come again, and the Colossian Christians, as well as all others, will be manifested with him in his glory. In short, Paul believed in the second coming of Christ, and he looked forward to it. When Christ comes again, the saints that are dead will come with him, and those that are alive shall be caught up with him, and all the righteous shall be manifested with him in glory.

#### Put to Death Your Members

(Col. 3:5-11)

*Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the soils of disobedience: wherein ye also once walked, when ye lived in these things; but now do ye also put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth: lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all.*

Having set forth how that Christ is all and all, pre-eminent in every respect, Paul calls upon the Colossians to put to death their members which are upon the earth:

**Fornication**—the unlawful and illicit sexual intercourse between a man and woman, whether neither, or either, or both are married.

**Uncleanness**—involves impure sex as fornication, except the term is broader and includes orgies, bestiality, and homosexuality.

*Passion, evil desire*—the inward and evil desires that stem from an inordinate sexual appetite.

*Covetousness which is idolatry*—the unlawful desire to have that which belongs to another, a neighbor's wife or field, and thus the worship of one's own strong fleshly desires.

*Anger*—a deep seated feeling of ill will.

*Wrath*—the fiery outburst of temper.

*Malice*—a settled, cruel malignity which rejoices in evil to others.

*Railing*—coarse language that is scornful and rebellious.

*Shameful speaking*—obscene talk calculated to excite to lustful passions.

*Lying*—the intention to deceive whether by words, deeds, or acts.

The wrath of God is upon all those who walk in such sins, and this had once been the course of those who made up the church at Colossae, but they had been washed and redeemed. They had put off the old man—the outward man or the controlling spirit of the flesh—and they had put on the new man—the inward controlling spirit of righteousness.

Through a continuing knowledge the Colossians would become more and more like Christ in feelings, purposes, and actions. In Christ there are no distinctions of sex, age, race, or nationality. Christ is all, and in all.

### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

1. Paul warned against the dangers of ceremonialism, asceticism, and mysticism. These dangers are very common in the religious world today.

2. The Pharisaic ceremonialism of the Jews was not according to divine revelation: (a) it explained away the obligation to the fifth commandment and permitted a son to neglect his aged parents under a pretense of superior liberality to God; (b) it tithed "mint, anise, and cumin," but forgot the weightier matters of the law—judgment, mercy, and faith; (c) it scrupled to eat with sinners and with unwashed hands, but it was forward to make great pretense and to worship with an unregenerate heart; (d) it was eloquent and precise about the cleansing of cups, but it was dumb and remiss about the cleansing and purifying of the conscience; (e) it was strong and mighty for the letter of the law, but oblivious to the spirit of it; (f) it was far more interested in the innumerable supplements to the law than the principles in it;

(g) it was careful to sacrifice a lamb, but it was indifferent to the sacrifice of the heart.

3. Grecian philosophy was only empty delusions and "vain deceits"—a study which in the main is a waste of time, particularly a study of the philosophy of existentialism.

4. Oriental mysticism claimed to know the secrets of heaven and the grades and functions and hierarchy thereof. The oriental mystics affected a deep voluntary humility. For show they washed the beggars' feet; with coarse rags, they walked barefooted and glorified in their feeling of self-annihilation; and with professed lowliness they defended their fallacies with a strong spirit of haughtiness.

5. Christianity requires the Christian to "put off" certain character traits; and conversely, it requires the Christian to "put on" certain character traits. (Col. 3.)

6. The Christian life is lived only in Christ. It is the very antithesis of an officious show, and parade, and display of proud humility.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give the time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

Where was Colossae located?  
Describe the prestige of this city during Paul's time.  
List several characteristics of the region in which Colossae was located.  
Why did the people of Colossae say, "I am rich"?

People of what nationality made up the area of Phrygia?  
Describe the worship of the Phrygians.  
Who was Epaphras?  
Describe the heresy in Colossae.  
What effect did the heresy have on the church there?  
What was Paul's attitude toward the false teachers?  
List Paul's observations concerning the heresy.  
A person may grow spiritually only in whom?

The Golden Text  
 The Word can dwell only in whom?  
 Raised with Christ  
 Why was it becoming for the Colossians  
 to seek things which are above?  
 Through what act had the Colossians  
 been raised with Christ?  
 What are the characteristics of Christ  
 which enable him to meet all human  
 needs?

Set Affections Above  
 Contrast setting one's affections above  
 with setting one's affections on things  
 upon the earth.  
 Why should one set his affections on  
 things above?  
 What was Paul's attitude toward the sec-  
 ond coming?

Put to Death Your Members  
 Define "fornication."

From what does passion and evil desire  
 stem?  
 Why is covetousness described as idola-  
 try?  
 What is "malice"?  
 Describe the "old man" whom the Colos-  
 sian brethren had put off.  
 What is the "new man"?  
 How would the Colossians become more  
 like Christ?  
 What distinctions exist in Christ?

Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson  
 Define ceremonialism, asceticism, and  
 mysticism.  
 Discuss the scruples of ceremonialism in  
 contrast to the actual tenor and spirit  
 of God's law.  
 Contrast philosophy with truth.  
 What are the character traits that a  
 Christian must "put off"?  
 What are the character traits that a  
 Christian must "put on"?

Lesson III—July 20, 1975

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE

Lesson Text

Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Pet. 2:21-25

5 Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped,

7 But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men;

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient *even* unto death, yea, the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name;

10 That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven and *things* on earth and *things* under the earth,

11 And that every tongue should

confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father:

21 For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

24 Who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.

25 For ye were going astray like sheep: but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ."* (1 Cor. 11:1.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Phil. 2:1-4.

Daily Bible Readings

- July 14. M..... Christ, Our Example in Obedience (Heb. 5:1-10)
- July 15. T..... Christ, Our Example in Forgiving Others (Luke 23:33-38)
- July 16. W. ....Christ, Our Example in Meeting Temptation (Matt. 4:1-11)
- July 17. T..... Christ, Our Example in Prayer (Matt. 26:36-46)
- July 18. F..... Christ, Our Example in Condemning Error (Matt. 15:1-14)
- July 19. S..... ..Christ, Our Example in Suffering (1 Pet. 4:12-19)
- July 20. S..... ..Christ, Our Example in Humility (1 Pet. 3:8-17)

TIME.—A.D. 61 for Philippians and A.D. 64-65 for First Peter.

PLACES.—For Philippians, Rome in Italy and Philippi in Macedonia. For First Peter, Babylon, the chief city of Babylonia on the continent of Asia.

PERSONS.—Paul and the saints of Philippi, and Peter and the saints of Asia Minor.

### Introduction

Paul's letter to the Philippians was warm and personal. He used the pronoun "I" fifty-two times. The church at Philippi was the first that Paul founded in Europe. There were two prominent converts at the beginning of the gospel in that city: Lydia, a seller of purple of Thyatira, and the jailor, a Roman officer. Lydia, the seller of purple, was engaged in a very lucrative trade. The jailor was a Roman and entitled to all rights, privileges, and prerogatives guaranteed by Roman citizenship. There was no synagogue in the city.

History through the centuries has given testimony as to how that the principles of Christianity have raised the dignity and position of women and slaves, and has been responsible for the abolishment of slavery. Of considerable interest is the fact that a woman was the principal figure in the founding of the church at Philippi. Of further interest is the fact that in the beginning the church at Philippi was made up primarily of women.

Lydia, a person of wealth and prestige, left no doubt in showing a concern for Paul's needs. She likely made liberal contributions through the church to Paul's financial support even while he was in Macedonia. Paul felt very close to this church, and he accepted gifts from them while rejecting support from other churches. The women at Philippi very likely were considerably responsible for the continued concern shown for Paul's personal needs.

Paul's very personal letter to the Philippians was occasioned by Epaphroditus' purpose to return to Philippi. He had formerly borne a gift from the Philippian church to Paul at Rome. On his arrival at Rome, he served with Paul in the gospel, but soon thereafter he became ill to the point of death, having hazarded his life for the cause of Christ, and could not return to Philippi. After an extended period of convalescence, he had completely

regained his health, but he was homesick, and thereby planned to leave for Philippi. Paul took advantage of Epaphroditus' return, and he composed a letter to dispatch to the church at Philippi. He wrote to express to the brethren his gratitude for the gift, to give a report on the favorable outcome of his first hearing before Caesar's Court, and to assure them that he hoped to send Timothy unto them at an early date, who would give them a full report of his (Paul's) welfare.

There were no doctrinal problems at Philippi, and thus there are few doctrinal references in the letter—only three in fact. (Phil. 2:5-11; 3:9-11, 20-21.) There had arisen in the church, however, a spirit of strife. There were contentions and disputes, if not opposing parties. The disputes were not over doctrine, but rather, they were over personal matters. An undesigned coincidence is that while the gospel was first preached in Philippi to women, the peace of the church had come to be endangered by a feud between women, but Paul did not take sides. He remembered that both women had labored with him in the gospel. (Phil. 4:2-3.)

With indirect delicacy Paul demonstrated that he was no partisan. He thanked God for all of them, he remembered all of them in his prayers, he had all of them in his heart, he longed after each one of them. (Phil. 1:1-11.)

In solemn exhortation, Paul appealed to those disputing Philippians to "be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others." (Phil. 2:1-4.)

These are some of the essential matters that should be held in mind as consideration is given to the portion of the lesson text taken from Philippians 2:5-11. The subject:

"Christ Our Example" has specific application to the verses taken from

Philippians, as well as the verses taken from First Peter.

### The Golden Text

*"Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ."* Christ is man's example, a perfect pattern, and that which is characteristic of Christ should be characteristic of every responsible soul. Like Paul, every responsible person should be an imitator of Christ. If a person is a true imitator of Christ, he can also say, as Paul did: "Be ye imitators

of me, even as I also am of Christ." While there are areas in which a Christian cannot copy Christ as his example—for example, he cannot copy Christ's redemptive acts of suffering and dying vicariously—he can copy the character and spirit of Christ which was basic to those acts.

### The Text Explained

#### Christ Sacrificed His Pre-existent State for the Salvation of Man (Phil. 2:5-8)

*Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.*

In keeping with the solemn and earnest plea that the Philippians be characterized by oneness, lowliness, and helpfulness; Paul proceeded to point out how that Christ had, as their example, manifested those very graces. "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," Paul admonished.

In detailing the oneness and lowliness and helpfulness of Christ, Paul affirmed the doctrine of the pre-incarnate Christ and also the doctrine of the incarnate Christ. In his pre-incarnate state, Christ was wholly divine, but in his incarnate state, he was wholly human and wholly divine. Without the pre-incarnate Christ, there could be no incarnate Christ; and without the incarnate Christ, the could be no system of Christianity. The incarnation—the enfleshment of Christ—is a basic cardinal doctrine of Christianity.

Paul enjoined the Philippians to have the mind of Christ by exemplifying in their lives those controlling characteristics which possessed Christ to come to earth to die for man. The reading and inter-reading comments follow:

*"Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, existing in the form of God [the state of his eternal pre-existence], counted not the being on an equality with God [equality and essence of God in his pre-existent state] a thing to be grasped [or held on to—something to cling to], but emptied [divested] himself [gave up his pre-existent state—or emptied himself of that existence which was equal to God], taking the form of a servant | took the form of and filled the office of a servant or bond servant], being made in the likeness of men [fashioned in the appearance of a man, thus born into the world with a body of flesh and blood and bone]; and being found in the fashion of a man [with all outward appearance of a man from birth to death], he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."*

If the Philippians took on the mind of Christ, they would thereby be characterized by humility and subjection as was so characteristic of Christ, and they would as a matter of course, give up their rivalry, and their disputes. Paul's great desire was that they would imitate the example that Christ had set.

#### Christ Humbled Himself and God Exalted Him (Phil. 2:9-11)

*Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that*

*Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

The way up is down, and the way down is up. Christ had taught his disciples this lesson. He who would become the greatest in the kingdom must be servant of all! (Mark 10:35-44.) Christ was crucified as if he were the lowest of notorious malefactors, but as was the shame of his humiliation, so was the honor of his exaltation. God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name—a name of office, rank and dignity, a name that excels every name of every creature in the universe, and a name worthy of worship and adoration. When Jesus comes again, every knee of man will bow. The angelic host and the redeemed of mankind will do so joyfully, and the damned, evil angels, demons, and men, will bow in fear and great remorse.

#### Christ Is Man's Example

(1 Pet. 2:21-25)

*For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were going astray like sheep: but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.*

Christ suffered for man, and the Christian in turn must suffer for Christ. Paul wrote: "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.) Christ is man's example, his pattern for imitation, his mould for living the Christian life. The Greek word here translated "example" does not appear elsewhere in the New Testament. It means a copy set by a penman for imitation, or a drawing set by an artist for reproduction.

The Christian should imitate Christ. He should reproduce in his own life the kind of life which Christ lived. As Peter shifts the figure, the Christian should place his feet in the footprints left behind by the Saviour. When imitating Christ, the Christian should remember that Christ did no sin; that guile, or craftiness, was not found in his mouth; that when he was reviled, subjected to verbal abuse, he reviled not again; that when he suffered he threatened not, did not retaliate; but instead committed himself to God whose very throne is righteousness and who would, therefore, render a righteous judgment. (Psalm 89:14.)

Christ bore the sins of man in his body upon the tree. He made his body of flesh a sin offering for fallen and sinful man. Without that sin offering, without the shedding of his blood, innocent blood, there could be no hope, and no redemption for mortal man. Animal sacrifices were not sufficient. The Hebrew writer expressed the matter in these words: "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith. Sacrifice and offerings thou wouldest not, but a body [a body of flesh and bone and blood] didst thou prepare for me [Christ]; in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin | the animal sacrifices that man had offered over the intervening centuries] thou | God | hadst no pleasure | the sacrifices of animal blood did not properly atone or meet the righteous demands of justice." (Heb. 10:5-6.)

Christ died for man that man might, in turn, die to sin, and live unto righteousness. Through Christ's stripes—bruises, crucifixion, and death—man may be healed from his sins.

When Christ died for man, all men were under sin. all men like sheep had gone astray, but as a shepherd gathereth together his sheep, so Christ, as the bishop of souls, has led men from the course of sin into a course or life of righteousness.

#### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

*Epaphroditus*

1. Epaphroditus was Paul's

brother, and fellow worker, and fellow soldier.



2. He was the church's messenger and the church's minister to Paul's needs.

3. He hazarded his life to supply that which was lacking in the church's service for Paul.

4. He was a real spiritual leader in the church at Philippi.

*Christ Our Example*

1. Christ's example was a perfect

one—so perfect in fact that his example has the force of rule or law.

2. Christ is an example in such a way and manner that he stimulates the imitation of men.

3. Christ is an example of suffering, of forgiveness, of submission, of humility, and of courage.

4. Christ gave his life for man, and man can afford to do no less than give his life for Christ.

Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give the time, places, and persons.

Introduction

Describe Paul's letter to the Philippians. Philippi was the first church that Paul founded where?

Name the first two prominent converts in Philippi.

Describe each of these converts.

What was notably absent from the city?

Give the influence of Christianity upon the position of women and upon the institution of slavery.

The church at Philippi at the beginning was made up primarily of whom?

What attitude did this church have toward the needs of Paul?

What influence did Epaphroditus' presence in Rome have upon Paul's writing to the church in Philippi?

List three purposes of Paul's letter to the Philippian brethren.

What accounts for the scarcity of doctrinal references in the letter?

Describe the disputes existing in the church in Philippi.

What was Paul's reaction toward the people involved in the feud?

The Golden Text

Man is to follow what example?  
What characteristics of Christ can we imitate?

Christ Sacrificed His Pre-existent State for the Salvation of Man

Describe the pre-incarnate state of Christ's existence.

Describe the incarnate state of Christ, and discuss its importance.

Of what did Christ empty himself?

What is meant by having the mind of Christ?

How would taking on the mind of Christ change the Philippians?

Christ Humbled Himself and God Exalted Him

What characterizes the greatest in the kingdom?

Why and how was Christ exalted?

Who must bow before Christ?

Christ is Man's Example

Why can the Christian expect to suffer persecution?

In what ways is Christ our example in times of persecution?

Why did Christ's blood have to be shed?

In what way was Christ's body prepared?

What enables man to die to sin?

How is Christ the bishop of souls?

Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

Who was Epaphroditus?

What had Epaphroditus meant to Paul and to the church at Philippi?

Christ is our example in what different ways?

Lesson IV—July 27, 1975

CHRIST, SOURCE OF STRENGTH AND EVERY NEED

Lesson Text

Phil. 4:4-13

4 Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice.

5 Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things

are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9 The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

10 But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length ye have revived your thought for me; wherein ye did

indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content.

12 I know how to be abased, and

I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want.

13 I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“But godliness with contentment is great gain.”* (1 Tim. 6: 6.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 6:25-34.

Daily Bible Readings

July 21. M.....	Christ, Our Saviour (1 Cor. 15:1-3)
July 22. T.....	Christ, Our King (Zech. 9:1-9)
July 23. W.....	Christ, Mediator (1 Tim. 2:1-5)
July 24. T.....	Christ, The Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:1-6)
July 25. F.....	Christ, the Good Shepherd (John 10:1-10)
July 26. S.....	Christ, The Way to God (John 14:1-6)
July 27. S.....	Christ, Our Advocate (1 John 2:1)

TIME.—A.D. 61, toward the close of the year.

PLACES.—Rome in Italy and Philippi in Macedonia.

PERSONS.—Paul and the saints at Philippi.

Introduction

Christ is verily the source and strength for every need. He gave himself to die on an accursed tree in order that man may be free—free of false ambitions, false desires, and false hopes; and free of sin and death. There is complete provision in Christ.

1. Does one long for a knowledge of the invisible God? He will find that knowledge in Christ.

2. Does one long for pardon and acceptance? This he can surely have through Christ!

3. Does one aspire to an ideal moral and spiritual development? This he can have through a spiritual union with Christ!

4. Does one long to have a true friend? Jesus said: “Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you”!

5. Is one spiritually hungry? Christ is the bread of life!

6. Is one spiritually thirsty? Christ is the fount of living water!

7. Is one in quest of truth? Christ is the way, the truth, and the life!

8. Would one see the Father? Jesus said: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father”!

9. Would one live forever? Jesus said: “He that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live”!

The Golden Text

*“But godliness with contentment is great gain.”* Paul’s words of this golden text agree with his words to the Philippians. To them, he wrote: “I have learned, in whatever state I am, therein to be content. . . . I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.” (Phil. 4:12, 13.) Contentment is a condition of the heart. It is not dependent upon

time or circumstances, but it is contingent upon godliness. Whether Paul was filled or hungry, he was content. He was godly, and he had, therefore, peace of mind and soul. Material things did not count with him. He was not minded to be rich, or powerful, or popular. He only wanted to serve his Lord.

The Text Explained

The apostle Paul apparently felt closer to the church at Philippi than to any other church. It was a good church. The brethren there were

much concerned for his welfare. This concern they had shown in financial support from the very beginning. Epaphroditus had of recent

date borne to Paul, then imprisoned in Rome, their love, their concern for his release from prison, and their gift.

The church at Philippi was sound in the faith. It was a continent away from the erroneous doctrines that were taking root among the churches in Asia Minor. Only one problem existed at Philippi. Two women, Euodia and Syntyche, who had been true yokefellows with Paul, were estranged. Paul pled with them to resolve their differences. Paul had already admonished the whole church to "have the same mind and spirit" that Christ had exemplified.

**Paul's Parting Benediction and Exhortation to Joyfulness**  
(Phil. 4:4-9)

In the lesson text for today, Paul takes up his parting benediction and exhortation to joyfulness. This portion of the Philippian text might be referred to, in some degree at last, as "Paul's Beatitudes."

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again*

*I will say rejoice.* Some have called Paul's epistle to the Philippians, "The Epistle of Joy." Certainly Paul wrote of joy and rejoicing. What, however, did Paul really mean by his exhortation to joyfulness? Some have been heard to say that God wants all of his people to be happy—to have a good time! Others have been heard to say that members of the church of Christ are, generally, without a spirit of joy and are thereby a very unhappy people. Unquestionably, when Paul wrote of rejoicing he was not contemplating a "country club good time" but rather a joy which this world cannot give or take. There is no criticism to be filed against wholesome Christian activities and social intercourse, but Paul's charge for rejoicing runs deeper than this. In the face of persecutions, sufferings, and death of dear ones; Paul admonishes Christians to be joyful even when all is dark. That joy stems, however, from the knowledge that regardless of how dark and trying the circumstances may be, "everything will be alright" in the by and by.

Christians should truly cultivate a disposition of joy—a positiveness of character—but this does not mean

that they should get "high on the Holy Spirit" as others get "high on dope." Some Christians have allowed themselves to become by nature negative, but others seem to feel that a person should have a broad and cheerful smile even at a loved one's funeral. Both concepts are extremes. The joy of which Paul wrote is especially that inner joy that rises from a knowledge of and a faith in Christ, who will in time take care of every Christian's needs.

*Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.* Paul is saying here that a Christian should have such a gentle and forbearing spirit that he will be recognized or known for it by all with whom he may be associated. The Lord is ever at hand to hear the Christian, to satisfy his needs, and to avenge his wrongs.

*In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.* The thought here is that a Christian should not allow himself to have anxious and harassing cares. Instead, he should go to God with those anxious cares. He should carry all matters to God by means of prayer and supplications, and his petitions and supplications should always be coupled with thanksgiving, for in every circumstance there is much for which a Christian should be grateful. Paul's epistles are, in the main, characterized by an outpouring of thanksgiving to God.

*And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.* The peace of God is that peace that is founded on faith in Christ, on the unmerited favor of God's love in giving his only begotten Son as a ransom for fallen man. It is the satisfaction that comes to a Christian as a result of his faith that, come or go what may, God will take care of him. Such peace passes the understanding of man, and it particularly passes the understanding of those of the world. It surpasses every device or counsel of man. The God of peace shall guard your hearts and your thoughts—or stand as a sentry over your hearts and your thoughts.

*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* The terms—true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, good report, virtue, and praise—are arranged in a descending scale.

*Whatsoever things are true:* Paul, in the first place, urged the Philippians to think on the things that are true—the things that are absolute. Truth is absolute! It is its own perfect defense. It always stands against falsehoods or lies, against pretensions, and against hypocrisy. Its norm is God. It is a vital part of the Christian's armor. (Eph. 6:14.)

*Whatsoever things are honorable:* Paul, in the second place, urged the Philippians to think on the things that are honorable—that is deserving of honor. In speech and conduct the Christian must be of good behavior—not frivolous but serious, but wieldy but firm, not erratic but wise. He must be impelled by the proper motives, straightened by the proper morals, and regulated by the proper manners.

*Whatsoever things are just:* Paul, in the third place, urged the Philippians to think on things that are just—that is, on things that are correct and righteous. The things that are just are the things that are fair, impartial, and unbiased. The just person is a fair-minded person. He gives credit where credit is due, praise where praise is due, and criticism where criticism is due. He does not give praise or credit where praise or credit is not due.

*Whatsoever things are pure:* Paul, in the fourth place, urged the Philippians to think on things that are pure—that is things which are chaste, modest, and decent. Instead of thinking on the unchaste manners and morals of the heathens of their social environment, those Philippians were urged to fill their minds with things that were pure and holy. Such should be the resolve of every Christian in this present evil and sensual society.

*Whatsoever things are lovely:* Paul in the fifth place, urged the

Philippians to think on things that are lovely—that is things that are amiable, pleasing, and lovable as a result of moral and ideal worth. On these things the Philippians were urged to think, rather than on their ugly disputes and the unholy deeds of others.

*Whatsoever things are of good report:* Paul, in the sixth place, urged the Philippians to think on things that are of good report, that is things that are well-sounding, appealing, uplifting, and of essential worth. On these things the Christian should think, rather than on ugly, vicious, and dishonorable reports.

Paul's statements of "if"—"if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise"—was not intended to imply doubt or as to whether or not there is any virtue and praise. One use of the word "if" is to introduce an untenable argument. Here Paul approaches the thought from a positive rather than a negative point of view. Certainly there is virtue and there is praise, and a denial of the fact would be untenable. This was Paul's way of putting emphasis on the healthy and desirable fact of virtue and praise, and therefore, the Philippians would *think on these things*.

Paul then instructed: "*The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*" Paul had taught sound doctrine. He had practiced that which he had taught. He had maintained a high moral and spiritual standard of conduct while with them and while away from them. He literally said, "Do as I do." Some Christians are bound to say, "Do not as I do. but as I tell you to do." Paul gave the Philippians positive assurance that if they would do as he did, and teach as he taught, the God of peace would be with them.

#### Paul's Expression of Gratitude for the Gift from the Philippians (Phil. 4:10-13)

*But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length ye have revived your thought for me; wherein ye did indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have*

*learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.*

Paul experienced a great joy at his receiving a gift from the Philippians after so long a time, but he was sufficiently careful and delicate to say that they had not relaxed their care for him, but instead they had lacked opportunity. While expressing genuine appreciation for the gift, Paul added that he was

complaining of want. He had learned to be content with his lot, whatever it might be. Further, he said that he knew how to bear humiliation, and he also knew how to bear abundance.

Paul had lived two lifetimes or more in one. He was prematurely an old man, and he had been a prisoner for four long years. He had learned in those years how that in every circumstance—whether in plenty or in hunger; in abundance or in want, to be therewith content. He had come to possess the true spiritual life. "I can do all things," he said, "in him that strengtheneth me."

### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

1. The cure for worry and anxiety is not resignation, or suppression, or inaction; but rather, the cure is through prayer and supplications, coupled with thanksgiving.

2. The conditions that make up an acceptable prayer are as follows:

(1) it must be made in faith (Matt. 21:22); (2) it must be made in the name of Christ (1 Pet. 2:5); (3) it must be made in keeping with God's will (1 John 5:14); (4) it must be made of or concerning an acceptable matter, or not amiss (James 4:3); (5) it must be made in a spirit of humility, of obedience, and of righteousness (1 Pet. 3:12);

and (6) it must be made in a spirit of forgiveness (Matt. 6:15).

3. Paul's statement, "whatsoever things are honorable," is the basis of a good sermon. Such a sermon would emphasize, as being especially honorable, the following: proper motives, proper morals, proper manners, proper mission, and proper message.

4. Christians must strive to overcome evil with good by means of that which is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. These graces must crowd out and conquer vice.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?

Repeat the golden text.

Give the time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

Christ died that man might be free of what?

List and discuss the provisions available in Christ.

#### The Golden Text

How does this text agree with Paul's words to the Philippians?

Upon what is contentment dependent?

What enabled Paul to have peace of mind?

#### The Text Explained

What special relationship did Paul sustain with the church at Philippi?

What problem existed in Philippi?

Name the two women who were estranged.

#### Paul's Partins Benediction and Exhortation to Joyfulness

This text may be described as what?

Of what kind of joy did Paul speak?

During times of suffering, from what does joy spring?

What two extreme concepts are held by some Christians? Discuss.

In what way does the nearness of the Lord comfort the Christian?

How does the Christian alleviate harassing cares?

With what should the Christian's petitions and supplications be coupled?

Upon what is the peace of God founded?

The Christian should think upon what things?

List some characteristics of truth.

Describe the person who is just.

With what should the Christian fill his mind?

In what sense did Paul use the word "lovely"?

What example in conduct had Paul maintained before the Philippians?

#### Paul's Expression of Gratitude for the Gift from the Philippians

Why had the Philippians been so long in sending a gift to the apostle?

Was Paul complaining of want? Discuss.

Regardless of the circumstance in which Paul found himself, he manifested what attitude?

How long had Paul been a prisoner?

Through whom could Paul do all things?

Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

What is the cure for worry and anxiety?  
 What are the conditions of an acceptable prayer?

What would a sermon on "Things Honorable" include?  
 How may Christians strive to overcome evil with good?

Lesson V—August 3, 1975

CHRISTIAN GROWTH

Lesson Text

2 Pet. 1:1-11

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.

9 For he that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins.

10 Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble:

11 For thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

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

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Eph. 6:10-18.

Daily Bible Readings

July 28. M.....	The Christian Armor (Eph. 6:10-18)
July 29. T.....	The Christian Graces (2 Pet. 1:5-11)
July 30. W.....	The Christian Life (Col. 3:1-15)
July 31. T.....	The Christian Walk (Eph. 5:1-20)
August 1. F.....	The Christian Hope (2 Cor. 5:1-10)
August 2. S.....	The Christian Home (Eph. 5:22-33)
August 3. S.....	The Christian Assurance (Heb. 13:1-8)

TIME.—A.D. 66-67, written shortly after First Peter and before Jude.

PLACE.—The place where Peter wrote the epistle is uncertain. The epistle was evidently written to the saints of Asia Minor.

PERSONS.—Peter and the saints of Asia Minor.

Introduction

Peter wrote two of the New Testament books, and they are designated First Peter and Second Peter. Relative to the genuineness, or authorship, of First Peter, the book has not been challenged with any degree of credibility; whereas, the

genuineness of Second Peter has been more seriously challenged than any other book of the New Testament.

Second Peter was one of the latest of the New Testament books to be written, and it was not circu-

lated and made known as readily as were some of the other books, but by the fourth century it had come to be recognized as canonical, that is, it came to be regarded as being entitled to a place in the canon of the New Testament Scriptures. The internal evidence for the book, or the marks of authenticity contained in the epistle itself, together with the attestations of the churches to which it was originally sent, have established its rightful place in the New Testament canon. To illustrate briefly, the following are some of the internal marks of the book.

1. The writer of the book identifies himself as Simon Peter. (2 Pet. 1:1.)

2. The writer of the book calls himself an apostle of Jesus Christ. (2 Pet. 1:1.) If he were not an apostle he was a liar and a fraud. How could such a fraudulent liar write such a book on righteousness? How could he so earnestly warn men against false teachers? The author's exhortations to virtue and his pronouncement of condemnation to vice testify to the fact that he was incapable of imposing a forged instrument upon the churches.

3. The writer of the book speaks of the book as being his second epistle. (2 Pet. 3:1.) The apostle Peter had written First Peter, of which book the authenticity is not denied. The two books—First and Second Peter—complement each other.

*"And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."* Jesus took upon himself the fashion of a man. He was wholly human, and he was wholly divine. As a human being, his physical body and mind grew and developed from birth as any other human does.

From the age of twelve to the age of thirty, a period of eighteen years, there is no record of Jesus, except for this golden text. During that

4. The writer of the book anticipated that he would be put to death in the immediate future. (2 Pet. 1:14.) This fact would certainly agree with the case of the apostle Peter, for he was crucified as a martyr for the cause of Jesus Christ.

5. The writer of the book was an eye witness at the transfiguration of Moses, Elijah, and Christ on the holy mount, and he heard the announcement from heaven: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, (2 Pet 1:17-18.) Only the apostles Peter, James, and John were present on the mountain at the time of the transfiguration, and the writer of Second Peter necessarily had to be one of those three. The writer was, therefore, none other than the apostle Peter.

The burden of First Peter was the severe trials and persecutions that had been heaped upon the Christians of Asia Minor. The epistle was intended to encourage those persecuted saints. Peter extended to them hope for their trying circumstances.

The burden of Second Peter was the rise of false teachers and their erroneous doctrines. The false teachers were, no doubt, some of the same school as those Paul identified in his epistle to the Colossians. Peter wrote to warn the brethren of those false teachers, and he emphasized that the real safeguard against them was knowledge. Knowledge of God's word is a safeguard for the church today.

### The Golden Text

*"And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."* Jesus took upon himself the fashion of a man. He was wholly human, and he was wholly divine. As a human being, his physical body and mind grew and developed from birth as any other human does.

From the age of twelve to the age of thirty, a period of eighteen years, there is no record of Jesus, except for this golden text. During that

eighteen year period Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. The advancement of Jesus, after the flesh, in that eighteen year period is in close harmony with Peter's emphasis on knowledge. Peter encouraged the saints of Asia Minor to go forward in the area of knowledge and wisdom as the real safeguard against the false teachers who were promulgating all forms of unrighteousness.

### The Text Explained

#### The Basis for Spiritual Growth

(2 Pet. 1:1-7)

Christian growth is not only desirable, but it is also incumbent as

well as imperative. If the Christian does not grow spiritually, he will inevitably die spiritually. Peter admonished in his first epistle:

"Putting away therefore all wickedness, and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation." (1 Pet. 2:1-2.) No person is born a full grown Christian, and no Christian will grow spiritually if he fails to partake of the sincere milk of the Word, and also in time the meat of the Word. When writing the Corinthians who had failed to make the proper spiritual growth, Paul observed: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not able to bear it; nay, not even now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal." (1 Cor. 3:1-2.)

One great weakness of the church of the Lord today is the failure of the respective members to make the proper spiritual growth. The church is not a mighty army of the Lord as it should be, because its military ranks are filled with spiritual dwarfs. The church in the United States has better buildings, better classrooms, better teaching materials, and better teachers, that is teachers with better academic preparation, than ever in the annals of history, but the church, generally speaking, has not grown spiritually as might be expected. There is a pressing need for spiritual growth on the part of almost all the members of the church today.

As per the lesson for today, the apostle Peter urged those to whom he wrote to become partakers of the divine nature, and he gave them a formula whereby they could so partake. To be a partaker of the divine nature is simply to participate in the righteous character and nature of the Godhead through godly living. Those who turn their backs to Satan and accept Christ as the pattern, example, and guide for their lives, become participants in the divine nature and, they enjoy the precious promises.

*Simon Peter:* Simon was Peter's Jewish name. He was known by this name when he was first called to be a disciple of Christ, and he was called by this name when he was commissioned to open the door of the church to the Gentiles, and

he was called by this name when he made the defense for the Gentiles at the Jerusalem conference. Christ had given him a new name "Peter," in keeping with his character, and by this name he was the more often called. Since Peter was here writing to Gentiles, he probably referred to himself as "Simon" as a means of calling to the memory of those Gentiles the fact that he had opened to them the door of the gospel. (Matt. 4:18; John 1:42; Acts 10:5; 11:13; 15:14.)

*A servant and apostle of Jesus Christ:* Peter's reference here to himself as a servant and an apostle of Christ is similar to references that Paul made of himself in his epistles with respect to Christ. Peter here calls himself a servant of Jesus Christ, a slave owned and possessed of Christ and thus with no legal rights of his own. Second Peter was written by the apostle Peter. The salutation here should be especially observed and stressed. What kind of man would write so particularly and specifically urging Christians to be "partakers of the divine nature" and to beware of false teachers who come with "feigned words," lying words, and at the same time lie about himself as to the authorship of his epistle? If a person will read the epistle thoughtfully and carefully, he will observe the strong internal evidence that points to Peter as the author and that beyond any reasonable doubt.

*To them [the Gentiles] that have obtained [did not possess at first, but gained through prior divine plan and purposeful acceptance] a like precious faith [the gospel which was just as precious to the Gentiles as to the Jews] with us [the Jews who had this gospel preached to them from the beginning on Pentecost] in the righteousness of our God [God's righteousness was demonstrated in that he was no respecter of persons, and thereby provided all the spiritual blessings for the Gentiles as had been from the first provided for the Jews] and the saviour Jesus Christ [Christ was an equal participant in the provision of the divine blessings]: Grace to you [the Gentiles] and peace [the peace that comes from knowing God] be multiplied*



[or increased exceedingly] in the knowledge [or through having knowledge] of God and of Jesus our Lord. For the grace and peace that can be had and multiplied only through the means of the continued and continual knowledge of God and Christ; seeing that his [God's] divine power hath granted unto us [Jew and Gentile alike] all things that pertain [belong as a part] unto life [a new spiritual life] and godliness [or godly living by maintaining the true spiritual character and conduct], through the knowledge of him | the things that pertain to life and godliness can only come through a knowledge of Christ that called [by means of the gospel] us [both Jew and Gentile] by his [Christ's] own glory [God, the father of glory highly exalted Christ and gave him a name that is above every name] and virtue [or goodness]; whereby [the through or means] he [Christ] hath granted unto us [Jew and Gentile] his precious [highly esteemed and cherished] and exceeding great [the very greatest] promises [forgiveness, partaker of the divine nature, and eternal life]; that through these [through these means] ye may become partakers [participants, sharers, partners] of the divine nature [the righteous nature and character of God and Christ and the Holy Spirit], having escaped from the corruption [sin, immorality, rebellion, witchcraft] that is in the world by lust [inordinate desire for the sensual, for possession, and for power]. Yea, and for this very cause (that is to accomplish this very end or to be partners in the divine nature) adding [supplying] on your part [the exceeding great promises of God must be accompanied by man's own personal effort] all diligence [put forth every effort].

In your faith supply virtue: Faith is the bed-rock, the very foundation on which the Christian life rests and builds. Faith or "belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ," 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." (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6.) The word supply means "to

add as a supplement, to fill up," and this is just what the Christian is to do. The Christian must supplement his faith with those characteristics which will make for spiritual attainment or fulfillment.

*Virtue:* This grace is one of those supplements which the Christian must add to his faith. Virtue is manliness or courage. It denotes conviction and commitment on the part of the Christian, the strength to stand for principle, or the strength to stand when the faith is being assailed, or the strength to stand in the face of persecution. This quality or characteristic of virtue is so very much needed in the lives of Christians today. Many just do not have the stamina or spiritual strength to stand when they should stand. They vacillate, trail the crowd, and rationalize themselves out of the responsibility for forthright action.

And in your virtue, knowledge: In the absence of knowledge, virtue will drop to the level of "foolhardiness." Virtue without knowledge is often worse than clouds without water or faith without works. The "foolhardy" man can do a great amount of harm to his family, to the church, and to the community.

Knowledge is unquestionably an essential quality or characteristic of the divine nature. Israel, the Northern Kingdom, was destroyed for the lack of knowledge, and Judah, the Southern Kingdom, was carried into Babylonian captivity for the lack of knowledge. (Hos. 4:6; Isa. 5:13.) The author of the Hebrew epistle wrote of how that those who by reason of time should have been teachers had need that someone teach them again the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God. (Heb. 5:12.)

Knowledge can come by the study of the Word of God. It can come by giving ear to gospel sermons that are preached, and it can come by full attention and active participation in classes that are taught.

The Christian who would add to his virtue the grace of knowledge must have a strong desire to learn, a strong desire to acquire knowledge of the Word itself. Many brethren have no such desire. They do not read; they do not study.

They seemingly give rapt attention to the preacher, but they never really hear what he says. If a new lesson is presented that requires mental activity, they tune the preacher out with a sigh of "this is very much over my head." When, or if, they do read, they rarely ever read the Bible, and when they do, it is often only a chore activity without an accompanying understanding and a will to learn in order to do.

Every Christian should have his own copy of the Bible, and it should be self-pronouncing and with concordance and dictionary. He would do well to avail himself of books that will accommodate him in the study of the Bible, an English dictionary, concordance, a standard Bible dictionary or a biblical encyclopedia set, the Gospel Advocate Commentaries, McGarvey's Commentaries and books of sermons.

Paul wrote Timothy: "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15.) If Timothy had a great need to study, then Christians now have equally as great need to study. Here Christians are failing themselves, their homes, and the church. The satirical fact is that among the most enlightened people of all the earth there is a prevalence of Bible ignorance, and much of this ignorance is to be found among brethren.

**And in your knowledge self-control:** Self-control is self-mastery, self-discipline, or self-government. The Christian must learn to control himself, to get a grip on himself, and he can only do this to the extent of his knowledge whereby he can discern and differentiate between that which is right and that which is wrong.

Christianity does not contemplate a situation wherein a person is removed from the normal drives of the flesh, but rather, it contemplates a situation wherein the normal drives and passions remain, but are held under proper balance and restraint. Self-control contemplates then the moderate indulgence in those things that are lawful and good, and it contemplates a total re-straintment from those things that are unlawful and unholy.

**And in your self-control pa-**

**tience:** In the absence of self-control there can be no patience. The word "patience" does not mean what many seem to think that it means. The person who is always quiet, who never speaks his conviction, who never complains, and who never expresses himself on an issue, in the interest of peace for all parties involved, is often characterized as being a *very patient person*; but such is not the meaning of patience. Patience is perseverance; it is steadfastness. The person who has patience will persevere and endure the hardships, the burdens, the conflicts, and the persecutions of life. Job is a classic example of patience. All things, seemingly, went against him. He lost his possessions, his children, and his friends. He came to be terribly afflicted with boils, and his wife called on him to renounce God and die, but Job said: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." (Job 13:15 A.V.)

Patience is thus a bearing-up under a tremendous burden or heavy load. It is the quality of steadfastness under hardships and grievous and trying circumstances. It is a quality of grace that is direly needed in members of the church today!

**And in your patience godliness:** In the absence of patience there could not be godliness for patience is approved only when it leads a person to a state of piety and reverence. Godliness is not Godlikeness, but it is reverence, respect, and piety toward God. It reflects a dependence upon God. In this present evil time, men are lacking in reverence, and the prevailing spirit of irreverence has made its inroads into the church of the living God. Old and young alike need to be reminded of their obligation to reverence. There is little means of reaching men who have no reverence for God.

**And in your godliness brotherly kindness:** Brotherly kindness grows out of reverence or godliness. It comprehends the love that each Christian is to have for his fellow saints. This brotherly love looks to the ultimate good of each respective brother. It contemplates help in time of need, comfort in time of sorrow, encouragement in time of disappointments, and rebukes in time of sin.

*And in your brotherly kindness love:* Love, universal love, is a natural step from brotherly love. There certainly would be no universal love in the absence of brotherly love. Universal love characterized the Father. He so loved man that he gave his Son to die in man's place, and man should thus give himself for his fellowman. Universal love is a viable force. It does not scruple a fair share of duty; but instead, it translates "duty" as meaning opportunity. It brings to one a feeling of joy and satisfaction in the doing of good for his fellowman.

**A Contrast of Those Who Add the Christian Graces with Those Who Do Not**  
(2 Pet. 1:8, 9)

*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. For he that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins.*

In these verses Peter contrasts those who give diligence to add the Christian graces with those who do not. If those graces are a possession of a Christian, if they abound, or multiply, in him, he will not be idle or inactive, nor will he be unfruitful or barren. The thought is that unless the Christian abounds in good work, he is of no value to himself or others as well.

The person who fails to add to his faith the Christian graces is blind,

**Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson**

1. All blessings of God are to be found "in the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord."

2. God has called man to eternal life freely of his own sovereign bounty and power, and man of his own free will may accept or reject that call.

3. The first chapter of Second Peter sets forth, beyond all question, the fact of the free moral agency or will of man.

4. The gifts of God are twofold: one is the escape from corruption or

spiritually blind, and he sees only that which is near. This is to say that he sees only the things of the world, those mundane or transitory day to day strivings and desires of the flesh. Such a person has or soon will forget the reason for his baptism into Christ, when his "old sins" were washed away. His forgetfulness in this regard is a matter of choice—in short he has chosen to forget.

**Peter's Earnest Exhortation**  
(2 Pet. 1:10, 11)

*Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble: for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Salvation in Christ is the calling and the election, and Peter urged those to whom he wrote to make that calling and election sure. The calling and election of God is predicated on the compliance of each responsible person to God's will in keeping with his free moral agency. In short, God calls, and man accepts.

If the Christian adds to his faith the Christian graces, he will never stumble or fall; but instead he will be richly supplied with an entrance into the eternal, the never ending kingdom. If the Christian virtues are possessed by the Christian, his richly supplied entrance into the kingdom will be certain. This God will provide.

sin; the other is the mountain, the church, to which the escape is to be made.

5. Christianity is a system of growth. The Christian is not born full grown, any more than a new born baby is full grown. Christian growth can be only realized: (1) by a conscious effort; (2) by a deep reverence for God; (3) by a strong desire and quest for knowledge; (4) by a full program of religious activity; and (5) by prayers, supplications, and thanksgivings.

**Questions for Discussion**

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give the time, place, and persons.

Introduction  
Name the New Testament books written by Peter.

By what time was Second Peter recognized as canonical?  
 By what evidence has this book been established as having a place in the canon of Scripture?  
 What relationship does First Peter and Second Peter sustain to each other?  
 In what way was Peter's anticipation of his own death valid?  
 Why had the writer of Second Peter necessarily been present on the mount of transfiguration?  
 What was the burden of Second Peter?  
 What did Peter recommend as the safeguard against false teachers?

#### Golden Text

In what way did Jesus develop?  
 For what length of time do we have no record of Jesus, except for our text?  
 How did Christ's development relate to the recommended development of the saints?

#### The Basis for Spiritual Growth

What is the result of a failure to make proper spiritual growth?  
 What food enables one to grow spiritually?  
 Give the observation made by Paul concerning the lack of spiritual development by the Corinthians.  
 Why is the church today not a mighty army of the Lord? Discuss.  
 How does one partake of the divine nature?  
 Give the significance of the name "Simon."  
 Simon was given the name "Peter" by whom? Why?  
 Why did Peter refer to himself as "Simon" when writing to these Gentiles?  
 Discuss the meaning of the word "servant."  
 What is the real significance of Peter's calling himself a "servant of Jesus Christ"?  
 What is the import of the statement "a like precious faith"?  
 How did God demonstrate that he is no respecter of persons?  
 One can receive the things that pertain to life and godliness only through what avenue?  
 List some of the precious and exceeding great promises granted by Christ to the Christian.  
 What must one escape in order to partake of the divine nature?

Discuss the statement "adding on your part all diligence."  
 What is faith?  
 Define "supply."  
 Why is virtue so vitally needed today?  
 Describe virtue without knowledge.  
 What destroyed both the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom?  
 How may one gain knowledge?  
 What is the prerequisite to obtaining knowledge?  
 What books should every Christian have in his library?  
 Quote Paul's admonition to Timothy concerning study.  
 Why is knowledge necessary to the exercising of self-control?  
 What is the Christian's relationship to the drives of the flesh?  
 How do many have a misconception of the word "patience"?  
 Name a classic example of patience.  
 How does patience aid one in times of tremendous hardships?  
 When does patience find approval?  
 Godliness involves what attitudes and relationship with God?  
 What is the reason why many cannot be reached with the gospel today?  
 What motivates one to practice brotherly kindness?  
 What is included in the practice of brotherly kindness?  
 Give the relationship of brotherly love and universal love.  
 Discuss the benefits of universal love.

A Contrast of Those Who Add the Christian Graces with Those Who Do Not  
 Describe the person who adds the Christian graces.  
 In what way is the person who fails to add the Christian graces blind?  
 What has such a person chosen to do?

#### Peter's Earnest Exhortation

What is the "calling and election"?  
 Upon what is this calling and election predicated?  
 How may one keep from falling?  
 What will God provide to the Christian who adds the Christian graces?

#### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

In what do all blessings of God rest?  
 Discuss the free-will agency of man.  
 In what way are the gifts of God twofold?  
 How can Christian growth be realized?

## Lesson VI—August 10, 1975

### CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

#### Lesson Text

Acts 2:42-45; Phil. 1:3-7; 1 John 1:5-7

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

44 And all that believed were to-

gether, and had all things common;

45 And they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need.

3 I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you,

4 Always in every supplication of

mine on behalf of you all making my supplication with joy,

5 For your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now;

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ:

7 Even as it is right for me to be thus minded on behalf of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as, both in my bonds and in the defence and confirmation of

the gospel, ye all are partakers with me of grace.

5 And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ.”* (1 John 1:3.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 John 3:16-18.

### Daily Bible Readings

August 4. M.....	Called into Fellowship (1 Cor. 1:1-9)
August 5. T.....	Right Hand of Fellowship (Gal. 2:1-9)
August 6. W.....	Fellowship in Affliction (Phil. 4:1-14)
August 7. T.....	Fellowship of Sufferings (Phil. 3:1-10)
August 8. F.....	Fellowship with One Another (1 John 1:1-7)
August 9. S.....	Fellowship in the Spirit (2 Cor. 13:11-14)
August 10. S.....	Fellowship with Evil Forbidden (Eph. 5:1-11)

TIME.—For Acts, A.D. 30; for Philippians, A.D. 61; for First John, A.D. 85-90.

PLACES.—For Acts, Jerusalem of Judea; for Philippians, Rome in Italy and Philippi in Macedonia; for First John, the epistle was written from Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor, but to whom is uncertain.

PERSONS.—Paul, John, and the saints in Philippi and everywhere.

### INTRODUCTION

The word “fellowship” is a broad or general term. It applies, generally to all joint participation of the saints whether of worship, of work, or of walk. The Greek word for fellowship is “*koinonia*,” and it is translated variously as fellowship, as communion, as contribution, as communication, as partakers, and as partners. The following passages reflect the use of the word and the varying renderings or translations of it, as per the American Standard Version.

#### *Fellowship*

Acts 2:42: “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ teaching and *fellowship* . . .”

1 Corinthians 1:9: “God is faithful, through whom ye were called into the *fellowship* of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.”

2 Corinthians 8:4: “They gave of their own accord, beseeching us

with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the *fellowship* in the ministering to the saints. . . .”

Galatians 2:9: “And when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, . . . they . . . gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of *fellowship* . . .”

Philippians 1:3, 5: “I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you . . . for your *fellowship* in furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now.”

Philippians 2:1: “If there is therefore any exhortation in Christ . . . if any *fellowship* of the Spirit. . . .”

Philippians 3:10: “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the *fellowship* of his sufferings. . . .”

Philemon 4, 6: “I thank my God always . . . that the *fellowship* of thy faith may become effectual, in

the knowledge of every good thing which is in you, unto Christ."

1 John 1:3: "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."

1 John 1:6: "If we say that we have *fellowship* with him and walk in the darkness, we lie and do not the truth."

1 John 1:7: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have *fellowship* one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

### Communion

1 Corinthians 10:16: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a *communion* of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a *communion* of the body of Christ?"

1 Corinthians 10:18: "Behold Israel after the flesh: have not they that eat the sacrifices *communion* with the altar?"

1 Corinthians 10:20: "I would not that ye should have *communion* with demons."

2 Corinthians 6:14: "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: . . . what *communion* hath light with darkness?"

2 Corinthians 13:14 "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the *communion* of the Holy Spirit, be with you all."

### Contribution

Romans 15:26: "For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain *contribution* for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem."

2 Corinthians 9:13: "They glorify God . . . for the liberality of your *contribution* unto them and unto all."

### Communication

Hebrews 13:16: "But to do good and to *communicate* forget not: for

with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

### Partakers

Matthew 23:29, 30: "Woe unto you, scribes, and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye . . . say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, who should not have been *partakers* with them in the blood of the prophets."

2 Corinthians 1:7: "Our hope for you is steadfast knowing that, as ye are *partakers* of the sufferings, so also are ye of the comfort."

1 Peter 5:1: "The elders therefore among you I exhort . . . who am also a *partaker* of the glory that shall be revealed."

### Partners

Luke 5:9-10: "For he was amazed . . . at the draught of fishes . . . so were also James and John . . . who were *partners* with Simon."

2 Corinthians 8:23: "Whether any inquire about Titus, he is my *partner* and my fellow-worker to you-ward."

Philemon 17: "If thou countest me a *partner*, receive him [Onesimus] as myself."

### Dispensation

Ephesians 3:9: "And to make all men see what is the *dispensation* of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things."

As will be readily observed, in the rendering of *koinonia* much depends on the context of a particular passage. While *koinonia* is legitimately translated "contribution," by way of example, a person would not expect to read from Galatians 2:9: "And when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, . . . they . . . gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of *contribution*." Now, the subject of Christian fellowship for this study embraces the fellowship of worship, the fellowship of the poor, and the fellowship with Christ, and Christians.

## The Text Explained

"Our *fellowship* is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ." John, as an apostle, wrote of the things from the beginning. He wrote of that which he and the other apostles had heard, had seen,

had beheld, and had handled relative to the Word (Christ) who was formerly with the Father, but was manifested in the flesh, and especially to the apostles.

John wrote of those great matters

in order that others might have fellowship with him and his co-workers. He thus declared: "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ." To know the Word (Christ) as John knew him, and to believe on him, and to obey him was to have fel-

lowship—a participation—with John in the spiritual relationship and position which he enjoyed with the Father. To occupy the position with John was and is to have fellowship—or spiritual communion and participation—with the Father and with the Son.

### The Text Explained

#### Fellowship in Worship (Acts 2:42-45)

*And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need.*

A basic assumption is that God has given his people—the church—a divinely authorized and prescribed order or scheme of worship. If God has not prescribed a uniform scheme of worship, then there can be no disorder, no error, no innovation and no transgression. If the scheme of worship is not to be uniformly the same in all congregations, then it is to be different in all congregations, in which case there can be no order, no standard, and no rule of worship. One remarkable characteristic of the churches of Christ is that without an overhead supervision by a conference or hierarchy—that is with each local church an autonomous unit—the worship is uniform in all the churches of Christ. This unusual characteristic may be accounted for on the simple fact that each church follows the divine prescription for worship.

Now, if the aforesaid basic assumption relative to a prescribed order or scheme of worship—order in the strict sense is not whether the Lord's supper will be observed before the sermon or after the sermon, but rather the fact that it will be observed—be a correct assumption, then Acts 2:42 constitutes that prescribed order or scheme of worship and all other scriptures that bear on worship, such as Colossians 3:16-17 and Ephesians 5:18-19, are thereby complementary to the order

set forth in Acts. The passage Acts 2:42 is unquestionably a summary statement of the order of worship set by divine guidance for the church for all times. Some who defend the use of a mechanical instrument of music in worship aver that there is no prescribed order of worship, and they emphasize that Acts 2:42 does not mention singing at all.

Let this be observed: The scheme or order of worship is stated in broad terms—the apostles' doctrine, the fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayers. Luke does not record whether the prayers were prayers of thanksgiving, or prayers of petition, or prayers of praise. The term "prayer" is, therefore, all inclusive. It embraced all kinds of prayers. The term "breaking of bread" certainly did not exclude the drinking of the fruit of the vine, but rather it embraced it. The term "fellowship" is also a broad or general term. It applies generally to all joint participation of the saints in the worship, particularly the contribution. If the translators had translated *koinonia* here as "contribution" instead of fellowship, as they did in Romans 15:26, they would have done no violence to the meaning, for "the contribution" is one specific of the term as it is used here.

Brethren are sometimes heard to explain that the contribution is not a part of the worship, that instead the occasion of worship is a convenient time to take up a contribution. Through the intervening centuries prior to Pentecost, those who worshipped presented animal sacrifices. After Pentecost animal sacrifices were discarded, but there is required a sacrifice, a sharing of possessions as well as lives, for a distribution to the poor and for the proclamation of the gospel to the lost.

Relative to a specific prescription

for singing in the stated order or scheme of worship, the broad term "apostles' doctrine" includes all methods and means of setting forth the teaching of the apostles—whether by informing, exhorting, reproving, or singing. Consequently, by the broad stated nature of the divine order of worship, singing is covered by the broad term "apostles' doctrine" as well as in the broad terms "fellowship" and "prayers." Paul wrote the Colossian church: "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." Observe that singing is one means of teaching and admonishing. (Col. 3:16.)

Those who believed were together, in oneness and brotherly participation, and had all things in common. This is to say that they shared their possessions—they gave of their means; they contributed—with those who had need. The circumstances then were unusual and would hardly obtain today, but the underlying principle remains the same for all ages and climes.

#### Fellowship in Action

(Phil. 1:3-7)

*I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you, always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my supplication with joy, for your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ: even as it is right for me to be Huts minded on behalf of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as, both in my bonds and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers with me of grace.*

The Philippian church is a striking example of viable action in Christian fellowship. They had fellowship with Paul in the gospel from their beginning until the time of Paul's epistle, a period of ten years. The accomplishments of Paul in the preaching of the gospel were also the Philippians' accomplishments. They had participated with

him by their prayers, by their longings for him, and by their liberal gifts to him.

Paul recognized that fact, and he thanked God for them. Preachers should bear in mind that without the prayers and financial support of the brethren, they could not give themselves wholly to the word. They, as Paul did, should thank God for those who so participate or have fellowship with them in the ministry of Christ.

#### Fellowship in the Blood

(1 John 1:57)

*And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

To declare fellowship with the Father and Son is one thing, but to have fellowship in actuality may be quite another thing. If a man walks in darkness—sin or rebellion—he cannot have that fellowship regardless of his averments, but if he walks in the light—if his course is onward, and upward: if he walks a righteous course—he not only has fellowship with the Father and the Son, but also he has fellowship with all others who walk in that same light.

Brethren are often concerned with the knotty problem as to whom they should extend fellowship and as to whom they should withhold fellowship—with reference to congregations as well as individuals. One thing is certain: the person who walks in the light has fellowship with the Father and the Son, and he has fellowship with all others who are also walking in that light. (See Amos 3:3.)

The blood of Christ cleanseth—that is it continues to cleanse from all sin those who walk in the light. No person ever reaches sinless perfection. John said: "If we say we have no sin," or commit no single act of sin. "we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." John said, on the other hand, "Whosoever



abideth [continues to abide] in him sinneth not," that is he does not follow a course or life of sin though he is subject to single acts of sin. He further said: "Whosoever sinneth," continues in a course of sin, "hath not seen him, neither knoweth him." (1 John 1:8; 3:5-6.) In the case of 1 John 1:8—"if we say we have no sin"—the tense denotes a single occurrence of an action without reference to its completeness.

### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

1. "Wholesome Fellowship Vs. Unwholesome Fellowship" would be a good title for a sermon. "Wholesome Fellowship" would include: Fellowship with the Father and the Son; Fellowship with Christians, Fellowship of Spirits; Fellowship of the Gospel; Fellowship of Suffering; and Fellowship of Possessions. "Unwholesome Fellowship" would include: Fellowship with Satan; Fellowship with demons; and Fellowship with world rulers of darkness.

2. Christians must walk in the light. Some characteristics of light are as follows: (1) Darkness can be

duration, or repetition; whereas, in the case of 1 John 3:5-6—"whosoever sinneth"—the tense denotes a present and continuing action.

The blood of Christ cleanseth—present tense continuing action—or purifies or covers the single occurrence of sin in those who walk in the light and do not continue in a course or life of sin. Christian fellowship resides, therefore, under the blood.

shut out, but light cannot be shut in. (2) No one can have light in his soul and darkness in his body; (3) As goes the soul, so goes the body; and conversely, as goes the body, so goes the soul; (4) Life rests in God; darkness rests in self; (5) Physically, life is glory; intellectually, life is truth; morally, life is holiness; futuristically, life is eternity; and practically, life is love.

3. The fellowship of Christians consists of a common faith, a common hope, a common love, a common work, a common worship, and a common walk.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

Define "fellowship."  
List and discuss the ways that the Greek word for fellowship "koinonia" is translated in the American Standard Version.

The rendering of "koinonia" depends upon what?

#### The Golden Text

Of what did John write?

#### Fellowship in Worship

How does one account for the uniform worship in churches of Christ?  
Discuss

Does Acts 2:42 prescribe a scheme of worship? Discuss.

Answer the charge that giving is not a part of the worship.

How is singing included in the "apostles' doctrine"?

In what way did the early church have all things common?

#### Fellowship in Action

How is the Philippian church an example in fellowship?

What was Paul's reaction to their fellowship?

#### Fellowship in the Blood

With whom does the Christian have fellowship?

Whom does the blood of Christ continue to cleanse?

Harmonize 1 John 1:8 and 1 John 3:5-6.

Discuss.

Wherein does Christian fellowship reside?

#### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

Contrast wholesome fellowship and unwholesome fellowship.

List some characteristics of light.

Of what does Christian fellowship consist?

Lesson VII—August 17, 1975

## CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY

## Lesson Text

1 Cor. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 9:1-11

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye.

2 Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.

1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2 For I know your readiness, of which I glory on your behalf to them of Macedonia, that Achaia hath been prepared for a year past; and your zeal hath stirred up very many of them.

3 But I have sent the brethren, that our glorying on your behalf may not be made void in this respect; that, even as I said, ye may be prepared:

4 Lest by any means, if there come with me any of Macedonia and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be put to shame in this confidence.

5 I thought it necessary therefore to entreat the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make

up beforehand your aforepromised bounty, that the same might be ready as a matter of bounty, and not of extortion.

6 But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work:

9 As it is written,  
He hath scattered abroad, he  
hath given to the poor;  
His righteousness abideth for  
ever.

10 And he that supplieth seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness:

11 Ye being enriched in everything unto all liberality, which worketh through us thanksgiving to God.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Keep yourselves from all covetousness.” (Luke 12:15.)  
DEVOTIONAL READING.—2 Cor. 8:1-9.

## Daily Bible Readings

August 11. M..... Liberality, A Christian Grace (2 Cor. 8:1-9)  
August 12. T..... Liberality, A Purposeful Act (2 Cor. 9:1-5)  
August 13. W..... Liberality, A Regular Act (1 Cor. 16:1, 2)  
August 14. T..... Liberality, A Cheerful Act (2 Cor. 9:6-10)  
August 15. F..... Liberality, A Sacrificial Act (Luke 21:1-4)  
August 16. S..... Liberality, An Obligatory Act (Mai. 3:7-12)  
August 17. S..... Liberality Demonstrates Our Love (2 Cor. 8:10-24)

TIME.—First and Second Corinthians were written in the spring and the fall, respectively, of either A.D. 54 or 55.

PLACES.—Paul wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus of the province of Asia in Asia Minor, and he wrote Second Corinthians from Macedonia. The letters were written to a church in Corinth of Greece.

PERSONS.—Paul and the Corinthian brethren, and certain other brethren.

## INTRODUCTION

When on his trip to Jerusalem, which in turn occasioned his four-year imprisonment, Paul arrived at Miletus and called unto him the elders of the church at Ephesus, and

in his address to those elders he said: “In all things I gave you a example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he

himself said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive.*" (Acts 20:35.) There is really no better starting point when considering the subject, "Christian Liberality," than with the words of the Lord Jesus. Paul wrote the Philippians: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich." (2 Cor. 8:9.) Christianity had its origin in sacrifice, its great triumph over death in sacrifice, its great influence through the centuries upon the lives of men in sacrifice, and its great hope and promise of a future life in sacrifice. The future of Christianity on the lives of man is predicated on sacrifice.

Christians should learn to sacrifice for others—their possessions, their time, and their lives. Throughout the Old Testament period the obligation for sacrifice and liberality is set forth, and it has been recorded for the Christian's example and admonition. The sacrifices required of the Hebrews included the following:

1. The Hebrews were required to give one-tenth of all of their products and herds and flocks unto Jehovah. (Deut. 14:22-27.) Some who would justify their paltry giving aver that the tenth went to keep up the Hebrews' government as well as their religion. They then press the point that Christians pay taxes in addition to their giving to the church. The averment is not well taken. When the Hebrews had

a king over them, they were required to give another tenth in taxes for the support of their government. (1 Sam. 8:15-17.)

2. Each Hebrew male over twenty years of age was required to pay a half-shekel into the tabernacle service on every atonement day. The day of atonement, the great day of national humiliation, was observed annually on the tenth day of Tisri (October). (Ex. 30:10-16.)

3. Each Hebrew male was to appear *not empty* before Jehovah three times each year—the feast of unleavened bread, the feast of weeks, and the feast of tabernacles. Every man was to give a free-will offering at each feast as he was able. (Deut. 16:16-17.)

4. The Hebrews were also required to make burnt offerings, peace offerings, drink offerings, in addition to the offerings already indicated. (Lev. 1-5; 23:37-39.)

5. They were also required to open their hands unto the poor among them. (Deut. 15:7-8.)

6. They were also required to leave the gleanings in the fields for the aid of the poor. (Lev. 19:9-10.)

7. They were *not allowed* to charge interest on a loan to a poor man. (Lev. 25:35-37.)

Will God require less of the Christian than he did of the Jews? The question is pertinent! It deserves a serious answer. Except for those who are financially impoverished, the Christian cannot afford to give less than the Hebrews. Generally speaking, he should give more.

### The Golden Text

*"Keep yourselves from all covetousness."* The term "covetousness" is marked by an inordinate desire for wealth or possessions or for another's possessions. The covetous man is greedy, grasping, acquisitive, and avaricious. The apostle Paul wrote: "Covetousness is idolatry." (Col. 3:5.) No wonder that Christ instructed: "Keep yourselves from all covetousness!" The lust for possessions, if not restrained, is strong and intense. The tendency of man is never to be satisfied with his earthly possessions. He wants more and more of this world's goods, and his selfishness shuts God out of his

heart. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," Jesus taught. (Luke 16:13.)

### The When, the Who, and the How of Giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2)

*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collection be made when I come.*

Then *when* of giving is "upon the first day of the week." Christ arose on the first day of the week—the

resurrection day of Christ—and the first day of the week is the greatest day in all the annals of history. On the first day of the week the saints meet for worship. How fitting then that the saints should lay by in store, or put in the treasury, when they assemble for worship on Christ's resurrection day. This instruction does not preclude a person's giving on some other day if a crucial need should arise, but under ordinary circumstances the Christian should give on the first day of the week.

The *who* of giving is "each one of you," each Christian, each member of the church. Of course, God does not require of man that which is impossible. If a man is destitute and in need himself of financial assistance for the basic things of life, God does not require that man to give that which he does not have.

The *how-much* of giving is as one may or has prospered. The Hebrews' tenth system is no longer specifically binding. It does set forth, however, a concept of a certain minimum below which the Christian, generally speaking, cannot afford to give.

**Ready as a Matter of Bounty—  
Not of Extortion**  
(2 Cor. 9:1-5)

*For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: for I know your readiness, of which I glory on your behalf to them of Macedonia, that Achaia hath been prepared for a year past: and your zeal hath stirred up very many of them. But I have sent the brethren, that our glorying on your behalf may not be made void in this respect: that, even as I said, ye may be prepared: lest by any means, if there come with me any of Macedonia and find you unprepared, ye (that ire say not, ye) should be put to shame in this confidence. I thought it necessary therefore to entreat the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your aforepromised bounty, that the same might be ready as a matter of bounty, and not of extortion.*

In A.D. 49-50, the Jerusalem conference was held, and the apostolic authority was established for the acceptance of the Gentile males into

the church without their first being circumcised. The conference was concluded by Peter, James, and John urging Paul to remember the poor, which thing Paul was already minded to do. (Acts 15; Gal. 2:9-10.) From A.D. 50-56, Paul urged the churches of Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia—churches constituted primarily of Gentiles—to make up a general collection for the poor saints of Judea.

At the point of the above reading, Paul was making final preparations for the collection to be assembled and thereby to be carried to the brethren in Judea. His instructions give the reader certain points and insights that are worthy of consideration, as follows:

1. For one thing the churches of Macedonia and Achaia had purposed and planned a year in advance to make their contribution.

2. For another thing, Paul had used the example of the zeal of the churches of Macedonia and Achaia to stir the zeal of other churches.

3. For still another thing, Paul had sent brethren to the churches of Macedonia and Achaia to make sure that the aforepromised bounty was in hand—lest Paul be put to shame in his having used the example of those churches to stir to action other churches.

4. For a fourth thing, Paul emphasized that by getting all of the aforepromised bounty in hand ahead of time, it could be so gotten together as a matter of bounty, and not of extortion.

**Sowing and Reaping**  
(2 Cor. 9:6-7)

*But this I say. He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

Here the apostle Paul stated a universal principle in both natural law and spiritual law, from which there are few exceptions. The Christian who sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly. Conversely, the Christian who sows bountifully, shall reap also bountifully. In short, bountiful giving calls forth bountiful blessings, and snare giving

calls forth spare blessings—if any blessings at all.

If Christians only knew this, or more accurately, if they only believed this, then the church could make its influence in the world more strongly felt. The expense of evangelists could be borne as they, by the thousands, traversed the four-corners of the earth with the gospel message.

Paul's further instructions to the churches of Macedonia and Achaia may be enumerated, as follows:

1. A Christian should, in the first place, purpose in his heart to give and also how much he should give. This is imperative!

2. He should, in the second place, give cheerfully. This, too, is imperative!

3. He should not, in the third place, give grudgingly or of necessity. This is folly!

4. He should remember, in the fourth place, that God is able to make grace abound unto him if only he meets the spiritual requirements for his giving.

#### Grace A hound ins

(2 Cor. 9:8-11)

*And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work: as it is written. He hath scattered abroad, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness abideth forever. And he that supplieth seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply and multiply your seed for*

*solving, and increase the fruits of your righteousness: ye being enriched in everything unto all liberality, which worketh through us thanksgiving to God.*

God will bless the Christian whose giving meets the stated spiritual requirements, and God will make all grace to abound unto him—in every good work. That Christian will have scattered abroad, he will have given to the poor, and his righteousness will abide forever. Temporal blessings as well as spiritual blessings will literally flow unto him. His life will be richer, fuller, and sweeter. The more he gives, the more he will desire to give. The more he gives, the more he will have to give, and the more he gives, the more he will realize and appreciate what Christ gave for him.

The spirit and act of giving—whether of possessions or personal and physical sacrifices—bring the greatest and highest sense of happiness to be enjoyed in this life. Such giving makes for a feeling of self-respect, for a feeling of real self worth, and for a feeling of purpose for living. May every Christian learn to give!

God through his laws and great power supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food. In keeping with that order of things, God will supply the liberal Christian with a great enrichment of spiritual life. The sacrificing Christian will be enriched in everything unto all liberality.

#### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

1. Sowing and reaping is a principle of life. There is sowing and reaping in the history of a nation, in the history of an individual, in the home, and in the church.

2. As a man sows, so shall he reap.

3. The law of interchange or intercourse between sowing and reaping is a just law.

4. The law of sowing and reaping

is somewhat observable. The want of liberality stunts the spiritual stature of a man, but the fulness of liberality enlarges his stature.

5. The liberal man is appreciated, honored, loved!

6. Grace is God's gift to bestow. He abounds in it, and if a person will permit, God's grace will abound in him.

#### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

##### Introduction

Paul quotes what statement made by Christ concerning giving? Discuss.

Upon what is the future of Christianity predicated?

List and discuss the sacrifices required of the Jews.

How should our sacrifices compare to the Jews?

The Golden Text

Define "covetousness." Describe the covetous man. What did Paul call covetousness?

The When, the Who, and the How of Giving

Why is it fitting that we give on the first day of the week? Who is to give? How much should the Christian give? Discuss.

Ready as a Matter of Bounty— Not of Extortion

For whom and from whom did Paul urge contribution to be made? List and discuss Paul's instructions concerning the gifts.

Sowing and Reaping

What universal principle applies to our sowing, giving? List and discuss Paul's further instructions to the churches.

Grace Abounding

What blessings come to the Christians who scatter abroad? Discuss. How does giving bring the highest sense of happiness? How does God supply seed to the sower?

Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

What determines what a man reaps? Is the law of sowing and reaping a just law? Discuss. What enables God's grace to dwell in us?

Lesson VIII—August 24, 1975

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IN SONG

Lesson Text

Matt. 26:30; Eph. 5:18, 19; Col. 3:16, 17; Heb. 2:11, 12; Rev. 14:1-3

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

18 And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit;

19 Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.

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.

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not

ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, In the midst of the congregation will I sing thy praise.

1 And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and the voice which I heard, was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3 And they sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders: and no man could learn the song save the hundred and forty and four thousand, even they that had been purchased out of the earth.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Is any cheerful? let him sing praise." (James 5:13.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rom. 15:9-12.

Daily Bible Readings

- August 18. M.....Sing Praises Unto Jehovah (Psalm 105:1-6)
August 19. T.....Song of Deliverance (Psalm 32:1-7)
August 20. W.....Some Songs Not Acceptable (Ezek. 33:30-33)
August 21. T..... Song of Fools (Eccles. 7:1-5)
August 22. F..... A New Song (Psalm 40:1-3)
August 23. S..... Song of Moses (Ex. 15:1-18)
August 24. S..... Song of the Redeemed (Rev. 5:9-14)

TIME.—For Matthew, A.D. 30; for Ephesians and Colossians, A.D. 60; for Hebrews, A.D. 67-69; for Revelation, A.D. 96.

PLACES.—Jerusalem in Judea, Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor, and Colossae on the border of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

PERSONS.—Jesus and his disciples; Paul and the saints of Ephesus and Colossae.

## INTRODUCTION

A lesson on Christian worship necessarily calls for two considerations: one, a definition of worship, and two, a treatment of the use of the instrument as an accompaniment to singing as a part of the New Testament order of worship. The instrument is used, generally speaking, in the denominational churches, and anyone from the ranks of denominationalism would view any objection to its use as being incredible. He would ask: "What could possibly be wrong with the use of the instrument in worship?"

One gradual change that is taking place within the brotherhood of the churches of Christ is the attitude and concept of many of the respective members on the matter of the unscripturalness, or the scripturalness, of the use of mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship. A number of serious-minded brethren are estimating—presumably on the basis primarily of empirical observation—that a minimum of forty percent of the members of the churches of Christ know no scriptural reason why mechanical instruments of music should not be used in the worship and would have no objection if they were so used.

Now, members of the churches of Christ should not be known for their nonuse of the instrument in the worship merely or the sake of being different from others. The members of the churches of Christ should refrain from using the instrument only if there is a Bible reason for their so doing. The unscripturalness or scripturalness of the use of the instrument in worship must necessarily turn on the question or principle of what constitutes scriptural worship. This naturally calls for a definition of worship.

### *Definition of Worship*

Worship may be defined—as per

the *New Standard Unabridged Dictionary* and Vine's *Expository Dictionary*—as "honor, reverence, and homage, in thoughts and feelings and in acts, paid by man to Deity." Observe that worship is a thing to be paid to Deity. It is not just an inward feeling. Worship involves attitudes and feelings, but it necessarily involves more than this. It demands expression, and it requires action. Worship within itself is not necessarily acceptable to God. Some worship should be classified as vain worship (Matt. 15:19), and some worship should be classified as true worship. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:24.)

### *Scheme of Worship*

God has given his church a divinely authorized scheme of worship—a worship which must be performed on a certain day. That day is the first day of the week—the Lord's day. Jesus arose from the dead early on the first day of the week. The first day of the week is the most important, the most momentous, day in all the annals of history. There is no wonder then that God, through the means of his divine economy, set forth a scheme of worship which was to be observed on, and only on, the first day, of the week—the resurrection day of the Son of Man. Christians may assemble on other days for worship through means of prayer, praise, and instruction; but they must assemble on a certain day—the first day—to engage in a certain and specific scheme of worship. (Acts 2:42.)

Further, the scheme of worship authorized for the church when it comes together on the Lord's day is uniformly the same in all congregations. If there were no uniform scheme of worship, then there could be no disorder, no error, no innovation, and no transgression in wor-

ship. If the scheme of worship were not uniformly the same in all Christian communities, then it would be different, in which case there could be no order, no standard, and no rule of worship.

### *Presumptions in Worship*

Worship is either acceptable worship, or it is presumptuous worship. David said: "Keep back my servant also from presumptuous sins." (Psalm 19:13.) David had once been guilty of a presumptuous sin. He had presumed to move the ark of Jehovah by means of a cart instead of having it borne by the priests. God had decreed that no one except a priest should touch the ark. When an ox to the drawn cart stumbled, Uzzah, who was not a priest, put forth his hand to steady the ark on the cart. The anger of Jehovah was kindled against both David and Uzzah, and Jehovah smote Uzzah so that he died by the ark. (2 Sam. 6.) David's action in causing the ark to be carried on a cart instead of its being borne by the priests was presumptuous. David was guilty of a very presumptuous sin. Christians must be careful to worship in an acceptable manner lest they be found to be presumptuous and sinful.

### *Three Prerequisites of Acceptable Worship*

There are three basic prerequisites to acceptable worship, and on those three prerequisites turn the principles respecting scriptural worship. There is, therefore, a pressing need for an understanding of the basic prerequisites for acceptable worship. Those prerequisites are as follows:

1. The worship must be that, and only that, which is due a sovereign God.
2. The worship must be such as will profit spiritually, or edify, the worshippers.
3. The worship must consist of only that which is so clearly taught in the New Testament that it may be enforced upon a congregation assembled for worship.

### *The Worship That Is Due a Sovereign God*

*Relative to the prerequisite that the worship must be that, and only*

*that, which is due a sovereign God,* the fact remains that no mere finite and mortal man can know what worship is due an infinite, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, sovereign God, except as that God shall instruct him as to how and when he would worship. Whenever a man presumes to worship God in any way and by any means that God has not authorized, that man is guilty of a presumptuous sin. Cain failed in his worship of God at this very point, and so did Nadab and Abihu.

If man's worship to God is to be scriptural and thus acceptable it must be based upon, and only upon, the authority of the Scriptures by means of commands, and/or approved examples, and/or necessary inferences. Here lies the principle of divine worship. Man can worship only in keeping with God's ordained scheme of worship. A body of disciples will be guilty of the sin of presumption when they add to or take from the scheme of worship. Without strict adherence to the principle herein involved, there can be no acceptable worship to God.

### *The Worship that Will Edify the Worshipper*

*Relative to the prerequisite that the worship must be such as will profit spiritually or edify and strengthen the worshippers,* emphasis should be given to the fact that man is the crown and climax of God's creation. God created man in his own image and likeness. (Gen. 1:16-27.) In making man in his own image, however, God necessarily made man a free moral agent, and as a free moral agent, man may choose Satan as his master, and thereby reject the God that brought him forth. God's desire is that man shall choose him as his master and that man will become more and more like him. The scheme of the New Testament worship includes, therefore, those items or acts or avenues of worship that not only are due a sovereign God but also are calculated to edify and encourage man in his efforts to become more like God.

Now, God is the final authority on the matter of what worship is due him and what worship will at the same time profit and edify the wor-



shippers. No man can be more spiritually edified, therefore, by the introduction of innovations into God's scheme of worship.

### *The Worship that May be Enforced upon a Congregation*

*Relative to the prerequisite that the worship must consist of only that which is so clearly taught in the New Testament that it may be enforced upon a congregation assembled for worship*, the unequivocal fact is that only by the observance of this principle can a body of disciples maintain respect for the authority of the Word and at the

same time maintain unity of worship and sanction of individual conscience. A clearly specified act or avenue for worship may be required of those assembled for worship, but such innovations as incense and the instrument violate the conscience of many worshippers. Such innovations cannot in good faith be enforced upon the worshippers; whereas, the acts or avenues of worship which are clearly specified in the Scriptures may be, and should be enforced upon a congregation assembled for worship.

### The Golden Text

*"Is any cheerful? let him sing praise."* If a person is worried, anxious, or disturbed; he should pray. If, on the other hand, he is joyful or in good spirits—not merely frivolous—he should sing

praise. In short, he should do that which is natural for him under his prevailing spirit or frame of mind. Singing praise is a high order or form of prayer. This fact brethren need to realize.

### The Text Explained

#### The Kind of Music Authorized in the New Testament

An objective study of the kind of music which God authorized for his church is quite in order at this point. The term, music, is generic. It embraces two main categories of music, namely; instrumental and vocal. If God authorized only instrumental music, there is no choice for the people of God. They must use instrumental music, and only instrumental music, in their worship to God. If God authorized both instrumental and vocal music, there is likewise no choice for the people of God. They must thus have both instrumental and vocal music in their worship to God. If God authorized only vocal music, there cannot be a choice for the people of God. They must have only vocal music in their worship to God.

#### *The New Testament Passages Relating to Music in Worship*

A no more objective approach could be taken to the question of the kind of music authorized by God than to consider carefully every passage of Scripture in the New Testament on the subject of music as it relates to worship. The

Scriptures that follow constitute every line and every word of the New Testament on the subject of music of any kind in a setting of worship. They are herewith presented in full so that the student may make reference to them from time to time if need shall arise.

1. Matthew 26:30 reads: "And when they had *sung* a hymn, they went out unto the mount of Olives."
2. Acts 16:25 reads: "About midnight Paul and *singing* hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them."
3. Romans 15:9 reads: "Therefore will I give praise unto thee among the Gentiles, and *sing* unto thy name."
4. 1 Corinthians 14:15 reads: "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will *sing* with the spirit, and I will *sing* with the understanding also."
5. Ephesians 5:19 reads: "Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, *singing* and making melody in your hearts to the Lord."
6. Colossians 3:16 reads: "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."

7. James 5:13 reads: "Is any among you suffering? let him pray. Is any cheerful? let him *sing* praise."
8. Hebrews 13:15 reads: "Through him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, *the fruit of lips* which make confession to his name."
9. Hebrews 2:12 reads: "I will declare my name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I *sing* thy praise."
10. Revelation 5:8-9 reads: "And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints, *and they sing a new song.*"
11. Revelation 14:2, 3 reads: "And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps; and *they sing as it were a new song before the throne.*"
12. Revelation 15:2-3 reads: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that came off victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God. *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb.*"

Thus the evidence for vocal music as presented from the New Testament relative to the kind of music authorized is overwhelming. God has spoken clearly through his inspired Word. The music that is due a sovereign God is vocal music that stems from the heart of the worshippers. Instrumental music is not authorized. The worshippers will be truly and spiritually profited and

edified when they sing scriptural songs in worship to Jehovah.

No man can show by the New Testament where God demanded the use of the instrument in the worship, or where Christ authorized it, or where the apostles practiced it, or where a necessary inference can be drawn to support it. The use of instrumental music then is without divine authority.

#### *Generic and Specific Commands*

God's commands are inclusive and exclusive. Those commands include everything that is specified, and they exclude everything which is not specified. The commands of the Scriptures may be classified into two categories—generic and specific.

A generic command is a command which authorizes the performance of some act, but it does not give directions as to the manner or method of its performance.

A specific command is a command which authorizes the performance of an act, and it also specifies the manner or method of its performance. A classic example of a specific command is found in Genesis 6:22. Here God commanded Noah to build an ark. He said: "Make thee an ark of gopher wood." God not only authorized the construction of an ark, but he specified that the ark should be built of gopher wood. Thus Noah was not at liberty to use any wood except gopher wood.

If Noah could have made the ark by the use of some other kind of wood, or by the use of gopher wood and also some other kind of wood, and at the same time could have been well pleasing to God; then, by the same logic, or on the same principle, Christians could choose to use the instrument exclusively to make music, or they could choose to use the instrument in conjunction with their singing. If Noah, on the other hand, could please God only by making the ark of gopher wood to the exclusion of all other kinds of woods, then Christians can please God only by singing, or by vocal music.

#### **Argument for the Use of the Instrument**

The instrument was first introduced in the church in Midway,

Kentucky, in about 1858, and it was introduced again in 1867—this time in the church at Cleveland, Ohio. The instrument was not used prevalently until after 1867, but wherever it was introduced, strife, bitterness, and division followed.

Since the introduction of the instrument, those responsible for its introduction and use have made from time to time certain arguments in defense of the use of the instrument in worship. A review of the major arguments that have been made and are being made is in order.

#### *Argument Based on Silence of Scriptures*

One of the first arguments that was made in defense of the use of the instrument in worship was based on the silence of the Scriptures. To illustrate, H. T. Anderson, in a discussion on instrumental music with Robert Richardson through the columns of the *Christian Standard*, wrote: "I am no advocate for instrumental music in churches. But the Doctor with his legalism cannot legislate it out of the churches. I might easily say to him, where there is no law, there is no transgression. There is no law against instrumental music in churches; therefore, those who use it are not transgressors."

As will be observed from this quotation, no claim was made from the Scriptures for the use of the instrument in worship. The only claim was that the instrument is not condemned in the Scriptures. The argument was and is based solely on the silence of the Scriptures.

When a pharmacist fills a prescription, does he compound any drugs, chemicals, or properties which he may choose so long as such is not specifically prohibited, —any chemical of which the prescription is silent—or does he compound only those drugs, chemicals, and properties which are specifically indicated? Without doubt the question carries its own answer.

The truth of this whole matter is that in the area of specifics, the silence of the scriptures is a limiting factor which allows only for that which is expressly set forth in the specific. Anderson's argument, based

on the silence of the Scriptures can never justify, therefore, the use of the instrument in Christian worship.

#### *Argument Based on Law of Expediency*

Another argument that was made —a corollary to the first—in the defense of the use of the instrument was based on the law of expediency. W. K. Pendleton, writing in the *Millennial Harbinger*, 1864, on the subject, "Pew-Renting and Organ Music," said: "With respect to instrumental music, I presume that no one at all acquainted with ecclesiastical history will pretend to claim for its introduction in the church any pretense of primitive authority or warrant . . . there are many things established and right, in the practical affairs of the church in this 19th century, that was not introduced in the days, nor by the authority of the apostles—questions of mere expediency, that involve neither moral nor spiritual principle or teaching. . . . We have no evidence that in the apostolic days, the disciples owned houses, such as we call churches, at all."

In short, Pendleton claimed no apostolic authority for the use of the instrument, but rather he based his defense of its use on the grounds of expediency and as the use of the instrument being equivalent to a church holding or owning a building for worship. To Pendleton and those of this persuasion, the instrument was an aid to the worship—an expedient. Isaac Errett, editor of the *Christian Standard* held that the instrument was an expedient, but he labeled it "an unnecessary expedient"—as an opinion, being neither right nor wrong in itself.

An expedient is a help or an aid, but the fact is that nothing is expedient which is not first of all lawful. Expediency is not something which falls without the law, but rather it is something that falls within the law. No expediency can be established for an instrument, or any act of worship for that matter, until a law or authorization of it is established, by a command, or an approved example, or by a necessary inference.

If God had authorized the use of the instrument, then matters of ex-

pediency with respect to it would lie within the law. Those matters of expediency would include the kind of instrument to be used, the price to be paid for it, the determination of who would play it, and the decision as to the time and circumstances that might regulate its performance.

Those who have contended that the instrument is an expedient, a help, or aid to the singing have reasoned that the instrument aids the singing in the same way and on the same principle that a cane aids a man when he walks. Now, an aid can never be a coordinate, that is equal in rank, with the thing or person that it is supposed to aid. An aid must always be a subordinate to the person or thing that it aids.

A cane is not coordinate, or equal in rank, with walking, that is, the cane does not do any walking; just so a songbook is not coordinate, or equal in rank with singing, that is, the songbook does not make any kind of music. The cane and the songbook, therefore, are both aids, or subordinates, the cane does aid walking and the songbook does aid singing. An instrument of music does not, however, sustain the same relationship to singing that a cane sustains to walking, unless the instrument is used in such a way as to make no music, such as the striking of a note to get the pitch of a song. The point of emphasis is that instrumental music and vocal music are coordinate—that is, they are two kinds of music, and they are equal in rank. Just as walking and riding are coordinate, or two ways of travel, just so playing and singing are coordinate, or two ways of making music. How could walking be an aid or help to riding? If a person were commanded to walk, could he ride at the same time? If a person were commanded to walk, could he ride instead? Thus if God commanded Christians to sing, could they play an instrument at the same time? If God commanded Christians to sing, could they play on an instrument instead? These questions carry their own answer, and the instrument in the worship cannot be justified on the basis of expediency.

### *Argument Based on Authority of the Scriptures*

In time a third argument, based on the authority of the Scriptures, was made in defense of the instrument. The arguments for the instrument on the basis of the silence of the Scriptures and on the basis of expediency had proven to be rather lame defenses. A stronger defense was needed, and it was diligently thought out by certain leading advocates for the instrument. Thus in the second decade of the twentieth century, O. E. Payne published a book entitled, *Instrumental Music Is Scriptural*. The intent of the book was to establish by the scholars of the world that the Greek word *psallo* which appears in conjunction with the command to sing means "to play on an instrument."

This new defense for the use of the instrument in worship led to the historic debate in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1923, between Ira M. Boswell and N. B. Hardeman. Boswell affirmed the proposition: "Instrumental music in church worship is scriptural." In his affirmation of the subject, Boswell emphasized the point that words do not lose entirely their original or primary meaning. He then showed that the primary meaning of the word "*psallo*" was "to touch, pull, twitch, to pluck, to twang; to play (i.e. a stringed instrument) with the finger (i.e. instead of with plectrum); to sing to a harp."

Hardeman, in his first reply, not only agreed but also emphasized the fact that an instrument inheres in the word "*psallo*," but he then proceeded to show that Paul defined the instrument—and that the instrument defined by Paul is the human heart. Hardeman said: "I want to state to you candidly, I believe that it is impossible to worship God acceptably unless there is the accompaniment of the vocal expression with that instrument described in God's book—namely, the making of melody or the striking on the strings or playing upon the chords of the human heart."

Now, one has but to weigh Paul's statement in Ephesians 5:19 in order to see the correctness of Hardeman's statement. The pas-

sage reads: "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody [psalting or psallontes] with your heart to the Lord." Paul did not command the Ephesians to "psallo" or pull the hunter's bow, nor did he command them to "psallo" or pluck the carpenter's line, nor did he command them to "psallo" or pluck the strings of a harp or strike the chords of an organ. Paul did command the Ephesians to sing and "psallo" or pluck, or make melody ' with your heart unto the Lord."

The word "psallo" does not indicate a particular instrument. "Psalting" is a thing that is done on an instrument, whether the instrument be a bow, a carpenter's string, a harp, or a human heart. The word "psallo" occurs in Ephesians 5:19, in Romans 15:9, in 1 Corinthians 14:15, and in James 5:13. In Ephesians it is translated "make melody"; in Romans it is translated "sing"; in First Corinthians it is translated "sing," both times; and in James it is translated "sing praises."

#### *Argument Based on Want of Authority for Congregational Singing*

A fourth argument that has been made of late in defense of the use of the instrument is based on the want of authority for congregational singing in the appointed assemblies. The late Dr. R. M. Bell, longtime and capable President of Johnson Bible College, in a tract entitled, *What Is Worship?*, wrote: "If the assemblies ever employed music,

vocal or instrumental, it is never mentioned. We are told that the 3,000 who were converted by the Holy Spirit at Jerusalem, "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42.) No music of any kind is mentioned. Singing is mentioned seven times in Acts and the Epistles, but in each case the reference is to a solo or duet, which has no connection whatever with a congregational singing commanded, mentioned or inferred."

Dr. Bell also observed in his tract that worship is not singing, or preaching, or praying, or partaking of the Lord's supper, or giving. In defining worship. Dr. Bell said: "Worship is not an act, but an emotion. It is not something that you do with your hands or your mouth, but something you feel in your heart. Worship is not objective but subjective. It is something that takes place on the inside of the worshipper."

The pertinent aspect of Dr. Bell's reasoning on worship turns on his defense for the use of an instrument in the worship. His reasoning is that the instrument in the assembly is not authorized; but likewise, congregational singing in the assembly is not authorized either; therefore, the instrument has as much place in the assembly as singing has in the assembly. The logical conclusion to Dr. Bell's reasoning would be that two unauthorized "acts" in the assembly of the saints would make each of those "acts" scriptural.

### Conclusion

The very pertinent question is: Shall Christians go by the authority of the Holy Scriptures in worship, or shall they presume to worship God in whatever way and by whatever means as they may personally be pleased to so do? The principle involved is deeper than the use of the instrument in the worship. The

principle involves an attitude toward the Bible, itself. It involves the matter of whether or not the Bible is the inerrant word of God. It involves respect for God, himself. It is a question of whether or not man shall be governed by what God says, or shall every man do that which is right in his own eyes.

### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

1. The apostle John fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, and the angel said: "See that thou do it not: . . . worship God." (Rev. 22:8-9.)

2. Jehovah said through Moses: "What things soever I command you, that shall ye observe to do; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." (Deut. 12:32.)

3. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before Jehovah, which would be a seemingly innocent thing in the eyes of those who see no harm in the use of the instru-

ment, and there came forth fire from Jehovah and devoured them.

4. The instrument was not introduced into the Christian worship until A.D. 660.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give the time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

Why is this study important to members of the church?  
Upon what should the use or nonuse of the instrument depend?  
Define acceptable worship.  
What is God's scheme of worship? Why is it necessary?  
Distinguish between acceptable worship and presumptuous worship.  
Name three prerequisites for acceptable worship. Discuss each.

#### The Golden Text

Is singing a high order of prayer?  
Discuss.

#### The Kind of Music Authorized in the New Testament

What type of music is authorized by God? Give evidence.

Apply the principle governing generic

and specific commands to the subject before us.

#### Arguments for the Use of the Instrument

Answer the argument made on the silence of the Scriptures.  
Define and refute the argument from expediency.  
Define and refute the argument made on the Greek word "psallo."  
Discuss the argument by Dr. Bell.  
What is the weakness of his argument?  
How does one's attitude toward the instrument actually involve one's attitude toward the Bible, itself?

#### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

Give the attitude of the angel when John fell down to worship him. Discuss.  
Discuss the prohibition concerning adding to or taking from the Scriptures.  
Does the lesson concerning Nadab and Abihu teach that sincerity is enough? Discuss.  
When was the instrument introduced into Christian worship?

## Lesson IX—August 31, 1975

### CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE

Eph. 5:22-33; 6:1-4

#### Lesson Text

22 Wives, be in *subjection* unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 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.

24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives also *be* to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it;

26 That he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word,

27 That he might present the church to himself a glorious *church*, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 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.

32 This mystery is great; but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church.

33 Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and *let* the wife *see* that she fear her husband.

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.—“Honor thy father and thy mother.” (Ex. 20:12.)  
 DEVOTIONAL READING.—Eph. 6:5-10.

Daily Bible Readings

August 25. M.....	Abraham’s Family (Gen. 12:1-3)
August 26. T.....	Solitary in Families (Psalm 68:1-6)
August 27. W.....	God and the Families of Israel (Jer. 31:1-10)
August 28. T.....	A Wise Woman (Prov. 31:1-27)
August 29. F.....	A Sinful Family (1 Sam. 3:1-14)
August 30. S.....	A Godly Family (Ruth 1:1-18)
August 31. S.....	A Faithful Family (Heb. 11:8-19)

TIME.—About A.D. 60.

PLACES.—Rome in Italy and Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor.

PERSONS.—Paul and the saints of Ephesus.

INTRODUCTION

The areas of human relationships often involve very delicate matters. Some of the greatest experiences and joys of life turn on human relationships; and conversely, some of the greatest disappointments of life turn on other human relationships.

There are no human relationships more delicate, more emotionally involved, more rewarding in some cases, and more disappointing in others, than the marriage—the husband and wife—relationships. The parent-child relationships are almost on the same par with the husband-wife relationships, and in some cases such relationships are even the more endearing in some instances and the more disappointing in other instances. The master-servant relationships are also often quite delicate—particularly at certain times and under certain circumstances—and they often determine a person’s general happiness and satisfaction with his vocation, or profession, or calling in life.

In the epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians, which epistles were written at the same time, the apostle Paul dealt with the basic areas of human relationships—the husband-wife relationships, the parent-child relationships, and the master-servant relationships. (Col. 3:18; Eph. 5:22-25.) (Col. 3:20-21; Eph. 6:1-4.) (Col. 3:22-4:1; Eph. 6:5-9.) Paul’s epistle to the church at Philippi, written about a year later, indicates that the primary problems in the church there turned on the area of human relations. Perhaps the various involvements in human relation affairs is the greatest single

problem in the churches of Christ today. These relationships involve elder-elder relationships, elder-deacon relationships, elder-member relationships, elder-preacher relationships, preacher-member relationships, wives of elder-member relationships, and wife of preacher-member relationships.

To the end that rightful authority might be maintained and that anarchy might be condemned, Paul began his instruction on human relations, in each instance, with the respective subordinate:

1. To the wives—the subordinates—he wrote: “Wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, as unto the Lord.” (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18.)

2. To the children—the subordinates—he wrote: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.” (Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20.)

3. To the servants—the subordinates—he wrote: “Servants, be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart.” (Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22.)

In each case, Paul, having given instruction to the subordinate, moved to the ascendant. His instructions to the ascendants were just as specific and demanding.

1. To the husbands—the ascendants—he wrote: “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself up for it.” (Eph. 5:25; Col. 3:19.)

2. To the fathers—the ascendants of wives and of children—he wrote: “Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.” (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3: 21.)

3. To the masters—the ascendants—he wrote: “Ye masters, do the same things unto them [the servants], and forbear threatening: knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.” (Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1.)

Paul, herein, set forth the perfect and positive pattern for good human relations in the three basic relationships of life. If Paul’s instructions are carefully followed, good rela-

tions will inevitably follow. To illustrate:

1. When wives and husbands follow Paul’s instructions, there can be no real imbalance, injustice, inequality, or disparity.

2. When children and parents follow Paul’s instructions, there can be likewise no real imbalance, injustice, inequality, or disparity.

3. When servants and masters follow Paul’s instructions, there can be likewise no imbalance, injustice, inequality, or disparity.

### The Golden Text

*“Honor thy father and thy mother.”* This text constitutes one of the ten commandments. The first four of the ten commandments pertain to obligations that man owes to his God. The last six of the ten commandments pertain to obligations that man owes to his fellowman. Man—any man or every man—owes his father and mother honor and respect. Paul wrote: “Honor thy father and thy mother (which is the first commandment with promise).” (Eph. 6:2.)

The proper love, honor, and respect for parents are indicative of a person’s basic character. People with basic character live longer lives and fuller lives, generally speaking, than do other people. This is of course a general rule of life, and almost everyone can call up an exception.

The point of emphasis is that the principles of character that will motivate a person to honor his parents will also shield and preserve him from the ruin which comes through ingratitude, disrespect, and rebellion.

So long as their parents shall live, children are under heaven’s imposed obligation to honor and respect them. When the children are young they should show respect, give obedience, and demonstrate their love for their parents. When the same children are adults, they should spend time and expend love, care, and encouragement to their parents, and they should especially expend such love, care, and encouragement when those parents are old, infirm, and helpless.

### The Text Explained

#### Husband and Wife Relationships

(Eph. 5:22-33)

*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.*

Christ brought liberty to those who were in sin, liberty to those who were in bondage to the law, and liberty to those who were in bondage to the world. The spirit of liberty prevailed among the Christians, and there was a danger that the prevailing spirit of liberty might be abused—that it might be used as an excuse to throw off the wholesome restraints imposed by

Jehovah, as well as those imposed by society. Thus, Paul began his instructions relative to the area of human relationships with the subordinates—with the very ones who might be moved by their new found liberty to throw off any and all of their irritating restraints.

God first created man, and he then created the woman for the man. Authority must reside somewhere, or else there will be anarchy—whether in a home, in a school, in a state, or in a nation. God made the man the head of the home. Within this frame of reference, Paul wrote: “Wives, be in subjection [submit to or obey] to your own husbands, as unto the Lord.” This means that even if her husband gives her no solace or comfort, she should submit because it is God’s command.

Moving to a counterbalance, Paul



charged: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it." The love imposed here is far more than love that stems from passion. It is a love that is unselfish, long-suffering, forbearing, and forgiving.

While the wife is charged to obey her husband as the head of the home, she will or should find a joyous service when her husband loves her as Christ loved the church. Under such prevailing circumstances, she will feel or find no imbalance, injustice, inequality, or disparity.

Much turns on the home—the lives of children, the course of society, and the hope of the world. Husbands and wives make a terrible mistake when they violate the conditions here enjoined. Wives should examine themselves. They should ask: Do I encourage my husband to take his rightful place as the head of the family? Do I encourage my children to respect and obey their father by my own example of compliance or subjection? Do I resent my subordinate place in the home? Do I nag and fret and frustrate my husband's decisions respecting the home? Conversely, husbands should also examine themselves. They should ask: Am I tender, kind, and thoughtful of my wife and her varied responsibilities? Am I understanding of her needs, her fears, and her desires? Do I give her support when the children have not been happy and cooperative? Do I vie for the children's love and sympathy, or do I teach them to respect and obey their mother? Do I demand the children to carry their load of home chores so that my wife will be the less burdened? Do I stand for principle? Am I really worthy to be the head of the home? Am I really the head, or do I abdicate my position or place as head of the family every time a knotty problem arises? Do I work so as to properly maintain my family? Do I set the example for spiritual guidance and direction? Do I discipline the children? Do I have the courage to say no, and mean it?

The church nor the nation can ever rise above the standards which are maintained in the respective homes. The home should be a place of joyful participation—where love prevails, where righteousness is

maintained, where God is feared, where the Bible is taught, and where the children are secure! God grant that the home everywhere may be lifted to higher standards! This can be done when husband and wife perform properly in their respective God-given roles.

Thus as Christ is the head of the church and the Saviour of the body, so the husband is the head of the wife and he is also her protector. The husband is, or should be, interested in her welfare. A home without a head is like a nation without a ruler. There are, therefore, good reasons why Jehovah assigned to the husband the responsibility of being the head of the wife and also of the children. Paul summarizes the instructions of verses 22-23 by declaring that as the church is subject to Christ so the wife must be subject to the husband in everything.

The husband, however, is not without heavy responsibility in this marriage relationship. He is charged with the obligation of loving his wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for it. The husband's love for his wife must be strong, deep, and spontaneous.

Thus Paul further commented: "*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it [or separate it to his service], having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word [that is by baptism into Christ by the instruction of the word], that he might present the church to himself a glorious church [or bride—the thought here contemplates the marriage custom of Paul's day], not having spot or wrinkle [that is not having moral or spiritual stain]; but that it [the bride or the church] should be holy [separated for Christ and for him only] and without blemish. Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies [the thought is that the wife is in a sense the husband's own body—as the church is Christ's body, so the wife is the husband's body, and the husband should love his body, his wife, as Christ loved his body, the church]. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself [she is a part of his body]: for no man ever hateth his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also*

*the church; because we are members of his body. For this cause* [because the bond between the husband and wife is such a strong human relationship] *shall a man leave his father and mother* [this is a basic condition to a successful marriage], *and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh* [the one flesh among other things is reference especially to the sex union]. *This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church* [those who make up the church are married to Christ], *Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife* [not some other man's wife] *even as himself; and let the wife see* [be sure] *that she fear* [or reverence] *her husband."*

### Parent and Children Relationships

(Eph. 6:1-4)

*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.*

As Paul began with wives—the subordinates—so here he begins with the children—another class of subordinates. Children are charged to obey their parents in the Lord—that is they are to obey their parents in everything, except when to obey would be to disobey God. The expression, "in the Lord," is a limitation beyond which a child may not go in his obedience to his parents.

The child learns to obey God by first learning to obey his parents. Parents do their children a great injustice when they fail to demand respect and obedience from them.

Children are to obey their parents—that is, both father and mother. Paul, however, moved in his instruction from parents, as such, to fathers. "Provoke not your children to wrath," he instructed. This was in recognition of the fact that the father was the head of the house or

home. When Paul wrote, ultimate authority resided with and in the father. This was and is as the case should be.

Paul cautioned, however, that fathers should not provoke their children to wrath—that is, fathers should not be bitter, wrathful, and overly severe in their relationships with their children. Fathers should lead with firmness, but that firmness should stem from principle and should be clothed with compassion, sympathy, and a good wholesome sense of humor. Children should be able to confidently feel that their parents are for them—on their side—in every wholesome and righteous endeavor.

The viable Christian home turns on the father. There is no basis for a debate on this affirmation. What a pity is the sight of a mother in her efforts to rear her children without the help—to say nothing of leadership—of her husband! Many of the homes in America have gone to wrack, primarily because the fathers have abdicated their responsibilities. Such men are men in gender only—not in real manhood. The father and mother are both to be spiritual, but if there is ever a difference in spirituality, the strength should lie with the father. The father or husband should be the stronger of the two. Let every man recognize this fact!

Napoleon said that what France needed was more mothers. He may have been correct, but in reality what the church of the Lord needs is more men—men of principle, men of faith, men who will stand up to be counted.

Fathers are specifically charged with the obligation to nurture their children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord. This means that they are to train, discipline, and restrain their children in keeping with the teaching from the Lord. Children must be taught to see life in its proper perspective, for if a child grows up to gain the whole world and loses his soul what shall he give in exchange for his soul?

### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

1. Every family should plan for time so that the members may work together, play together, and pray together.

2. As a way of putting to shame the infidelity of the Judahites, Jeremiah, speaking for Jehovah, appealed to the case or example of the

Rechabites who were, apparently, a subdivision of the Kenites—a nomad tribe closely connected with the Israelites. Rechab had taught his sons to drink no wine, nor build houses, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyards, nor have any. All their days they were to dwell in tents, as remembering that they were strangers in the land. For some two and one-half centuries—observe two and one-half centuries—his descendants had adhered to the instruction that he had given to his sons prior to his death. What a long far-reaching influence! Does this have implication for fathers? (Jer. 35; 1 Chron. 2:55.)

3. For much too long, brethren have remarked as to society's need for good women. The need is apparent and certain. It is not overdrawn. When, however, will brethren come to realize that a real and greater need of society is for men—good men! Women, by and large, are being forced to take over the

home, make the decisions, rear and discipline the children, and often to eke out a living for the family. The need is for men! honorable men! Let no person mistake this fact!

4. Sociologists and counsellors are known for their warnings relative to the fact that so many families in America—particularly in certain ethnic groups—are without men as heads of the homes.

5. Abraham was chosen because he commanded his household and his children after him. (Gen. 18:19.)

6. The home is the bedrock of all society.

7. The master-servant relationship abounds in all areas of human intercourse. At times there are interchanges in these relationships. To illustrate, an elder may find himself an employee of a member of the flock over which he is a shepherd. As an elder he would occupy the "master" position, but as an employee he would occupy the "servant" relationship.

**Questions for Discussion**

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

**Introduction**

What are some of the more endearing human relationships?  
What are the three basic human relationships?  
In what two epistles did Paul discuss human relationships?  
What good church was troubled over human relationships?  
Whom did Paul address first in the area of human relationships? Why?  
Discuss how that Paul gave a balance between husbands and wives, parents and children, and masters and servants.

**The Golden Text**

What is the first commandment with promise?  
In what way may a person's life-span be increased through his honoring his parents?  
Discuss how and to what extent children should show respect to their parents.

**Husband and Wife Relationships**

How might the spirit of freedom in Christ be abused?

Why is woman the subordinate?  
Must or should every institution have a head? Discuss.  
Must a woman obey her husband?  
What questions should wives ask themselves?  
What questions should husbands ask themselves?  
What is the bedrock of all society?

**Parents and Children Relationships**

What is meant by the statement: 'Children obey your parents in the Lord'?  
How may children learn to obey their Lord?  
What is meant by the instruction of fathers to nurture their children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord?  
Discuss ways and means for the guiding and directing of children in righteousness.

**Seed-Thoughts On the Lesson**

Discuss family togetherness.  
Who was Rechab? What kind of influence did he have on his descendants?  
Discuss the need for fathers. Which is the greater need in society today, fathers or mothers?

## Lesson X—September 7, 1975

## THE CHRISTIAN'S ARMOR

Eph. 6:10-20

## Lesson Text

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might.

11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

13 Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

15 And having shod your feet with

the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil *one*.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18 With all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints,

19 And on my behalf, that utterance may be given unto me in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,

20 For which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Watch ye, stand fast the faith, quit you like men, be strong"* (1 Cor. 16:13.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Eph. 5:1-20.

## Daily Bible Readings

September 1. M.....	War a Good Warfare (1 Tim. 1:1-18)
September 2. T.....	Contend for the Faith (Jude 1-4)
September 3. ....	W. A Good Soldier of Christ (2 Tim. 2:1-5)
September 4. T.....	Fight Good Fight of Faith (1 Tim. 6:11-16)
September 5. F.....	Lord Guards Our Hearts and Minds (Phil. 4:1-7)
September 6. ....	S. Some Fall Away (Heb. 3:7-19)
September 7. ....	S. Rest Awaits the Faithful (Heb. 4:1-13)

TIME.—About A.D. 60.

PLACES.—Rome in Italy and Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor.

PERSONS.—Paul and the saints of Ephesus.

## INTRODUCTION

Christ and Paul, particularly, employed many figures of speech in their teaching—like the parable, the allegory, the fable, the simile, the similitude, and the metaphor. In the main, the figures of speech were employed as a means of emphasizing and clarifying the message. The figures served to move the hearers to understand the new instruction in the light of their everyday knowledge and experiences. There were times when figures of speech were employed to conceal the message from all except a select

few, in order to conceal it from those who had no right to the message, or who would abuse it.

Christ, by way of illustration, used several word descriptions—or metaphors—to describe the Christian's influence, such as the following:

1. The Christian is the salt of the earth. (Matt. 5:13.)

2. He is the light of the world. (Matt. 5:14.)

3. He is the leaven of righteousness. (Matt. 13:33.)

4. He is a laborer in the vineyard. (Matt. 20:1-6.)

The apostle Paul, by way of illustration, used several word descriptions—metaphors and/or similes—to describe the Christian's profession or vocation. To illustrate:

1. The Christian is a servant. (2 Tim. 2:4.)

2. He is a messenger. (Phil. 2:25;

1 Thess. 3:1-2.)

3. He is a runner. (Heb. 12:1-2.)

4. He is a soldier. (Eph. 6:10-17.)

As a means of instruction and encouragement to brethren and individuals, particularly Timothy, Paul admonished:

1. Make your bodies a living sacrifice. (Rom. 12:1-2.)

2. Do good unto all men. (Gal. 6:10.)

3. Be ready to every good work. (Tit. 3:1.)

4. Walk honestly as in the day. (Rom. 13:13.)

5. Do the work of an evangelist. (2 Tim. 4:5.)

6. Suffer hardships. (2 Tim. 4:5.)

7. Fight the good fight of faith. (1 Tim. 6:12.)

8. Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. 2:3.)

Thus, by a figure of speech, the apostle Paul referred to the Christian as a soldier, and as the lesson today will show, he urged the Ephesian Christians to put on the whole armor of God—or every piece of the soldier's equipment—that they might be able to stand against the enemy, or Satan with all of his wiles. As was the case then, so is the case now; a great and bitter war is on. It is a long and bitter struggle—a struggle between the forces of righteousness and the forces of evil. Christ is the captain of the forces of righteousness, and Satan is the captain of the forces of evil. (Heb. 2:10.)

In this warfare both Christ and Satan are calling for volunteers. Though Christ has the power to conscript, he only recruits volunteers. Only volunteers are accepted in his army. He does not conscript soldiers, and he maintains no mercenary reserve troops—that is troops who serve for the mammon. Satan does not have the power to conscript—every man is free to choose whether he will fight

for Christ or for Satan—but he does pay enormous wages to those who join his forces. The sad fact is that the wages of Satan are the wages of death. (Rom. 6:23.) Christ's worldwide call for volunteers reads: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." (Matt. 11:28-29.)

The nature of the warfare which rages is spiritual—not carnal. Paul wrote the Corinthians: "The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds." (2 Cor. 10:4.) Paul also wrote Timothy: "This charge I commit unto thee, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies which led the way to thee, that by them thou mayest war the good warfare; holding faith and a good conscience; which some having thrust from them made shipwreck concerning the faith." (1 Tim. 1:18-19.) In short, the Christian's warfare is not "against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

The manner of enlistment into the Lord's army is through a commitment to the cause, through a faith in the Captain, and through the meeting of the terms of enlistment, including the oath of allegiance—in short, faith, repentance, confession, and baptism. The minimum period of enlistment, in fact the only period, is for life. (Matt. 28:19-20.) There is absolutely no provision for a furlough of any kind at any time. Deserters from the Lord's army are punished by death. (2 Pet. 2:20-21.)

Upon the proper enlistment into the Lord's army, the new recruit is outfitted with the soldier's uniform—he puts on Christ. He then has issued to him his fighting equipment—the Christian's armor.

The new recruit in the Lord's army is drilled and trained to endure hardships. He is fed the proper foods—the milk and the meat of God's Word. (Matt. 4:4; 1 Pet. 2:2;

Heb. 5:12-14.) He grows stronger daily by his fighting activities and experiences. The reward for his service is eternal life, and he will have a seat at the old soldier's re-

nion, when the war has been won and when the Captain meets with all his true and faithful soldiers. (1 Tim. 6:12; 1 Thess. 4:14-17; Matt. 25; Rev. 21.)

### The Golden Text

*"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."* Paul's admonitions here summarize the qualities of a good soldier. Every Christian soldier will do well to reflect seriously on these admonitions:

*Watch ye*—the meaning is to beware of the craftiness of Satan. Watch in behalf of oneself and in behalf of the entire church. Watch for the rise of evil, whether sensualism, dissensions, disorder, or error. The good soldier is ever alert for any slight movement on the part of the enemy.

*Stand fast in the faith*—the meaning is to take a position for the faith—for truth and righteousness

and further to be firm and steadfast in the support of that position. The good soldier will have the stamina to stand, even in the face of strong and overwhelming odds and/or opposition.

*Quit you like men*—the meaning is to behave like men; do not be frightened like children. The good soldier is not a coward. He does not lose his bearing or become overly alarmed at the aggression of the enemy.

*Be strong*—the meaning is to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. The good soldier of Christ does not trust in himself; he trusts in the strength of the Lord.

### The Text Explained

#### The Christian Warfare

(Eph. 6:10-12)

*Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

The Christian warfare is a fight between the forces of righteousness and the forces of evil. The Christian, therefore, must be strong—a person of commitment, determination, and moral courage. He can only have this great strength in the Lord, for without the Lord he can have no strength at all. To be in the Lord is to be in the church. In Christ there is salvation. All spiritual blessings are in Christ, and no person is in Christ who has not been baptized into him.

Paul urged the Ephesians to put on the whole armor of God. The figure of speech has reference to the standard fighting equipment of the soldiers of that day. There was a pressing reason for the admonition. Those Ephesians—as in the case of

all Christians—were engaged in a bitter warfare. They, every Christian there, needed the whole armor of God—both that which was used for protection and that which was used for attack. They needed this armor so that they could stand against the wiles of the devil—against the craftiness, the deception, and the diabolical cunningness of Satan.

Paul then emphasized that "our wrestling [he included himself! is not against flesh and blood." Here Paul was speaking in a comparative sense. Christians do wrestle with flesh and blood, as Paul quite well knew from long years of experience. He had been beaten, stoned, and persecuted. Paul, then by way of comparison was saying, "We wrestle *not against flesh and blood only,*" there were other foes than those of flesh and blood.

The other foes, concerning whom Paul wrote, were principalities, powers, world-rulers of this darkness, the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Here Paul describes the spirit world, consisting of Satan, an angel who led a rebellion against God, and the angels who joined him in that rebellion. The reference to the "spir-

itual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places" is to the rebellious angels who have been cast out of heaven. According to Paul, those rebellious angels have their own organization—their own position, rank, and authority. To the Colossians, Paul made reference to the organization, position, and rank of good angels. He said: "Who [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, for in him were all things created in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible [such as man] and things invisible [angels], whether thrones or dominions or principalities, or powers; all things have been created through him [including angels], and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist." (Col. 1:15-17.) Christian soldiers, then, not only wrestle against flesh and blood, but they wrestle against an innumerable spiritual host of wicked and rebellious angels, including Satan who stands as their prince—the prince of the air.

#### The Christian Armor (Eph. 6:13-17)

*Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

Without the armor of God, no Christian soldier can stand. God provides the armor, but the soldier must put it on. This he must do in order to stand in the evil day—the day of severe trial and of crucial decisions. The "having done all, to stand, stand therefore" has reference to the Christian's preparation to stand, and his persistency in standing—the Christian defends himself while attacking the enemy.

The armor, concerning which Paul wrote in a figurative sense, consisted of the following:

*The belt*—this was fastened about the loins, and it served to protect the loins and to keep the other parts of the armor in place. The belt stands for truth: the belt of truth is a most vital part of the Christian's armor.

*The breastplate*—this was that part of the armor which protected the breast and chest, and the vital organs therein housed. When a Christian is always seen in the right places and engaged in the right work, he wears the breastplate of righteousness, and he is thereby shielded from the fiery darts of criticism when they are hurled against him.

*The shoes*—these were sandals that were bound firmly to the soldier's ankles as well as his feet. The shoes represent the soldier's preparation—the readiness—of the gospel of peace. The soldier must have a sound foothold—a foothold that grounds in the faith.

*The shield*—this was worn on the left arm, and it could be moved from one position to another so as to protect the entire body. The shield represents the faith that comes by hearing the word of God. The soldier must rely heavily upon the shield of faith. It is his chief means of defense against the trials, tribulations, and persecutions of this life. The shield protects the Christian soldier from all the fiery darts of life.

*The helmet*—this was a cap of thick leather or brass, and it was worn on the head so as to guard it from blows by the enemy. The helmet represents salvation, and it thereby indicates that salvation is contingent upon the intellectual and free moral agency of man. The system of faith ever appeals to man's intellect. The Christian soldier cannot afford to be without the helmet.

*The sword*—this was a sharp dagger-type instrument with which the soldier struck down his enemy. The sword represents the word of God. The word is sharper than any two-edged sword. It is the power of God, and it stands in opposition to all unrighteousness. The Christian soldier would be quite ineffective without the sword of the spirit.

### Other Accompaniments to the Armor (Eph. 6:18-20)

Having set forth by figurative language the Christian's armor, Paul said, ". . . with all prayers and supplications [that is, attended by prayers or petitions and supplications or humble entreaties] *praying at all seasons* [that is on all occasions whether periods of stress or periods of joy] *in the Spirit* [by the guidance and instruction of the Spirit], *and watching thereunto in all perseverance* [a continuous activity] *and supplications* [humble entreaties] *for all of the saints* [intercessory prayers or prayers for others were characteristic of both

Christ and Paul], *and on my behalf* [Paul would have the Ephesians to especially pray for him], *that utterance may be given unto me* [that he might have courage] *in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness* [frankness in speaking the whole truth] *the mystery of the gospel* [or the fact that the Gentiles were included], *for I am an ambassador in chains* [he was at that time a prisoner in Rome]; *that in it* [the gospel] *I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*" If the courageous apostle Paul felt the need of the prayers and supplications of Christians that he might with boldness declare the gospel, how much more the need of Christians today.

### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

1. All true Christians are soldiers of Christ.
2. The object of Satan is to break God's plan for man. His object is to destroy man.
3. In the warfare between Christ and Satan, there is no neutral ground. Every responsible soul is enrolled in either the army of Christ or the army of Satan.
4. Paul charged Timothy to "fight the good fight of faith." (1 Tim. 6:12.) The good fight is a fight for truth, a fight for principle, a fight for righteousness, a fight of faith, and a fight to control the flesh.
5. Satan is a murderer, the father of lies, the enemy of God, the prince of devils, the prince of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the ruler of the darkness of this world, the god of this world, the adversary, and the accuser of brethren. (John 8:44; Matt. 13:39; Matt. 12:24; John 12:31; Eph. 2:2; 6:12; 2 Cor. 4:4; Matt. 4:3; 1 Thess. 3:5; 1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:10.)
6. Unlike the armies of the na-

tions that are made up of men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, the army of the Lord is composed of men, women, and children, both old and young.

7. Where is the battlefield of this great warfare? Where does the Christian soldier first meet the enemy? The answer: (1) in his own heart is the first battleground; (2) in his home is the next battleground; (3) among his associates is the third battleground; (4) in his local environment is the fourth battleground; (5) in his business world is the fifth battleground; and (6) in the world at large is the sixth battleground.

8. The true Christian soldier will fight an enemy at any time—he can stand under fire. Other soldiers will fight as long as they can touch elbows with their comrades—during an evangelistic campaign or some exciting activity. Still other supposed soldiers will not fight at all—in every battle they hide in the stumps of dead trees.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

- Why did Christ and Paul use figures of speech?  
Give some word descriptions which describe the Christian's influence.  
Give some word descriptions which describe the Christian's profession.  
What figurative references to Christians did Paul make in today's lesson?  
What forces are at war?  
Who are the captains?

- What is the nature of the war?  
Does the Lord conscript men into his army?  
How does one become a soldier in the Lord's army?  
What is the shortest period for enlistment?  
What are the furlough times?  
What and when will be the "old soldier's" reunion?

#### The Golden Text

- In what ways is the golden text a description of a good soldier?



Must every Christian have these characteristics?

The Christian Warfare

Where does the Christian soldier's strength lie?

What is involved in one's being in the Lord?

Where are all spiritual blessings?

Why did Paul urge the Ephesians to put on the whole armor?

What did Paul really mean when he said: "Our wrestling is not with flesh and blood"?

Had Paul been beaten by men of flesh and blood?

Who constitutes the spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places?

Discuss the subject of angels.

Is there a sufficient amount of teaching done on the subject of angels, Satan, evil angels, and demons?

The Christian Armor

Who provides the Christian armor?

What must the would-be soldier do?

How does one put on the armor?

What are the parts of the armor which

Paul had under consideration?

What did each part represent?

Other Accompaniments to the Armor

Other than the Christian armor, what

must the Christian soldier do?

How often must he do these other things?

Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

In the prevailing warfare, is there any neutral ground?

What is Satan's object?

What is the good fight of faith?

Who is Satan? Describe.

Lesson XI—September 14, 1975

THE CHRISTIAN'S PRAYER LIFE

Matt. 6:5-15; 1 Thess. 5:16-18

Lesson Text

5 And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.

7 And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye. Our Father who art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one:

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 Rejoice always;

17 Pray without ceasing;

18 In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples." (Luke 11:1.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Luke 11:1-4.

Daily Bible Readings

- September 8. M.....Grace to Help in Time of Need (Heb. 4:14-16)
- September 9. T.....The Lord's Prayer (John 17)
- September 10. ....W. The Disciples' Prayer (Matt. 6:9-15)
- September 11. T.....A Prayer for Enemies (Matt. 5:43-48)
- September 12. F.....A Prayer of Paul (Rom. 15:30-33)
- September 13. S.....A Prayer of Abraham (Gen. 18:23-33)
- September 14. S.....Praying in His Name (John 16:20-24)

TIME.—For Matthew, about A.D. 29; for First Thessalonians, about A.D. 50-51.

PLACES.—For Matthew, near Capernaum in Galilee of Palestine; for First Thessalonians, Thessalonica, a city in Macedonia of Europe.

PERSONS.—Jesus and the multitude; Paul and the saints of Thessalonica.

## INTRODUCTION

Prayer is a subject that is interwoven with special emphasis throughout both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The great heroes of the Old Testament were men who prayed to Jehovah—men like Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Hezekiah, and Daniel, to mention only a few. John, the Baptist, taught his disciples to pray.

Jesus the Christ prayed often—even all night on one occasion. He, too, taught his disciples to pray. The apostle Paul was a great advocate of both the necessity of prayer and the efficacy of prayer. To the Thessalonians, he wrote: "Pray without ceasing." To the Romans, he wrote how that they should be patient in tribulation, "continuing stedfastly in prayer"; to the Colossians, he wrote: "continue stedfastly in prayer"; and to the Ephesians, he wrote: "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, . . . with all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." Further, Paul exhorted Timothy "that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high places; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity." (Luke 6:12; Matt. 6:9; Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2; Eph. 6:17-18; 1 Tim. 2:1-2.)

Prayer may be defined as an appeal, or intercession unto God. It is an act of offering reverent petitions to Deity. The classic Bible definition was given by Paul when he wrote: "Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication [prayer] to God is for them, that they may be saved." (Rom. 10:1.) The point here is that supplication, or prayer, is the expression of the heart's desire.

While prayer is a subject that receives much emphasis throughout the Bible—more in fact than many other pertinent Bible subjects—the fact is that there is a growing dis-

credit of the efficacy of prayer, even in prominent religious circles. One contention made is that God cannot answer prayers without performing miracles—without violating, countermending, or overruling the laws of nature. Thus, if there is no miracle, there can be no answer to prayer. Another contention made is that the only real benefit to be derived from prayer is a reflex influence—thus, a kind of spiritual gymnastic influence. One thing is certain: the Bible teaches men that they should pray. Another thing is equally certain: the same Bible that teaches men they should pray, teaches them also that God will hear and will answer their prayers. We should remember that God providentially cares for his children.

There are, however, limitations upon prayer. For one thing, except for a special direction from God, of which there is none, a prayer for a miracle would be no more allowable or acceptable than for a child to earnestly request his father to set fire to the family house and burn it down. If God, in answer to a mother's prayer, should pick up a telephone pole in the way, or path, of her son's reckless speeding, he might, on the same basis, set it down in the path of some man who drives soberly and within the speed limit. Jesus said: "What man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone; or if he shall ask for a fish, will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matt. 7:9-11.)

For another thing, a prayer for which the granting of the request would contravene the object of the laws of nature would not be allowable. In short, God will not do for man what he can do for himself. Paul—not John Smith—said, "If any will not work, neither let him eat." If a man in a hard blizzard deliberately sits down and prays, "Lord save me; make me warm,"

he will freeze to death of a certainty. If, while he prays, he hastens on his way to shelter as best he can, the providence of God may very well intervene for him.

There are certain conditions which must be met—certain elements that must exist—in order for a prayer to be acceptable and answerable. Those conditions or elements are:

1. There must be on the part of the one praying, the desire, and the expression of that desire. (Rom. 10:1.)

2. The prayer must be asked in faith. (Matt. 21:22; James 1:5-7.)

3. The prayer must be in accordance with the will of God. (1 John 5:14.)

4. The prayer must be made in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 14:13-14.)

5. The person praying must be righteous. (1 Pet. 3:12.)

6. The person praying must be unselfish. (James 4:3.)

7. The person praying must forgive others as he asks the Lord to forgive him. (Matt. 6:15.)

God answers prayers through the means of natural and spiritual laws in their continuous operation of cause and effect. He also answers prayers through his order of providence, but he does not answer prayers today through the means of miracles. Providence is God's working in invisible ways through the process of the laws of nature, and God may, no doubt, combine the laws of nature without the sus-

pension or violation of them. Miracles are visible and demonstrable signs of God's power. A miracle may be defined as "an extraordinary manifestation of divine power operating either independently of the laws and forces of nature, as in the original creation, or in opposition to them as in the separation of the Red Sea, or in connection and in harmony with them, as in the Noahic deluge" (Milligan). When Mary conceived in her womb the Christ-child without the agency of man, that was a miracle. When a child was born to Sarah at the age of ninety, that was providence. Isaac's birth was not miraculous, but Christ's birth was.

There is a warning, relative to prayer, which needs to be sounded. Some brethren go to extremes in their efforts to build up the faith of young men and women. Some aver that no one should question miracles because they are to be observed on every hand—like the budding of a flower and the birthing of a baby. Now, the budding of a flower and the birthing of a baby are reflections of the power of God, but they are not miracles! Then too, young men and women are told that if they pray for something or someone and believe—really believe, they are told—God will answer that prayer. So, what if that person is praying for his mother who has incurable terminal cancer? What will be the result when that person really prays and really believes, and his mother dies?

### The Golden Text

*"Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples to pray."* Christ was praying in a certain place, and his praying motivated his disciples to request that he teach them to pray. Jesus granted their request and gave them a model prayer, as per the text of this lesson.

One very pertinent point in this golden text is the necessary implication that men need to be taught to pray—they need to be taught how and when to pray. This need is a pressing one, and the intent of the present lesson is to assist in meeting the need.

### The Text Explained

#### Instructions on How to Pray

(Matt. 6:5-8)

*And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of*

*men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recom-*

*pense thee. And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*

The most scathing epithets that Jesus ever spoke were not against the woman taken in adultery, or against the cities wherein he did most of his mighty works—Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum—or against Peter who denied him thrice. His most scathing epithets were hurled at the scribes and Pharisees—hypocrites they were. (Matt. 23.) There is no wonder, then, that when he gave instruction on how to pray, he said: “Ye shall not be [or pray] as the hypocrites ... to be seen of men.” “They have received their reward,” he said. The lesson to be learned here is that men who pray must be humble and submissive in spirit, else God will reject their prayers. Men who pray should be like the publican who with downcast eyes said: “God, be thou merciful to me, a sinner.” (Luke 18:9-14.)

Jesus further instructed that instead of making a display of prayer, men ought to go to their chambers and pray there with the door shut and thus in secret to the Father who is in secret, so that the Father who seeth in secret would recompense them or reward them openly. Among the seven varieties of the Pharisees was the humpbacked variety, so called because they had gone about so long in a bent pious position of prayer that they had come to be humpbacked.

Jesus also spoke of vain repetitions in prayer—long prayers with involved and word-decorated repetitions. “Do not be as the Gentiles who think that they shall be heard for their much speaking,” Jesus admonished. Jesus prayed often and long—all night on one occasion, as a matter-of-fact. His point was that long elaborate prayers should not be the source or foundation of trust—their trust should be in God, himself, and not in the length of a prayer. Prayers should be sincere, direct, pertinent, and to the point. Jesus, in his discouraging vain repetitions in prayers, said: “Your Father knoweth what things ye

have need of before ye ask him.” The point here is that God does not need a long elaboration or explanation relative to the petition. He knows the need of the petitioner already. Does one ask, “Why pray?” The answer is simply that by means of prayer, an earnest humble soul is brought into a state of communion with God, wherein God hears and answers his prayers.

### The Model Prayer (Matt. 6:9-15)

*“After this manner therefore pray ye [this is not the Lord’s prayer, but rather a model for his disciples to pray], Our Father who art in heaven [this by contemplation is calculated to put the person praying in an humble and proper attitude], Hallowed [consecrated, sacred] be thy name. Thy kingdom come [the kingdom had not then been established, but was later established on Pentecost after Christ’s death]. Thy will be done [all true prayer is an expression of one petition—thy will be done], as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread [only a day at a time, and that not without individual work and effort—actually, a day at a time will suffice]. And forgive us our debts [our sins, broader sins than trespasses, but nonetheless mild: trespass is a misstep; debt is an unfulfilled obligation], as we also forgive our debtors [one must forgive to be forgiven]. And bring us not into temptation [God does not tempt, but when men request, he will shield or deliver them from temptation, as per their will or desire], but deliver us from the evil one [evil from within and Satan from without]. For if ye forgive men their trespasses [a re-emphasis of the necessity to forgive], your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses [are hardhearted—and refuse to forgive], neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”*

### Three Beautiful Admonitions (1 Thess. 5:16-18)

*Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward.*

Paul had just strongly admon-

ished the Thessalonians as to the attitude that they should hold toward the disorderly, the fainthearted, the weak, and for that matter, all men. Here he moves to give an admonition relative to their inner attitude and expression in reference to God.

Paul thus admonished: "Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks." This is a beautiful formula, and the ele-

ments of the formula are inter-dependent. There is always the danger that joy will disappear, particularly when hardships and persecutions arise. Only ceaseless prayer can call forth joy in such times of trial and conflict, and prayer without thanksgiving is wanting in an essential element—even in the face of tribulation, a n g u i s h , persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword.

### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

1. The instruction to pray presupposes a God who both hears and answers prayer.

2. The view that prayer is a mere reflex influence would make prayer a dumbbell exercise.

3. In prayer there is the communion of two wills—the finite and the infinite.

4. The parts of prayers are said to be invocation, adoration, confession, petition, dedication, pleading, thanksgiving, and blessing.

5. Many songs and psalms are high type prayers.

6. "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working." (James 5:16.)

7. "Elijah was a man of like passions with us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain; and it

rained not on the earth for three years and six months. And he prayed again; and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." (James 5:17-18.)

8. Public prayers should be spoken loud enough for all in the audience to hear.

9. Of the present time, the usual expression at the Lord's table is "Now let us pray." In the first half of this century, the expression was, "Now let us offer thanks for the bread, or for the fruit of the vine," as the case was. While "thanksgiving" is a form of prayer, and the person presiding may scripturally say, "Let us pray," the expression, "Let us offer thanks" seems to be more appropriate.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?

Repeat the golden text.

Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

What emphasis does the Bible put on prayer?

Name some men of prayer.

Discuss how Jesus prayed.

Relate Paul's teaching on prayer.

Define prayer.

What are some arguments made against prayer?

Give two limitations of prayer. Discuss.

Name seven conditions for an acceptable prayer.

Define providence.

Define a miracle.

Discuss the danger of extreme statements.

#### The Golden Text

What is the necessary implication of the golden text?

Discuss the need for the right kind of teaching on prayer.

#### Instructions on How to Pray

Whom did Jesus condemn more severely than all others?

With what spirit did the Pharisees pray?

What is the great message for those who pray?

What are vain repetitions?

Who made vain repetitions?

If God knows a person's needs before he prays, why pray?

#### The Model Prayer

Should this prayer be called the Lord's prayer?

Should Christians pray, "thy kingdom come"?

What one special condition is necessary for an answerable prayer?

May a person just pray for his daily bread and leave the matter there?

#### Three Beautiful Admonitions

What are the three elements that make Paul's formula for a Christian's inner attitude and expression?

How are these elements interrelated?

#### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

Is prayer a mere reflex influence?

Are a number of songs and psalms high type prayers?

Discuss public prayers.

Discuss the prayers or the offering of thanks at the Lord's supper.

Lesson XII—September 21, 1975

CHRISTIAN CONSECRATION

Rom. 12:1, 2, 9-20

Lesson Text

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.

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.  
GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."* (Rom. 12:21.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rom. 12:3-8.

tality.

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.

Daily Bible Readings

- September 15. M..... The Christ-Centered Life (Phil. 1:12-27)
- September 16. T..... Imitators of Christ (Eph. 5:1-14)
- September 17. W..... Taking Up Our Cross (Mark 8:27-38)
- September 18. T..... Seeking the Things That Are Above (Col. 3:10-17)
- September 19. F..... Proper Speech (Eph. 4:25-32)
- September 20. S..... Watchfulness (1 Thess. 5:1-11)
- September 21. S..... Manifold Duties (Eph. 6:1-9)

TIME.—About A.D. 56.

PLACES.—Corinth in Greece; and Rome in Italy.

PERSONS.—Paul and the saints in Rome.

INTRODUCTION

The apostle Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans from Corinth in A.D. 56 or 57. In that epistle he expressed to the brethren how that for many years he had longed to visit them. He related further how that he planned to go to Spain, and that he purposed to visit them as he made his journey to Spain. There were no doubt several reasons why Paul desired so much to visit Rome, and three of those reasons were special, indeed.

One reason why Paul desired so much to visit Rome was because no apostle had ever been there. The churches in Rome had been established by converts from other places who had either resided there all of the while and had heard and obeyed the gospel when on a trip away from Rome, or else by converts who had moved from some other city or province to Rome. Paul had had sufficient communications from certain brethren in Rome

—there were in Rome certain of his kinsmen and converts—for him to know that his presence was needed. His accomplishments, after he reached Rome some four years later, also attest to the fact that his presence was needed for the sake of the brethren, for the sake of the communities of the Jews, and for the sake of the Romans.

Another reason why Paul desired so much to visit Rome was because he had no other place in Europe, as well as the other great regions of Asia, where he had not preached. To illustrate, he wrote the Romans: "Wherefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you: but now, *having no more any place in these regions*, . . . whenever I go unto Spain . . . I hope to see you in my journey." (Rom. 15:22-24.) The thoughtful and informed Christian will stand amazed at the great accomplishments of the apostle Paul through his long, arduous, and dangerous travels in both the continent of Asia and the continent of Europe.

A third reason why Paul desired so much to visit Rome was because that city was the capital of all of the then-known world. The city of Rome was perhaps the most strategic city for the good course of the gospel in all of the world. As Luke's inspired history will show, Paul's choice of cities or localities to carry the message of the gospel turned on two factors, namely: (1) the presence of a synagogue or synagogues, and (2) the population, interchange, and viableness of the city and/or the region.

*"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."* Paul wrote Timothy: "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.) All, therefore, who live godly will be faced, one time or another and perhaps many times, with the obligation of overcoming evil with good. The obligation is not without some knotty problems, particularly under certain circumstances. The great suffering prophet, Jeremiah, faced some of those knotty circumstances and he prayed unto Jehovah: "Be not a terror unto me: thou art my refuge in the

Paul wrote the epistle to the Romans as a means of laying a foundation for his visit. He knew of certain circumstances and conditions which prevailed there, and he was therefore, apprehensive of certain brethren and/or attitudes which prevailed there—attitudes such as had been demonstrated among the churches of Galatia. He wrote his epistle to the Romans, therefore, in order to set forth by apostolic authority the fundamentals of Christianity, and that in such a manner so as to conciliate, if possible, the antagonistic spirit of the Jewish Christians toward the Gentile Christians.

Paul proceeded in the epistle to the Romans to show that before Christ came all were under sin—not just the Gentiles but the Jews also. "All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God," Paul declared. God in his mercy, therefore, set forth Christ Jesus to be a propitiation—an appeasement—for the sins of man "*that he might himself be just* [God, himself, would cease to be just if violated justice should go unrequited] *and the justifier* [through Christ's death and blood God could be just on the one hand and merciful saviour, on the other] *of him that hath faith in Jesus.*" (Rom. 3:21-27.) Paul, therefore, championed Christ as being the only hope of the world for both Gentile and Jew. The epistle literally glows with the logic and arguments that establish Christ and Christianity as the hope of all the world. The epistle is profound.

### The Golden Text

day of evil. Let them be put to shame that persecute me, but let not me be put to shame; let them be dismayed; bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with double destruction." (Jer. 17:18.) Paul was the Jeremiah of the New Testament. If ever a man suffered at the hands of enemies, Jeremiah and Paul did, and within the context of suffering at the hands of enemies, Paul wrote: "Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good."

The primary thought here, no doubt, is that the godly Christian must overcome or conquer the

abuse and evil conduct of his enemy. He must not retaliate, or take vengeance, upon his enemy. He must not stoop to the level and employ the tactics of his enemy. Instead, the godly Christian must conquer his enemy by doing good for him—feed him when he is hungry and give him drink when he is thirsty, and pray for him.

Paul did not imply by the words of the golden text that the godly Christian should refrain from labeling the sins of his enemy for what they really were. If such were the case, then one law of God would fall into conflict with another. To illustrate, Paul wrote Timothy: "Them that sin reprove in the sight of all, that the rest also may be in fear." He called Elymas the sorcerer, "the son of the devil, and the enemy of all righteousness." Further, he wrote: "Demas forsook me, having loved this present world. . . . Alexander the copper-smith did me much evil. . . . At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me." "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and

strife." (1 Tim. 5:20; Acts 13:4-12; 2 Tim. 4:9-16; Phil. 1:15.)

Jesus prayed when on the cross: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Paul wrote of the brethren who forsook him, "May it not be laid to their account." Stephen, when being stoned to death, prayed: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." (Luke 23:34; 2 Tim. 4:16; Acts 7:60.)

Did these, Christ, Paul, and Stephen, pray that God would save their enemies as they were in their sins? Would not a pardon without repentance run counter to the justice and righteousness of God? Truly, if God should pardon a rebellious impenitent soul, he would, himself, cease to be righteous. God's mercy will rejoice against his justice when a man turns to him in faith and obedience. The prayers of the three, Christ, Paul, and Stephen, must be understood, therefore, to be prayers for God to give the rebellious ones time and opportunity to see the error of their way, and repent, and turn to him for forgiveness.

## The Text Explained

### Doctrine and Practice

(Rom. 12:1-2)

From the beginning of the epistle through the eleventh chapter Paul stated and defended the great doctrine of Christianity, and with the twelfth chapter to the end of the epistle he set forth the practical aspects or use of the doctrine.

"I beseech [Paul as an apostle could have commanded, but instead he implored or begged] *you therefore, brethren* | the *therefore* has reference to all that Paul had so ably set forth in the first eleven chapters], *by the mercies of God* [the *mercies* wherein God had given both Jews and Gentiles a common means of salvation, and as both were included under sin, so both could be saved in Christ], *to present your bodies* [restrain your fleshly appetites from all sensual and lustful desires] *a living sacrifice, holy* [in order to sacrifice a body, whether animal or human, it must be dead, and the meaning is that the Christian's body must be dead to sin and alive to righteousness, thereby being a living dead

body, holy, or without sin, and thereby set apart as a living sacrifice to God], *acceptable to God* [acceptability turns on careful attention to matters of God's appointments in the worship, walk, and work of a Christian], *which is your spiritual service* | in consequence of the sacrifice of Christ in behalf of both Jew and Gentile the service required is the logical and reasonable service that would be expected in return therefrom]. *And be not fashioned according to this world* [do not follow the life styles of those who seek worldly and sensual pleasures, worldly goods and positions, and worldly wisdom]: *but be ye transformed* [a major change in form, nature, and function, a radical damage in character both inward and outward] *by the renewing of your mind* [a knowledge of and meditation upon God's word is the means of changing the Christian's mind so that he has not the desire for the evil worldly things, but instead, his faith, desires, and purposes lead him to a life very much unlike the world], *that ye may*



*prove* [test, demonstrate by experience and example] *what is the good* [infinitely good in itself] *and acceptable* [or well pleasing] *and perfect* [complete when the mind is renewed] *will* [or plan] *of God.*"

**Love for the Friendly and the Unfriendly**  
(Rom. 12:9-20)

The verses for this lesson, as follows, reflect the love which should operate within the lives of those who make up the church. The verses, nine through twenty, logically divide into two categories; namely, (1) love for brethren (verses 9-16), and (2) love for enemies (verses 17-20). The exhortations which follow are incumbent upon every child of God. Let every Christian, therefore, analyze and inspect himself at every point of the way.

*Let love be without hypocrisy.* The quality of love is one of the great aspects or characteristics of Christianity, but anything except genuine and true love is counterfeit, pretense or a mere sham. Hypocrisy is defined as "a feigning to be what one is not." Thus love with hypocrisy is no love at all. It merely feigns to be that which it is not. Love with hypocrisy is one of the very common sins of Christians today. Let every Christian examine himself!

*Abhor that which is evil.* "Abhor" means to regard with extreme repugnance, or to loath. The natural inclination of the flesh is to delight in that which is evil, to seek it out, to revel in it. Only Christians who live close to the Lord will really find the motivation and spiritual strength to abhor evil, for its form is not hideous, but rather it is attractive and pleasing. There seems to be a great tendency for brethren today to jest about the danger of evil, to view the danger lightly. An order of general worldliness prevails in society today, and that spirit of worldliness has infiltrated the church. Let every Christian beware!

*Cleave to that which is good.* The word "cleave" as used here means to adhere to, or stick to. or cling to those things which are good—principles, morals, and matters of faith. The Christian must not

merely cling to these spiritual matters in a feeble way; rather, he must cling to them tenaciously, rigidly, and with all of the strength of his being. Such clinging qualities are not found in worldly and indifferent Christians. Let every Christian recount his present daily course in light of this pertinent admonition from the apostle Paul.

*In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another.* This admonition would have brethren to love each other with the kind of love that a mother has for a child. The admonition means that a Christian should love his brother in Christ as he loves his brother in the flesh. The love for the brethren must be universal—not partisan or confined to one congregation. The spiritual atmosphere is sweet and inviting in any church where this kind of brotherly love prevails, but the spiritual atmosphere is cold and restrained when there are cliques and parties and confusion in the church. Let every church take a spiritual inventory of itself!

*In honor preferring one another.* The meaning is that the Christian should seek to honor his brother—not to seek or take honor for himself. He should esteem his brother highly and without envy or jealousy. As a father is pleased when his son excels him, so a Christian should be pleased when his brother in Christ is honored. This exhortation requires the very essence of unselfishness. Preachers, elders, and all who lead can well afford to take a lesson here. Let all of them reflect on this admonition!

*In diligence not slothful.* The meaning here is that in whatever pursuit a Christian is engaged, whether religious or secular, he must perform with diligence, or with haste and alert attention. He must not be slothful. The term "slothful" means indolent, lazy, a disinclination to action or labor. Solomon said: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." (Eccles. 9:10.) There is really no place for a lazy person in the home, in the church, or in society. Young men and women can well afford to learn a lesson here, as well as wives and husbands. Some wives are lazy. They do not keep the home and the children in a

clean and wholesome way. Some husbands are so lazy that they never really make a standard living for their wives and children. Let the young, especially—both unmarried and married—learn a lesson here!

**Fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.** The word "fervent" means seething or boiling over. The connecting thought is that in all activities, whether religious or secular, the Christian should radiate enthusiasm, and particularly in spiritual affairs. The Christian should remember that all lawful employment—even if menial labor—is honorable and dignified. In fact, there is a certain dignity that attends the man who earns a livelihood by the sweat of his brow, even if he must eke it out with long hours of work. All should remember, regardless of employment and/or activities, that such work and activities are to be consecrated to God and thereby give glory to God. Let each Christian interrogate himself relative to the enthusiasm, or want of it, that attends his daily activities!

**Rejoicing in hope.** The thought here is that regardless of present pressures, disappointments, threats and persecutions, there is ground for rejoicing. That ground for rejoicing is the hope of eternal life. Admittedly, this kind of rejoicing requires faith—stronger faith often than the supposedly stronger-in-the-faith actually have. Let every Christian reflect on this!

**Patient in tribulation.** The word "patient" means to bear pains and trials calmly or without complaint, to manifest forbearance under provocation or strain, to be steadfast despite opposition, difficulty, and adversity. Patience is an outstanding quality of a true Christian. The word "tribulation" means distress or suffering resulting from oppression or persecution. Trials and persecutions come upon Christians, but rarely ever to the degree that Paul experienced them. The persecutions that Christians experience today are often at the hands of their own brethren, but regardless of the source, the Christian must learn to endure them with patience—or without complaining. The weaker the Christian, the more

complaining he does. Let every soul reflect on this fact!

**Continuing steadfastly in prayer.** Whether in peace and prosperity or persecutions and adversities, the Christian should continue steadfastly in prayer. God is especially pleased when his children pray to him. In prayer, the Christian engages in close communication with his heavenly Father. In such prayers and intercessions he leaves his otherwise insurmountable cares with the Father. Let every Christian reflect on the matter of how often and with what fervency he prays!

**Communicating to the necessities of the saints.** The thought of this exhortation is that the Christian must communicate—render financial help—to his needy brother. Solomon said: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto Jehovah." (Prov. 19:17.) The converse of this statement is that he that hath not pity upon the poor refuses to lend unto Jehovah. Such communications to the necessities of the saints will only stem from unselfish merciful Christians. Let every Christian take thought for this obligation!

**Given to hospitality.** The word "hospitality" means given to the generous and cordial reception of guests. The author of Hebrews wrote: "Forget not to show love unto strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Heb. 13:2.) Abraham is one of those who entertained angels unawares. The exercise of hospitality requires the qualities of sympathy, unselfishness, and love for fellow-man. Let every Christian also take thought for this admonition!

**Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not.** The word "bless" means to invoke divine care for or upon a person or persons. In this case, the Christian is to invoke divine care upon those that persecute and curse him. Often such persecutions and cursings come from those inside the church as well as those from the outside, but regardless of the source, the Christian may never retaliate. Instead, he must do good for evil, and he must invoke divine care upon his persecutors. He may not pray that God will forgive them of their rebellious

and impenitent sins, but he must pray that the Father will give them time and grace to come to a knowledge of their sins and thereby turn in obedience to God and in an attitude of regret for the persecutions which they administered. There is much difficulty in this obligation. It is contrary to the nature of the carnal man. Let Christians everywhere contemplate this obligation!

*Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep.* The natural man will by nature weep with his fellowman who is in distress. There is really no difficulty here. The difficulty lies in a Christian's being able to rejoice with a fellow Christian in his prosperity. With respect to his prosperous brother, if a Christian is not careful, instead of rejoicing, he may experience envy. The obligation herein imposed in that the Christian may have an unselfish interest in his brother's state, whether it is a state of prosperity or a state of adversity. Let every person examine himself relative to the sin of envy!

*Be of the same mind one toward another.* The meaning here is that the Christian must love all brethren alike. He may not love one and hate another. He may not show favors to one, or several, and slight another, or others. Wherever there is strife, and divisions, and parties, the obligation herein enjoined has been, and is being, abused and disregarded. Let every church ask if strife and divisions and parties prevail!

*Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly.* The "high things" are the exalted positions and affairs of life. Christians, like those of the world, tend to desire to walk with the great, and they have little or no time for the lowly. This makes for pride, class, distinction, and social eminence. Paul exhorts: "condescend to things [or people] that are lowly." Let each Christian contemplate the spirit of his mind with respect to this obligation!

*Be not wise in your own conceits.* The thought is that the Christian may not be overly confident in the sufficiency of his wisdom and in the innate intellectual capacity of his mind. He must not think of himself more highly than he ought to think.

Unfortunately, here lies the failure and sin of so many who are intellectually gifted above their fellows. In far too many cases, the intellectually gifted become self-conceited, arrogant, and self-exalted. Many, in their conceit, cavil at every tenet of truth and reject all inspiration which does not fall within *their* range or compass of explanation. Let every gifted, or intellectually endowed, person reflect on Paul's exhortation herein set forth!

*Render to no man evil for evil.* This is one of the cardinal obligations of the Christian. He may not render evil for evil. The law of Moses said "an eye for an eye," but this is not allowed in the teaching of Christ. Vengeance belongeth to God. Let every Christian reflect upon himself with respect to this obligation!

*Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men.* The thought here is that the Christian must set his heart to do right, and he must take measures to always be seen in the right places and doing the right things. In monetary matters, he must take all necessary precautions so as to properly justify his handling of money, and that before all. He must be careful not to make obligations which he cannot fulfill. Let all Christians contemplate this obligation!

*If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men.* The Christian cannot at all times be at peace with all men, but he can try. He can do all things within his power, short of the sacrifice of truth and righteousness principle, to be at peace with all men, whether in the church or out. Let every Christian contemplate this obligation!

*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.* The meaning of this is that God is the avenger. Even in calm judicial areas and punishments—as indicated here—the Christian is to leave the matter of vengeance in the hand of God. Let every Christian leave the matter of vengeance to God!

*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.* There is enjoined in this exhortation two obligations: First, if the enemy is hungry or thirsty, the Christian should meet his needs with food and water. Second, the Christian should heap coals of fire

upon his enemy's head—that is he should melt his enemy's hatred and enmity through kindness, and a righteous example that is coupled with all sorts of good works. Let all Christians also reflect on this obligation!

### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

1. There is no religion, except the Christian religion, that teaches men to pray for their enemies.

2. Men go to the first eleven chapters of Romans for props for their often peculiar doctrines, but few of the number go to the remaining chapters for the rules for godly living.

3. All teaching that comes from God inevitably leads to a holy life.

4. "The mind of God is clouded by no passion, biased by no prejudice, deceived by no false appearances, misled by no lying testimony, warped by no ill will." (Pendleton.)

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give the time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

Where was Paul when he wrote the epistle to the Romans? (2 Cor. 9:3-4; Rom. 15:24-25; Acts 20:1-3.)

When was the epistle written?

What was Paul ready to do when he wrote the epistle? (Rom. 15:22-26.)

Discuss some of the reasons why Paul wanted to go to Rome. (Rom. 1:11-13; 15:22-24.)

#### The Golden Text

Does the text mean that we are to refrain from labeling the sins of our enemies?

What is the meaning of the text?

Why would God cease to be just and righteous if he pardoned sins without repentance?

#### Doctrine and Practice

Discuss the two broad divisions of the epistle to the Romans.

What is involved in presenting our bodies as "living sacrifices"?

What must precede the change in "living"?

What does a Christian prove by such consecration?

#### Love for the Friendly and the Unfriendly

Does it require much effort to love "without hypocrisy"?

Discuss the great need for our abhorring evil and cleaving to that which is good.

What kind of affection are we to manifest toward our brethren in Christ?

What does it mean to be "fervent in spirit"?

Why is a faithful Christian able to rejoice even in times of disappointments and persecutions?

What does it mean to be "patient in tribulation"?

What is the meaning of the command to continue "steadfastly in prayer"?

How does one "communicate" to the necessities of the saints? (1 Tim. 6:17-19; Heb. 13:16.)

Does it require much effort to keep the commandment, "Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not"?

Which requires more effort—"to weep with them that weep," or to "rejoice with them that rejoice"?

What happens to the person that becomes wise according to his "own conceits"?

What are some of the requirements of the command to "take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men"?

Discuss the difference between the law of the Old Testament and the New Testament in respect to vengeance.

How may a Christian "heap coals of fire" upon his enemy's head?

#### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

What religions other than the Christian religion teach their disciples to pray for their enemies?

Why do some men go to the first eleven chapters of Romans?

Why should we especially study the remaining chapters?

Lesson XIII—September 28, 1975

CHRISTIAN FRUITFULNESS

John 15:1-8; Gal. 5:22-26

Lesson Text

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that is may bear more

3 Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast

them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 Meekness, self-control; against such there is no law.

24 And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.

25 If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk.

26 Let us not become vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“I am the vine, ye are the branches.” (John 15:5.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 1:1-6.

Daily Bible Readings

September 22. M.....	Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16-26)
September 23. T.....	Fruits of Righteousness (Phil. 1:3-11)
September 24. W.....	Fruit Unto Life Eternal (John 4:31-38)
September 25. T.....	Peaceable Fruits (Heb. 12:1-11)
September 26.	F. Mercy and Good Fruits (James 3:1-17)
September 27. S.....	Fruit Unto God (Rom. 7:1-4)
September 28. S.....	Known by Their Fruits (Matt. 7:16-20)

TIME.—For John, A.D. 30; for Galatians, about A.D. 55-56.

PLACES.—For John, Jerusalem in Judea; for Galatians, Paul wrote from Macedonia to the churches of Galatia—Antioch of Pisidia; Iconium in Phrygia; Lystra and Derbe in Lycaonia; and Perga in Pamphylia.

PERSONS.—Jesus and his apostles; Paul and the saints of the churches of Galatia.

INTRODUCTION

One part of today’s lesson is on the Master’s allegory of the vine and the branches. Jesus often used figures of speech, and he, especially, taught many lessons by means of parables and allegories. There is a need for the student to be familiar with the various figures of speech, their definitions, and some examples of their employment in the Scriptures.

The chief figures of speech are: (1) the simile, (2) the metaphor,

(3) the similitude, (4) the parable, (5) the fable, (6) the allegory, (7) the metonymy, (8) the synecdoche, and (8) the hyperbole. The definitions and examples that follow are not exhaustive, and in some instances they are over-simplified. Limited space, however, prohibits an extended treatment for this lesson.

The simile is a means of comparison always by a simple statement. Example: Herod is like a fox.

The *metaphor* is a figure of speech that expresses similitude by a single word. Example: Herod is a fox.

The *similitude* is a drawn-out or prolonged simile. It is constituted of similes made from statements but not woven into a story. Some of the parables, so called in the New Testament, are actually similitudes as per the differentiations made of figures of speech in the English language. The wise builder and the foolish builder, of which Jesus spoke (Matt. 7:24-27) is an example of similitude, and so is a part of Psalm 9, verses four through six.

The *parable* is a story by which something real in life is used as a means of presenting truth. The actors in a parable are beings, and they do nothing which they could not do. Things which those actors could not accomplish are never related. The parable is the oldest and most common of all the figures of speech, and Jesus used it often as a means of teaching. He employed the parable as a means of teaching for at last four special reasons, as follows:

1. To make clear that which otherwise would not have been understood—or to make known the unknown by a comparison with the known.

2. To embalm or so emphasize truth that it might never be forgotten.

3. To present a truth to the mind in such a way as to keep the person from seeing the point until his mind had given assent to the truth involved. Nathan's parable to David is a classic example of this use of a parable.

4. To conceal truth, while revealing truth to the disciples, from those who had no right to it, or from those who would abuse it.

The *fable* is also a story, but the actors are unreal. It attributes human qualities to animals and inanimate (like a cedar tree) objects and things. The case of Jotham's objection against Abimelech's having been made king is set forth by means of a fable. (Judges 9:6-21.)

The *allegory* is a figurative application of historical or real facts. It is a continued or series of metaphors, and it has the quality of sup-

pressing all mention of the principal subject. Christ's lesson on the vine and the branches of today's lesson is an allegory, and so is Paul's lesson on Hagar and Sarah. These two cases are classic examples of the allegory. (John 15:1-8; Gal. 4:21-27.)

The *metonymy* is a trope, a figurative word, in which one word is put for another. Examples of this figure are such as follows: "They have Moses and the prophets" that is they have the writings of Moses and the prophets. The man has a clear head (understanding and/or intellect) and a warm heart (affection). "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (cup is used for content). The sign on a meeting house which reads, "Church of Christ," is a metonymy of speech. The building is not the church, but it stands for the church which meets in the building. The metonymy, the word means change, has been very troublesome for many good brethren who have not understood this figure of speech. It is quite involved.

The *synecdoche* is a figure of speech in which a part is put for a whole, and in which a whole is put for a part. Example: "They continued ... in the breaking of bread." The "breaking of bread" is a part which also stands for the drinking of the "fruit of the vine." This figure of speech involves singular for plural and plural for singular, and the like.

The *hyperbole* is a figure of speech in which the expression is an exaggeration of a meaning intended to be conveyed. Example: "We saw the Nephilim . . . and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers." (Num. 13:33.) "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written." (John 21:25.)

There are still other figures of speech—the proverb, the apostrophe, the personification, the prolepsis, the synonymous parallelism, the antithetic parallelism—but those treated above will suffice. The elders of a church would be wise to arrange for some competent person to teach a special course in Hermeneutics.

**The Golden Text**

*"I am the vine, ye are the branches."* The vine is a source of life for its branches. The branches in turn are the means of fruit. Christ bears fruit through his disci-

ples (the branches) and the disciples (the branches) have their source of life through Christ (the true vine).

**The Text Explained**

**The Abuse of the Allegory of the Vine and the Branches**

Christ's allegory of the vine and the branches has been abused often by making it to teach that which it was never intended to teach. The abuse turns on the identification of the branches—the individual as being the different denominational churches of Christendom. The interpretation is a justification or apology for the existence of the many denominational churches, but there is only one New Testament church, and it is the Lord's church. Paul wrote that "Christ is the head of the body, the church," and he further wrote: "There is one body . . . one Lord." (Col. 1:18; Eph. 4:4-5.) Thus the one Lord (Christ) is the head of the one body (the church). There can be, therefore, but one church.

**The Allegory Defined**

As has already been defined, an allegory is an extended metaphor, and a metaphor is a figure of speech that expresses a similitude by a single word, like the expression: "I am the vine." The scripture from John 15:1-8 is an allegory, and a study of this allegory will present the following facts and/or lessons:

1. God, the Father, is the husbandman of the vineyard—"My Father is the husbandman."

2. Christ, God's Son, is the true vine—"I am the true vine."

3. There are branches in the vine, and every branch must bear fruit, else God, the husbandman, will take it away—"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away."

4. Every branch that beareth fruit, God, the husbandman cleanseth—he prunes it, cuts away hindrances, and gives it a greater means for bearing more fruit. "And every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit."

5. The fruit-bearing branch is cleansed, pruned, by the word of

God, that is God in Christ cleanses or purifies the soul through the hearing of the word, the believing of the word, and the obeying of the word. "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you."

6. The disciple, of his own initiative and purpose, must abide in the vine to bear fruit at all. The "abiding" is something that the Christian must do out of his own free will and purpose, and he can so abide through study, prayers, worship, and work. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me."

7. Jesus is the true vine, and the individual disciples, not denominational churches, are the branches. Jesus said: "Ye (individual disciples) are the branches." "He [personal pronoun, third person singular, not a church] that abideth . . . beareth much fruit."

8. Apart from Christ no person can accomplish anything in behalf of his own soul—"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing."

9. If a disciple will abide in Christ, that is continue in place and endure without yielding, Christ will abide in him.

10. If a man (a disciple) abide not in Christ, he is cast forth into the fire and is burned, which thing is the lot of all the faithless. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

11. A disciple cannot abide in Christ except as Christ's Word abides in him. Only as a person studies the Word, contemplates the power of it, and meditates upon it can the Word be said to dwell in him. "If ye abide in me, and my

*words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will and it shall be done unto you."*

12. Those who abide in Christ have the privilege of praying to the Father with the assurance that he will bear them.

13. The disciples can have no life except in Christ, the vine, and Christ can have no fruit except through his disciples, the branches.

14. God is glorified when the disciples bear much fruit. "*Herein is my father glorified, that ye may bear much fruit; and so [by fruit bearing] shall ye be my disciples."*

#### The Fruit of the Spirit

(Gal. 5:22-23)

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law.*

The fruit of the Spirit is to be considered in contrast with the works of the flesh. The fruit of the Spirit—observe "fruit," singular, a unit—is that spontaneous life and goodness which eschews evil. The fruit of the Spirit consists of spiritual endowments characteristic of all those who love the Lord.

The fruit designated love, joy, and peace constitutes basic spiritual qualities, and love the greatest of the three. Love calls forth joy, not a superficial worldly mirth, but a joy "unspeakable and full of glory." Love and joy call forth peace, a peace rising from the serenity of the heart through faith.

The fruit designated longsuffering, kindness, and goodness constitutes those spiritual qualities that the believer demonstrates in his contacts with his fellow men. "Longsuffering" is a delightful and welcomed quality. It is the quality that makes allowances for the weaknesses and shortcomings of others. Longsuffering goes hand in hand with kindness, another delightful and welcomed quality or

virtue. Kindness is mildness of disposition and personality.

The fruit designated faithfulness, meekness, and self-control constitutes those spiritual qualities that the believer exercises with respect to God, with respect to his fellow man, and with respect to himself. Faithfulness is the quality of the believer's loyalty and fidelity to God. Meekness is the quality of the believer's gentleness toward his brethren and toward all men. Self-control is the quality of the believer's control of himself—the power to keep himself in check.

Paul wrote: "Against such there is no law," that is, against such things, against such virtues, there is no law. Such fruit—such qualities or virtues—are delightful, pleasing, and wholesome. A church with members bearing such fruit will be a bright light in any city or clime.

#### Life in the Spirit

(Gal. 5:24-26)

*And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof. If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk. Let us not become vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another.*

Those who were of Christ Jesus were those who had died to sin, had been buried with Christ in baptism, and had been raised to a new life. They were, therefore, united with Christ in his crucifixion and death. (Rom. 6:1-4.) Paul admonished, therefore, that if those Galatians lived by the Spirit, that is if they had been born anew, they should also walk by the Spirit or live as the Spirit directs, and not after the works of the flesh that had characterized the Galatians of late. "Let them practice that which they preach," Paul was saying. Those who resorted to vainglory, provocations, and envy did not practice that which they had embraced in principle. Paul's admonitions in this respect are needed in churches today!

#### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

1. With freedom goes responsibility.

2. The Christian's law is the law of love. It is the first on the list of virtues.

3. Departures in doctrine breed the works of the flesh.

4. The works of the flesh breed departures in doctrine.

5. The Galatians had made de-



partures in both doctrine and morality.

6. The Christian is under obliga-

tion to practice in life the principles which he has embraced in mind.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

Why should every Bible student give some attention to the figures of speech used in the Scriptures?  
Discuss some of the figures of speech that are used in the Scriptures.

#### The Golden Text

Jesus spoke the words of the golden text after what important event?  
To whom was he speaking?

#### The Text Explained

How has Christ's allegory of the vine and the branches been abused by some?  
Give some of the reasons why we know he was not talking about denominational churches.

#### The Allegory Defined

What is an allegory?  
What special need did the apostles have for this instruction at the time that Jesus gave it?  
How does the allegory show the vital union that each Christian is to have with Christ and God?  
What does God do with every branch that does not bear fruit?

What happens to every Christian that bears fruit?  
How is the fruit-bearing branch cleansed?  
How does this passage show that salvation in Christ continues to be conditional?  
How does Christ's work depend on his disciples?  
How does Jesus say that we can glorify God?

#### The Fruit of the Spirit

Why is "fruit" singular here instead of plural?  
What are the basic qualities of the fruit? Why?  
What are the qualities which involve relationships with a person's fellow men? Discuss.  
What are the qualities that pertain to God, to fellow men, and to self? Discuss.

#### Life in the Spirit

How had the Galatians been crucified with Christ?  
If a person has been born anew, how should he walk?  
Discuss vainglory, provocation, and envy.

#### Seed-Thoughts on the Lesson

How had the Galatians abused their liberty?  
In what two areas had the Galatians made departures?



## LIVING FOR CHRIST (Part 2)

*AIM.—To study in detail those qualities of heart and characteristics of life which all who profess to be Christians must acquire and exhibit in order to enjoy the approval of our Lord here, and eternal life hereafter.*

### Lesson I—October 5, 1975

## THE CHRISTIAN IN BUSINESS

### Lesson Text

1 Tim. 6:6-11, 17-19; Deut. 24:14, 15

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain:

7 For we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out;

8 But having food and covering we shall be therewith content.

9 But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But thou, O man of God, (lee the e things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

17 Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not

highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is *life* indeed.

14 Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy sojourners that are in thy land within thy gates:

15 In his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it (for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it); lest he cry against thee unto Jehovah, and it be sin unto thee.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Render to all their dues.*” (Rom. 13:7.)  
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Eph. 6:5-9.

### Daily Bible Readings

- September 29. M.....The Upright Man (Prov. 11:18-31)
- September 30. T.....Service As Unto Christ (Eph. 6:5-9)
- October 1. W.....Stewardship in Life (2 Cor. 9:6-15)
- October 2. T.....Reward of Faithfulness (Mark 10:22-31)
- October 3. F.....Providing Things Honest (Rom. 12:17-21)
- October 4. S.....Reward of Labor (Prov. 13:1-15)
- October 5. S.....A Woman in Business (Prov. 31:10-31)

TIME.—For First Timothy, about A.D. 64-65; for Deuteronomy, about B.C. 1408.

PLACES.—For First Timothy, Paul probably wrote Timothy from Spain, and Timothy was probably at Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor; for Deuteronomy, Moses and the children of Israel were beyond, or east of the Jordan in the land of Moab. (Deut. 1:5.)

PERSONS.—Paul and Timothy; Moses and the Israelites.

## Introduction

A strong case can be made from the Scriptures for a Christian's being industrious and enterprising in business affairs, even to the point of his becoming wealthy. To illustrate, Solomon wrote: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." He further showed the divine contempt for the lazy, indolent person when he wrote: "The sluggard burieth his hand in the dish, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again." Then, too, he admonished: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise." (Eccles. 9: 10; Prov. 19:24; Prov. 6:6.)

Paul admonished the Christians at Rome that in whatever their pursuits—whether religious or secular, they were to be diligent and not slothful. To the Thessalonians he wrote: "If any will not work, neither let him eat"; and to Timothy he wrote: "But if any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." To the Ephesians he wrote: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need." (Rom. 12:11; 2 Thess. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:8; Eph. 4:28.)

Now, the fact remains that many men of such industry and thrift will

emerge as successful enterprising men of position and wealth—particularly in a nation where the principle of free enterprise prevails. The case is one of cause and effect. Industry and thrift give rise to possessions and wealth. The industrious person quite naturally moves ahead in the business world.

The Lesson Text for this study turns primarily on warnings against wealth or riches and warnings against the manner in which riches are so often acquired. In God's divine communication to man there is no real conflict of law, though at first there might seem to be. There is a harmony between the instruction to industry and thrift on the one hand, and the warning against riches on the other. The harmony lies in the source of the riches and the use made of them. If a man acquires riches by illegal and unscrupulous means and/or by exploiting the poor, the orphans, the widows; the strong disapprobation of God rests upon him. Further, if he acquires riches through industry, thrift, and honorable means, but stores them to himself, even then the disapprobation of God will rest upon him. In short all riches must be gotten by ethical and honorable means, and the riches must be used for scriptural and humanitarian ends—for the care of the poor and the proclamation of the gospel.

## The Golden Text

*"Render to all their dues."* This statement is a generalization with respect to civil officials. Each official must receive from the Christian that which is due—whether tribute, custom, fear, or honor. The civil officials are the appointed ministers of God. They preserve peace and maintain order among the lawless, they punish the violators, and criminals, and they perform public civil functions for the general welfare of all citizens.

The civil officials give their whole time to their functions, and as in every case of those who do honorable work, they have a right to a livelihood in return from their labors. The Christian, therefore, is under obligation to pay his share of taxes to cover the salaries of the officials and the general expense of government. Jesus stated an underlying and well established principle when he said: "The laborer is worthy of his hire." (Luke 10:7.)

## The Text Explained

The Virtue of Godliness and Contentment  
(1 Tim. 6:6-8)

*But godliness with contentment is great gain: for we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we*

*carry anything out; but having food and covering we shall be therewith content.*

Paul was writing of false teachers who were puffed up and without knowledge; yet, they went forth,

doting about questionings and disputes of words—words which produced envy, strife, railings, evil surmising, and wranglings. These false teachers were bereft of the truth, and they supposed that godliness is a way of gain—that is they outwardly feigned the practice of godliness as a means of livelihood and of becoming rich. They were selfish men depraved in mind and deprived of truth.

Within this context of thought, Paul said: "But godliness with contentment is great gain." The truly godly person does not crave for riches so as to store them up to himself for many years to come, but rather, having food and covering—that is adequate food and clothing and shelter for the body—he has wherewith to be content. Paul made an indirect reference to a statement by Job when he said: "For we brought nothing into the world, but neither can we carry anything out." (See Job 1:21.) Why then live to lay up riches which must be left behind at death? Godliness with contentment may be defined as true devotion to God which in turn calls forth a contentment—an inner-source of spiritual faith—which rises far above the mundane affairs of this life. When the simple needs of a man are met—a sufficient income for him to provide food, clothing, shelter, and education for himself and his family—what more need does he really have? If he were to have a mansion with ten additional bedrooms, he could only sleep on one bed at a time. If he were to own five different, new, and well-equipped automobiles, he could only drive one or ride in one at a time. The goal of every Christian should be, therefore, godliness with contentment. Paul said: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content." (Phil. 4:11.)

### The Danger of Riches

(1 Tim. 6:9-11)

*But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith,*

*and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*

Many Christians through their industry, thrift, and business acumen become rich—and some become very rich. Like those with "green thumbs" who seemingly can make every plant to grow, there are those men with "green thumbs" for acquiring possessions and making money. Such men are imaginative, enterprising, and often daring! Their prevailing desire in life is not to make money, but they do so as a natural course of their industry and wisdom. Men of this caliber have made tremendous contributions to the welfare of the cause of Christ through their liberal contributions to the church, to Christian schools, to homes for orphans, and other such endeavors. The late A. M. Burton and Mrs. A. M. Burton, respectively, are classic examples of those who have used their wealth—given it away during their life time, for the support and promotion of the cause of Christ. The Burton's liberality should serve as a great example for those who read this lesson who are already rich or well on their way to becoming rich.

There are, however, grave dangers in having wealth. People with wealth often become prideful, arrogant, and overbearing. They cease to be humble, and they become so intensely interested in their business enterprises and so burdened with the demands that those enterprises make upon them that they lose sight of their Christian and family responsibilities. They reach the point where they do not have time for Bible reading, for prayer, for worship, and for family responsibilities. Their business associates are often of the undesirable kind, worldly and covetous.

Even when Christians with wealth resist the association of undesirable men of wealth, they are faced with two very strong temptations: (1) the temptation to store their wealth for themselves and their families, or (2) the temptation to feel that the wealth has come as a result of their own industry and they have, therefore, the inherent

right to spend lavishly on themselves. Men with wealth often squander it on hobbies and projects that do no one any good. Neither course or temptation can be justified by the word of God.

Within this frame of reference relative to the dangers of riches, Paul wrote: "But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition." The desire to be rich, within itself, is an unholy desire. It is a strong lust, and it connives—makes common cause—with the lust for the sensual, and the lust for power. It drives men on, and they have less and less time for the church, for their wives, and for their children. They often fail their families in their most crucial hours.

Paul further stated that "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." Money, alone, is not the root of all evil. It is a wonderful means for the support and education of a family, for the support and care of the poor, for the support and endowment of Christian education, and for the support of the church. The love of money is where the evil lies—even all kinds of evil. As was the case then, Christians today are led astray from the faith and are pierced through with many sorrows as a result of their acquiring a love for money. Let every Christian examine himself!

Paul's admonition to Timothy then is quite fitting for Christians now: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things [that is Paul's warnings, including the desire for riches and the love of money]: and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." Only those who follow after these virtues can have godliness with contentment.

### God's Concern for the Poor (Deut. 24:14, 15)

*Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy sojourners that are in thy land within thy gates: in his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it (for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it); lest he cry against thee unto Jehovah, and it be sin unto thee.*

God's disapprobation rests upon those who take advantage of the poor. During the Old Testament period, God did not allow his people to oppress the poor—whether the hired servant or the stranger within their gates. He required his people to pay their poor hired help at the end of each day.

Christians can take a lesson here! Those who desire to be rich often take advantage of the poor, the orphans, and the widows, and this God reprobates. The Christian must remember that the laborer is worthy of his hire, and under no circumstances may he exploit an employee. Every hired person is entitled to receive wages that will meet the basic requirements of life—wages commensurate with the earnings and profits of the employer and the prevailing economy of the times. Paul reminded the Corinthians that the law of Moses read: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." Then he asked: "Is it for the oxen that God careth, or saith he it assuredly for our sake? Yea, for our sake it was written: because he that ploweth ought to plow in hope, and he that thresheth, to thresh in hope of partaking." (1 Cor. 9:9-10.) Thus he emphasized a principle as old as Adam—the man who labors has the right to live from the fruits of his labors! The laborer, on the other hand, is obligated to give a full-day's work for a full-day's pay.

### Pertinent Quotes

"Wealth produces ease as well as art."

"The same wealth that generates a civilization announces its decay."

"Wealth softens a people to the ways of luxury and peace and thereby invites invasion from

stronger arms and hungrier mouths." (Durant)

"In a society like ours of which it is truly said to be often but three generations 'from shirt-sleeves to shirt-sleeves.'" (Butler, *True and False Democracy*.)

"And as their wealth increases, so

enclose infinite riches in a little room." (Marlowe)

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving

favor rather than silver and gold. The rich and the poor meet together: Jehovah is the maker of them all." (Prov. 22:1-2.)

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give, time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

Discuss some of the scriptures which encourage a child of God to be industrious and enterprising in business affairs.  
Discuss some of the passages which show God's contempt for the lazy and indolent.  
What are the primary warnings of the lesson text?  
How do we know that there is no conflict between God's instruction to industry and thrift on the one hand, and warnings against riches on the other?  
What is the harmony of this instruction?

#### The Golden Text

What obligation is enjoined on each Christian by the words of the golden text?  
Should every Christian have much respect and appreciation for civil officials? Why?

#### The Virtue of Godliness and Contentment

What people was Paul writing of in 1 Timothy 6:3-5?  
What did these people think about godliness?  
On what occasion did Job make a statement like 1 Timothy 6:7?

Is there a great lack of contentment in the brotherhood today? Why?

#### The Danger of Riches

What is the meaning of the statement, "They that are minded to be rich"?  
What will happen to those that "are minded to be rich"?  
Discuss some of the grave dangers of having wealth.  
Where does the evil lie with respect to money?  
How does one find the contentment that Paul speaks of?  
What charge was Timothy to give to the rich? (1 Tim. 6:17-19.)  
What is the meaning of the statement, ". . . that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come"? (1 Tim. 6:18-19; Gal. 6:6-10; Heb. 13:16.)

#### God's Concern for the Poor

How does God look upon those that take advantage of the poor? (Prov. 14:31; 17:5; 21:13; James 5:4.)  
How does God look upon those who care for the poor? (Prov. 14:31; 19:17; 29:7.)  
What reward is every hired person entitled to?  
What was the purpose of the commandment, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn"?  
What is the laborer or employee always obligated to do? (Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:22-24; 1 Tim. 6:1-2; Tit. 2:9-10.)

## Lesson II—October 12, 1975

# THE CHRISTIAN AS A SOUL WINNER

### Lesson Text

Acts 8:4, 5, 12; Prov. 11:30; Dan. 12:2, 3; James 5:19, 20

4 They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word.

5 And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ.

12 But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life;  
And he that is wise winneth souls.

2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

3 And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

19 My brethren, if any among you err from the truth, and one convert him;

20 Let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation.” (Mark 16:15.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 1:40-45.

### Daily Bible Readings

October 6. M.....	Examples of Soul Winning (John 1:40-45)
October 7. T.....	Mission of Jesus (Luke 19:1-10)
October 8. W.....	Christ, Friend of Sinners (Luke 15:1-32)
October 9. T.....	Paul's Desire for Israel (Rom. 10:1-4)
October 10. F.....	Gospel to Be Preached to All (Mark 16:15, 16)
October 11. S.....	Missionaries Sent Out (Acts 13:1-12)
October 12. S.....	Philip in Samaria (Acts 8:4-12)

TIME.—For Acts, A.D. 33; for Proverbs, about B.C. 971-933; for Daniel, about B.C. 535; for James, about A.D. 45-48.

PLACES.—For Acts and Proverbs, Jerusalem in Palestine; for Daniel, Babylon of Babylonia on the continent of Asia; for James, Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—The disciples of the dispersion; Solomon; an angel and Daniel; James and the saints of the twelve tribes of the dispersion.

### Introduction

Every Christian should ask himself. “What is the purpose of my life?” He should ask, “What purposes and goals have I set for myself? Are the purposes and goals worthy ones? Am I meeting those purposes and goals?”

Young men and women who have their lives before them should give thought and make plans for their lives, and this is especially the case with young men. Generally speaking, young women will look forward to marriage—and thus the care of the home, the husband, and the children. This is as it should be for the woman was made for the man—not the man for the woman. The woman was beguiled and was thus first in transgression, but Paul said: “She shall be saved through her child-bearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.” (1 Tim. 2:15.) The thought here is not that women will be saved by the mere bearing of children, but rather, through their child-bearing they cradle or mold society by the rearing of the children that they bear. Strikingly significant is the fact that the woman who was first in transgression is now first in molding society.

With young men the matter of laying plans for life are often more complicated than is that for young women. He must ask relative to his interests and capabilities—should he prepare for a vocation? or a profession? Such plans and choices for young men are, however, actually challenging and in-

vigorating, yet many young men delay and desist in making such choices and in the prosecution of such plans. Every young man owes to himself the obligation of making plans and purposes for his life.

Giving choice, plan, and purpose to life does not lie exclusively with the young. Others must give such choice and purpose to their lives—and that often under uninviting and sorrowful circumstances. To illustrate the problem, consider the successful executive who on entering upon his sixties is suddenly removed from his position without prior warning. Under such shocking circumstances what will he do with his life? Consider, too, the faithful wife of some three decades or more who is suddenly deserted by her husband for a younger woman. Under such sorrowful circumstances, what will she do with her life? Consider, further, the elderly man or woman who loses his mate by death. Under such trying circumstances, what will he or she, as the case may be, do with his life? Many who read this lesson will be in one or more of these unfortunate circumstances. Many who read this will have experienced the shock, dismay, and hopelessness of such drastic life changes.

May one confidently assert that even people in such unfortunate circumstances—brought on by disappointments, divorce, and death—must find a purpose and make plans for their lives? Does Christ expect



this of his disciples? Is such always God's will for his own?

The answer is, "Yes"—positively and emphatically so! Does someone ask, "What is the basis of such an assertion or conclusion?" The

answer lies in the subject for this present lesson. The Christian is and must ever be, as long as he has his rational faculties, a soul winner. Truly, he that winneth souls is wise.

### The Golden Text

*"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation."* This great commission was given to the apostles, and it was passed on to the Christians of every age and clime. What a fearful responsibility is herein imposed! Incumbent upon the church in every generation is the obligation to preach the gospel to every responsible soul in the world during that generation, else God has not made sufficient provisions for the salvation of the souls of all men. The gospel is the power, the only power, for the salvation of souls.

(Rom. 1:16.) In face of the obligation to preach the gospel to the whole creation, the Christian religion is a minority religion in the world, and it becomes increasingly more so each day that passes. If the gospel is ever preached to all creation, every Christian—man, woman, boy, and girl—must become a soul winner. Further, parents and elders and teachers must encourage young men to give their lives to the ministry, and all Christians must give liberally of their means in order that such men may be sent.

### The Text Explained

Both Men and Women  
Preached the Word  
(Acts 8:4)

*They therefore that were scattered abroad, went about preaching the word.*

Beginning from Pentecost following the death of Christ, the gospel was preached "in all creation under heaven; whereof . . . Paul was made a minister" in less than thirty-five years. (Col. 1:23.) Imagine this! and without the modern means of travel and communication! How may one account for such results? Without question one great contributing factor to the progress of the gospel then was the fact that all the disciples of the Lord—both men and women—went everywhere preaching the word.

Of course, women did not assume the role of public proclaimers of the word, but one certain historical fact is that the gospel was carried from household to household by women and slaves. Women hold an enviable record with respect to Christ and his church.

Christianity will cease to be a minority religion only when all Christians feel keenly the obligation to win souls to Christ. True, the church must depend upon its elders and evangelists to give the gospel to all the world, but more

than this, it must depend upon every respective member.

Philip Carried the  
Gospel to the Samaritans  
(Acts 8:5)

*And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ.*

Philip, a man of good report and full of the Spirit and wisdom, was first selected to serve tables under the direction of the apostles in behalf of the Grecian widows who were being neglected in the daily ministrations. He advanced from the position of a "table-server" to become an effective evangelist. He went to Samaria and proclaimed unto the Samaritans the gospel of Christ.

The Samaritans were descendants of the old nation of Israel, which some seven hundred years prior were carried into Assyrian Captivity, except for a small percent who were allowed to remain in the land. Some foreigners were immediately moved into the land by the king of Assyria, but during the reign of Esarhaddon (B.C. 680-669) many people were deported to the territory of Samaria. The remaining Israelites intermarried with those of the deportation, and they lost their

identity as Israelites and came to be known as Samaritans.

When Zerubbabel led a company from Babylon to Jerusalem at the end of the seventy-year captivity with a commission from Cyrus to rebuild the temple, the Samaritans desired to build with them; but this Zerubbabel did not allow. There were already long standing hostilities between those of the Northern Kingdom and those of the Southern Kingdom, and Zerubbabel's refusal of the Samaritans' request increased those hostilities. Later, during the governorship of Nehemiah, especially his second term, the hostilities were especially intensified. A rival temple was built on Mount Gerizim, and according to Josephus many Jews consorted to it.

On the occasion of Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, many of the Samaritans were led by the woman to Jesus, and they believed on him, and they besought him to abide with them, which he did for two days. (John 4:39-42.) Jesus, prior to his ascension to heaven, had instructed the apostles that they should be his "witnesses, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Observe the order: Jerusalem, then Judea, then Samaria, and then the uttermost part of the earth. The fact is that the gospel was preached to the Samaritans somewhat as if they were Jews. Several years later the gospel was preached to the Gentiles and the new name, "Christian," was then given. Philip's preaching to the Samaritans was, therefore, quite in order.

### **The Samaritans Believed and Were Baptized**

(Acts 8:12)

*But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.*

Philip went to Samaria and proclaimed unto them the Christ. In short, Philip preached Christ. What did he preach when he preached Christ? (Acts 8:14.) This is a pertinent question.

Luke summarized Philip's preaching as follows:

1. Philip preached the things concerning the kingdom of God.
2. Philip preached the name of Jesus Christ, and
3. Philip preached baptism, else how would the Samaritans have known to be baptized?

As a result of Philip's preaching, the Samaritans obeyed the gospel. Evangelists today should be characterized by the zeal for souls as was Philip. Philip was truly a soul winner for Jesus.

### **Those Who Win Souls Shine as Stars**

(Dan. 12:2, 3)

*And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn away to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*

Verse two of this reading from Daniel contemplates the general resurrection. "Many [that is "all" as is also the case of Romans 5:19] that sleep in the dust of the earth [in the graves] *shall awake* [shall arise from the dead], some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." In short, this statement from Daniel is a parallel with Christ's statement wherein he said: "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.)

Verse three of this reading is not to be understood as meaning that after the general judgment men will go forth and turn many to righteousness. Actually, verse three contemplates the righteous of all periods of history leading up to and ending with the general resurrection. As verse thirty-two of Joel the second chapter takes its place along side verse twenty-eight of the same chapter, so verse two of Daniel the twelfth chapter takes its place along side verse one of that chapter.

The point of emphasis of verse three of this reading is that those who turn many souls from sin to

righteousness will, in the general resurrection, shine as the bright stars of the universe. Wise is the Christian, therefore, who sets his purpose in life to win souls to Christ. This can be and should be the goal of every Christian.

**Those Who Win Souls Cover a  
Multitude of Sins**  
(James 5:19, 20)

*My brethren, if any among you err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.*

The winning of souls for Christ does not lie exclusively with the bringing of alien sinners to Christ through their obedience to the gospel. Christian brethren often err from the truth, and they often fall into sins. The Christian who converts such an erring brother saves a soul from death, and thereby covers a multitude of sins. What responsibilities the Christian must shoulder for his brethren's sake! So long as there are souls in sin and so long as there are brethren in Christ who have erred from truth and righteousness, there can be and should

be purpose in life for every Christian. He that wins souls is wise.

**Every Christian Has an Obligation  
for Winning Souls**

(Prov. 11:30)

*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that is wise winneth souls.*

The world is full of people who feel that they have little, if anything, for which to live. Unhappy circumstances — disappointments of one kind and another, including brethren, death, loneliness, and insecurity—often bring good brethren to the point of despair of life. Such Christians reach the place where they are without purpose for life; and yet, they must live until death overtakes them.

Life adjustments under sorrowful and disappointing circumstances are difficult, and those who have faced such circumstances know how difficult they are. There is, however, one very real and viable purpose that may and should be characteristic of every Christian's life, and that purpose is to win souls for Christ. In this purpose and responsibility every Christian can take solace. Jesus said: "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 10:39.)

**Pertinent Observations**

1. The apostle Paul is a classic example of one who under all circumstances gave purpose, point, and compass to his life.

2. When writing to the Philippians, he said: "Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do [one purpose I have], forgetting the things which are behind [his mistakes such as the persecution of Christians and also his accomplishments], and stretching forward to the things

which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:13-14.)

3. Paul also wrote: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want." (Phil. 4:11-12.)

**Questions for Discussion**

What is the subject of this lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

**Introduction**

What important questions should each Christian ask himself?  
Why is the matter of laying plans for life often more complicated for young men than for young women?  
What should every Christian in unfortunate circumstances of life realize?

**The Golden Text**

To whom were the words of the golden text spoken?

How do we know that the commandment of the text is passed on to the Christians of every age? (Matt. 28:19-20.)

What are some of the things that we can do to implement this great commission?

**Both Men and Women Preached the Word**

How long did it take the early Christians to preach the gospel to the world?

What were some of the great contributing factors to the progress of the gospel then?

What were the end results of the persecution led by Saul?

Philip Carried the Gospel to the Samaritans

How is Philip first mentioned?

What aided him in becoming an effective evangelist so soon?

Review the history of the Samaritans.

What order of evangelization did Jesus instruct his apostles?

Why do you suppose that they were commanded to go to the Samaritans before going to the Gentiles, or "unto the uttermost parts of the earth"?

The Samaritans Believed and Were Baptized

Why did the multitudes in Samaria give heed to the preaching of Philip? (Acts 8:5-8.)

How did Philip receive the power to perform "wonders and signs"?

Philip's "good tidings" included what three important things?

Those Who Win Souls Shine as Stars

What does verse 2 of this reading from Daniel contemplate?

What New Testament passage is a parallel to Daniel 12:2?

What is the meaning of verse 3?

Those Who Win Souls Cover a Multitude of Sins

How do we know that the winning of souls for Christ does not lie exclusively with the bringing of alien sinners to Christ?

What does one do when he converts a brother in Christ from "the error of his way"?

Every Christian Has an Obligation for Winning Souls

What is the one very viable purpose that every Christian should have? Why?

Discuss the need for giving heed to this important purpose.

Lesson III—October 19, 1975

THE CHRISTIAN AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT

Lesson Text

Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17

1 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.

2 Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment.

3 For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldst thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same:

4 For he is a minister of God to thee for good. 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:

5 Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

6 For for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

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.—"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." (Prov. 14:34.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Mark 12:13-17.

Daily Bible Readings

- October 13. M..... Duty to God and Civil Government (Mark 12:13-17)
- October 14. T..... Righteousness Exalts (Prov. 14:28-35)
- October 15. W..... Keeping the Law (Prov. 28:1-15)
- October 16. T..... The Wise Ruler (Prov. 29:14-27)
- October 17. F..... Christians Not Like Earthly Rulers (Matt. 20:25-28)

October 18. S.....Suffering for Righteousness Sake (Dan. 3:1-30)  
 October 19. S.....Obey God (Acts 4:18-20; 5:27-29)

TIME.—For Romans, A.D. 56; for First Peter, about A.D. 65.

PLACES.—Paul wrote the Roman saints from Corinth in Greece; Peter wrote the saints of Asia Minor from Babylon in Babylonia on the continent of Asia.

PERSONS.—Paul and Peter and the saints to whom they wrote.

**Introduction**

The study of the subject, "The Christian and Civil Government," involves some serious matters. The New Testament teaches unequivocally that Christians must be subservient to the higher powers, that they must pray for the higher powers, and that they must pay taxes to the higher powers.

The higher powers are the instruments of God's wrath. They are ordained or appointed by Jehovah. The higher powers are charged with the obligation of maintaining peace and of punishing the evil doers. They are a terror to evil doers, an avenger of wrath, and a servant to the law-abiding. The higher powers, therefore, beareth not the sword in vain.

The study of this subject very naturally raises the question as to whether or not a Christian can scripturally participate in carnal warfare. Brethren should study the subject in a deliberative and objective manner. After all, the desire of brethren should be to understand just what the New Testament teaches on the subject.

Some pertinent questions which bear on the matter of a Christian's participation in carnal warfare should include the following:

1. Are there any limitations to the Christian's obligation to obey the powers that be?

2. If Romans 13:1-7 teaches that a Christian must participate in

combat service, would not the obligation lie equally with every Christian of every nation?

3. Are there works—both from within and without the military—where the Christian can serve his fellowman without engaging in combat service?

4. Is an emotional attitude of intense hate necessary for a soldier to do his best fighting in the heat of combat?

5. What attitude did the Christians of the first and second centuries maintain toward their participation in combat service?

6. If a Christian kills on orders from the state, does he only kill as an agent of the state?

7. If so, could a Christian of Paul's day, and upon orders from the higher powers, have struck the blow which struck dead both Paul and Peter?

8. May a Christian engage in combat service to help his nation fight an aggressive war?

9. If not, may a Christian engage in combat service to help his nation fight a defensive war?

10. If the latter proposition be affirmed, who is to define a defensive war? How may one be certain that a war is in reality a defensive war?

The Christian should hold these questions in mind as he makes a careful study of the lesson text. He should remember that though he is in the world, he is not of the world.

**The Golden Text**

*"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."*

Righteousness is justice. It contemplates an impartial administration or application of law to all men alike—the rich and poor, the mighty and lowly, and the learned and ignorant. Further, righteousness contemplates public countenance of religion, virtue, and charity. These characteristics exalteth a nation.

Sin—the want of the above characteristics—is a reproach to any city, state, or nation. Every government is charged, therefore, with the obligation to preserve order, restrain evil doers, and maintain respect for those of honor, integrity, and virtue. This can be accomplished only if the officials of the government are men of honor and integrity, themselves.

## The Text Explained

### The Purpose of Civil Governments

(Rom. 13:1-2)

*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.*

The student should read the twelfth and thirteenth chapters of Romans as if there were no chapter-break. Paul instructed in chapter 12:9: "Render to no man evil for evil." Then in verse 19, he wrote: "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." Apparently, in the latter verse, Paul had reference to calm judicial areas and punishments. Even under calm, deliberate, and judicial circumstances the Christian is to leave the matter of vengeance in the hand of God. This Michael, the archangel, did when contending with the devil about the body of Moses. He said to the devil: "The Lord rebuke thee," thereby leaving vengeance to God. (Jude 9.) The apostle Paul called upon the Roman courts for protection from his enemies, but he never prosecuted a single enemy who had so ruthlessly violated his citizenship rights under Roman law.

On the note that vengeance belongeth unto God, Paul moves to admonish every soul—Christian or non-Christian—to be in subjection to the higher powers. The thought is that the powers that be are the instrument of God's vengeance—or at least one of the instruments. God ordained or set in order the powers that be that they might maintain peace and punish the violators and criminals. God also on frequent occasions used one nation or power to punish another or others. The powers that be, therefore, have no power except that which is given them of God, and anyone resisting the power is in the position of resisting God.

The Jewish Christians, particularly, needed this instruction with respect to the civil government.

Rome was the "powers that be." The Jews had resented very much their being taken over and forced to subjection by a heathen power, and the Jewish Christians sprang from just such a prejudicial background. Further, the state religion of the Roman nation was the worship of gods, and tax money was spent to do sacrifice to the idolatrous gods. The Christians—especially those of Jewish background—wondered, no doubt, if they should pay taxes to an idolatrous nation that would take their money and expend it for sacrifices to idolatrous gods. Paul forever settled the question. The Christians must be subservient and pay taxes to the powers that be.

At this point, let note be taken of the fact that there is here absolutely no authority for a Christian's being a part of the powers that be. Instead, the Christian is ordered to submit to the powers that be.

### Civil Governments—A Minister of God

(Rom. 13:3-5)

*For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: for he is a minister of God to thee for good. 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. Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake.*

Civil governments are a necessity for the welfare of men, and civil laws serve both the good people and the evil people. The purpose of civil law is to protect the good and punish the evil. The powers that be are a minister of God to the Christian for good. The rulers, therefore, are not a terror to the good people, but rather to the evil. Let the good law-abiding citizen have no fear; instead, he will receive praise.

Nonetheless, the powers that be beareth not the sword in vain—that is they inflict capital punishment upon the evil doer. The powers that be are, therefore, ministers of

God—or avengers of wrath upon the person that doeth evil. The case of “powers that be” having persecuted and put to death Christians does not change the principle involved. Men have prostituted the church from its God-intended righteous course, but their having done so is not an argument against the intended course of the church. It is an argument against the abuse of the church, and not against the rightful use of it. The case is the same with respect to the prostitution and abuse of the powers that be.

May Christians be avengers for God’s wrath? If so, what is the meaning and harmony of Paul’s admonition to “avenge not yourselves . . . for vengeance belongeth unto me . . . saith the Lord”? Christians, therefore, may not become a part of the powers that be—that is by bearing the sword in capital cases, in inflicting punishment on evil doers, and in bearing the sword in military conflict.

#### The Christian’s Obligation to Render His Proper Dues

(Rom. 13:6-7)

*For for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God’s service, attending continually upon this very thing. Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.*

Christians are under heaven’s imposed obligation to support their government. Paul makes this fact crystal clear. There are two reasons why he should pay tribute:

(1) “Because of wrath”—or in order to avoid punishment for having disobeyed the law, and (2) “For conscience’ sake”—or in order to have a good conscience before God.

All citizens enjoy the advantages offered by the civil governments, wherever they may be—advantages of protection by police power, the preservation of records, the maintenance of educational systems, and the many other functions of government. All citizens—including Christians—are under obligation, therefore, to pay their *pro rata* share of taxes to cover government expenses.

“Tribute” was direct taxes.

“Custom” was toll or tariff on certain goods. These the Christian was to pay, and at the same time he was to give honor to whom honor was due, and in every way he was to show proper respect for the powers that be.

#### Peter’s Instruction to Jewish Christians

(1 Pet. 2:13-17)

*Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evil-doers and for praise to them that do well. For so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bondservants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.*

Peter’s epistle was addressed to the sojourners of the Dispersion. The Jews spoke of those of their race who were scattered throughout the Gentile world as being “the Dispersion.” Peter was writing, therefore, to the Christian Jews who were scattered among the Gentile nations.

Peter’s admonition to the Dispersion—relative to the powers that be as per the text above—is a parallel to Paul’s admonition to the Romans, as per this lesson. The Jewish Christians of the Dispersion were of such a religious background as to lead them to question as to whether or not they should pay tribute to Caesar at all. Paying tribute to Caesar had long been a bitter experience for the Jewish race. Further, the fact that some of the tax money paid by the Jewish Christians went to keep up the heathen idolatrous places of worship—the state religion—was a trying factor with those Jewish Christians.

Peter enjoined those of the Dispersion to be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake—or for the sake or welfare of the church. He affirmed with Paul that the powers that be are of God for vengeance on evil doers and for praise for those who do well. Instead of manifesting vehement attitudes toward idolatrous and evil

rulers, those of the Dispersion were admonished by Peter to be known for their good deeds and quiet manner of life. They were not to use their freedom in Christ for the indulgence of the flesh.

Peter called upon those of the Dispersion, therefore, to honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, and honor the king. This Christians are to do in every age and in every clime.

### Some Pertinent Considerations

"It is, then, unmistakably true that those who disobey civil law disobey God at the same time." (H. Leo Boles)

"The apostles rejected the command of the Jewish council because it conflicted with the command of Jesus. (Acts 5:28, 29; Mark 16:15, 16.) Daniel disobeyed the decree of King Darius because it interfered with his duty to God. (Dan. 6:7, 8.) If necessary to reject man's civil laws when they conflict with God's law, it is far more necessary to reject the religious laws of human origin. (Matt. 15:9; Gal. 1:8-10.)" (H. Leo Boles)

"In no case are Christians justifiable in disobeying these powers, except only when the civil governments require them to do that which God forbids, and forbids Christians doing that which God requires them to do." (E. A. Elam)

"It is not the duty of the Christian to bear the sword, to be a terror to evil doers, to execute vengeance. All this children of God are forbidden to do." (Guy N. Woods)

"We are thankful that in the United States one is not required to serve in a combatant way; he can request some other way to serve his country and still be subject to the powers that be, and be loyal, and be an asset to his nation." (Hugo McCord)

"Christians are taught to obey, rather than to rule. The work of both the church and the state is the work of God, but the members of each group have a different sphere in which to function." (Leslie G. Thomas)

"Some argue that Christians kill-

ing on government orders are not personally responsible, but are mere agents. If, however, Christian soldiers were ordered to behead a John, to decapitate a James or Paul, or to crucify Peter, it would let them sleep no better to keep saying to themselves, 'We are not responsible.'" (Hugo McCord)

"Church and state are separate institutions, yet they may support each other. The state is lifted to a high and purer state of civilization wherever the gospel goes, and the church will benefit from the protection and orderly influence of good government." (Roy H. Lanier, Sr.)

"Early Christians up to about 170 A. D. who had read Romans 13, did not think they were violating the passage in their refusing combat service." (Hugo McCord)

"'Hate must become first nature to a soldier', says the War Department, for 'until he hates the enemy with every instinct and every muscle, he will only be afraid.'" (Hugo McCord)

"Situation ethics converts yesterday's sins into today's moral code. Women spies use sex to inveigle foreign agents, and why not? Why should a boy give his life for his country and a girl not give her chastity? In Romans 13:9 is a commandment prohibiting adultery. If a Christian boy may with impunity kill for the duration, may a Christian girl with impunity commit adultery for the duration? Is the situation ethics advocate pressing the matter too far when he asks, 'Is the girl who gives her chastity for her country's sake any less approvable than the boy who gives his leg or his life?'" (Hugo McCord)

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?

Repeat the golden 'ext.

Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

In what ways is this lesson especially important?

What particular question is raised by this study?

What answers should be given to the questions set forth in the introduction?

#### The Golden Text

What exalteth a nation?

Define righteousness or justice.



Must a government countenance religion in order to be exalted?

The Purpose of Civil Governments

What are the purposes of civil governments?

How does God use the powers that be?

Does Romans 13:1-7 authorize a Christian to participate in combat service?

Need a Christian be fearful of the powers that be?

Must Christians obey the powers that be? Are there exceptions?

The Christian's Obligation to Render His Proper Dues

Why must Christians pay taxes and respect and honor to the powers that be? What is tribute? custom?

Peter's Instruction to Jewish Christians

Who were "the Dispersion"?

Why were they of a strong attitude to not pay taxes?

How do Peter's instructions agree with Paul?

Must Christians of all ages and times show respect and honor to the powers that be?

Lesson IV—October 26, 1975

THE CHRISTIAN AND RECREATION

Lesson Text

1 Tim. 4:6-8; Mark 3:7-10, 20; 6:30-32

6 If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed *until now*:

7 But refuse profane and old wives fables. And exercise thyself unto godliness:

8 For bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come.

7 And Jesus with his disciples withdrew to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and from Judaea,

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and beyond the Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came unto him.

9 And he spake to his disciples,

that a little boat should wait on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him:

10 For he had healed many; inso-much that as many as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch him.

20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

30 And the apostles gather themselves together unto Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught:

31 And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32 And they went away in the boat to a desert place apart.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof."* (Zech. 8:5.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Phil. 4:4-9.

Daily Bible Readings

- October 20. M..... Jesus Seeks Solitude (Mark 1:35-38)
- October 21. T..... A Life of Abstinence (Dan. 5:1-6)
- October 22. W..... Bodily Exercise Profitable (1 Tim. 4:1-8)
- October 23. T..... Sabbath Made for Man (Mark 2:18-28)
- October 24. F..... Time for Fasting (Mark 2:18-20)
- October 25. S..... Discipline Required (1 Cor. 9:24-27)
- October 26. S..... Sinful Activity (1 Cor. 10:5-12)

TIME.—For First Timothy, A.D. 64-65; for Mark, A.D. 27-28.

PLACES.—For First Timothy, there is the probability that Paul wrote from Spain, and there is also the probability that Timothy received the letter at Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor; for

Mark, Capernaum and the desert place northeast of the Sea of Galilee of Palestine.

PERSONS.—Paul and Timothy; Jesus and the multitude; Jesus and his apostles.

### Introduction

According to *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, the word "recreation" means "to create anew, restore, refresh as with refreshments of strength and spirits after toil—a means of refreshment or diversion." Christian recreation is not within itself a Bible doctrine, but there are numerous Bible references which reflect the need for recreation in the life of every person. Jesus reflected his need for recreation—the need of his human body for rest and refreshment.

The need for Christian recreation does not turn on the fact that some brethren, at least, are having more and more leisure time. Leisure time may or may not be a form of recreation. The need for recreation stems from the demands of a person's physical and mental faculties for rest and diversion. The need for recreation also stems from the needs of a family—husband and wife and children—to share time together.

A differentiation should be made between an abundance of leisure time and recreation. Some persons have such an abundance of leisure time and are so engaged in play and in entertainments, so-called, that recreation for them would be hard physical and mental endurance. The American Society has moved in some four decades from a predominantly rural and agrarian society to a predominantly urban and industrialized society. When the machine age came to the fore, there came to be less and less place for the gainful labor and occupation of youths. In time there were few chores to perform about the home. With a house located on less than a half acre of ground and with no cows to milk, no animals to feed, and no wood to cut, there was and is little place for young people to learn the dignity of labor and the self-respect that ensues therefrom. Parents—and all society in fact—have looked to the local school systems to provide activity and entertainment for their young people. School bands, pep squads, ball

teams, and dance sessions have been organized to provide activity and entertainment for young people.

In the meantime parents and children tend to have less and less time together. Father, somewhat of necessity, goes his way, and mother is left to go her way. Often, both father and mother work. Each child has his schedule of extra school, and away-from-home activities. Even when father and mother make a concerted effort to bring the family together as a unit on a daily basis they are faced with many seeming impossibilities.

While there is much leisure time for the youth, for the retirees, and for certain labor groups, the fact remains that in many cases the father works two jobs at long hours in order to maintain the family, and the mother works outside the home to assist him. Some parents rarely ever have any kind of recreation.

Within the framework of such prevailing circumstances as described, Christians need to give thought for the matter of recreation. Many sets of overworked parents are in dire need of some wholesome recreation—particularly recreation that involves all of the members of the family. Such parents need time off for rest and diversion, and conversely, their children need time off from entertainment and play for work. They need to be engaged in the kind of labor that will mold them for maturity. Parents and children need time together. They need time to work together, to play together, and to pray together.

While some forms of entertainment may provide rest and diversion for the physical and mental needs of a person, entertainment as such, is not necessarily recreation. Good wholesome recreation is that which creates anew, but present day entertainment often degrades. The concept of recreation involves a rest, a relaxation, a diversion of such nature and kind that the person will enter with freshness upon

a continuation of his righteous course.

Christians can enjoy recreation without their participation in questionable worldly entertainment, and they—both old and young—have some restraining obligations with respect to their participation in the so-called world of entertainment.

Some questions that Christians should very conscientiously consider when choosing entertainment and/or recreation should include the following:

1. Does the Bible condemn the nature of the entertainment, or form of recreation, as being of the works of the flesh?

2. Will the form of entertainment or recreation have an adverse effect upon a Christian's spiritual life?

3. Will such participation offend good brethren?

4. Will participation in such forms of entertainment and recreation compromise a Christian's influence?

5. Is the cost for such entertain-

ment and recreation too great and wasteful in view of the needs of lost souls, even if a Christian is financially able to pay the price?

6. Is such entertainment or recreation too time consuming for a Christian who must ever be zealously engaged in leading souls to Christ?

7. Will such entertainment or recreation be injurious to a person's health?

8. Does such entertainment and recreation provide for a close association with the members of the family?

9. Does such entertainment or recreation tend to become a habit forming activity that detaches a person from more important matters in which he needs to be engaged?

10. Will the entertainment or recreation cause a Christian to reflect upon the experience afterwards in such a way to deter him from his rightful course of meditation, prayer, and study?

### The Golden Text

*"The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof."*

Zerubbabel had led a company of some fifty thousand from Babylon to Jerusalem with a commission from Cyrus to rebuild the Temple. The Samaritans hindered the work on the Temple all the days of Cyrus until the reign of Darius. Accusations were filed during the reign of Ahasuerus (Cambyses, the son of Cyrus), and the work was stopped during the reign of Artaxerxes (Pseudo-Smerdis or Gaumata who reigned only eight months). (Ezra 4:5.) The prophets, Haggai and

Zechariah, stirred up the people to resume the work of rebuilding the Temple.

As a means of encouragement to the people, Zechariah prophesied that the time was at hand when boys and girls would be playing in the streets of the city—the city would be full of boys and girls. This would be joyfully welcomed, for Jerusalem had long been without such a wholesome sight of many children playing in the streets. What can be a greater source of recreation than a picnic in the woods where the parents rest and observe the boys and girls romp and play?

### The Text Explained

#### Bodily Exercise Is Profitable

(1 Tim. 4:6-8)

*If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed until now: but refuse profane and old wives' fables. And exercise thyself unto godliness: for bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the*

*life which now is, and of that which is to come.*

Paul was encouraging his son in the gospel, Timothy, to exercise himself unto godliness, and he moved to contrast exercise in godliness with the exercise of the body. "Bodily exercise is profitable for a little," he said, "but godliness is profitable for all things."

The point of emphasis for this lesson is the fact that bodily exercise is profitable—quite profitable as

a matter of fact—though only for a little in contrast to the exercise of godliness. A man's body is a temple of God—a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 6:19.) He is under obligation, therefore, to take thought and care for his body.

The proper food, rest, and exercise are necessary for the well being of the physical body. In far too many instances Christians become so involved in the responsibilities and obligations of life, even in spiritual activities, that they do not take time for bodily exercise. This of course is a mistake. No one can do his best over a period of time who fails to take the physical exercise which his body demands.

#### Jesus Needed Time for Rest

(Mark 3:7-10, 20)

*And Jesus with his disciples withdrew to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed; mid from Judaea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came unto him. And he spake to his disciples, that a little boat should wail on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him: for he had healed many; insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch him. . . . And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.*

Jesus had been very busy all day. Multitudes had pressed upon him. They came from Galilee, Judea, Idumea, Tyre, and Sidon. He had healed many of their plagues and diseases. The throngs pressed upon him to touch him.

Under these tiring and demanding circumstances, Jesus instructed his disciples to have a little boat to wait on him. The little boat was to be the Master's way of escape from the multitude so that he could get some much needed rest for his physical body. After all, not only was Jesus God, but also he was man. His physical body needed

rest.

Verse 20 reflects how that later the multitude pressed upon the Master so that he and his disciples did not even have time to eat bread. Many people today, particularly physicians as well as other professionals, find themselves working under similar circumstances.

If the Master needs time for rest and relaxation, all may be certain that every person today needs time for rest and relaxation. This includes wives who work as a wife and mother, and whose work is never done! Amen!

#### Jesus Encouraged the Apostles to Rest

Rest

(Mark 6:30-32)

*And the apostles gather themselves together unto Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught. And he saith unto him, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desert place apart.*

The apostles had returned from their mission, and they gave the Master a report of their activities. Then the Master said: "Come ye yourselves apart in a desert place, and rest a while." Mark adds by way of explanation that many had been coming and going so that they had no time to eat. In short, the disciples needed food, rest, and relaxation. In order to get their much needed rest and relaxation, "they went away in the boat to a desert place," an uninhabited place.

The need of the apostles was the same as the need of the Master, as per the prior scripture reference. There is a place, there must be a place, in the life of every Christian for rest, relaxation, and recreation if he is to do his very best over a long period of time. The physical and mental make up of man is such that he must have time for rest and relaxation to create anew his physical strength and mental spirit.

#### Pertinent Evaluations

John Doe is a high school football enthusiast. He teaches a boys' teenage Bible class on Sunday morning, and he invariably opens

his class by comments on the ballgame on the prior Friday night. Considerable class time is usually consumed in the discussion. The

majority of the members of his class are not members of the church. Is John Doe to be criticized or commended? Evaluate.

...

Abraham Smith is a football enthusiast. He makes a comfortable living of \$12,000 per year, and he regularly contributes ten percent of his income to the church. He also contributes a modest amount on special appeals. Smith thinks nothing of paying eight dollars for football tickets for himself and his family every time his college plays a home game. He never fails to watch a professional game, football or whatever sport is in season, on Sunday afternoon. He is being considered for an elder of the church. Some members of the church are critical. They fear that he puts football and sports above the work of the Lord. Is Abraham Smith to be criticized? Evaluate.

...

Elijah Jones takes no interest in football. He, too, is being considered for an elder. His salary and family and giving to the church are comparable to that of Abraham Smith. His means of recreation is fishing. He takes long fishing trips and spends considerable money for fishing equipment. He actually spends more money on recreation than does Abraham Smith, but the brethren have raised no objection to him in regard to his recreational activities. Is there a difference? Should he be criticized? Evaluate.

...

Tom Hardy is the minister of the

church where Smith and Jones are members. He is a fisherman, a huntsman, and a golfer. The elders give him a day off each week for his outdoor activities. On arrival at the church on Sunday morning and between services the brethren, including the elders, have a running topic of conversation relative to the preacher and his outdoor activities. Of recent date, Tom Hardy has proposed that he take his day off to attend a college nearby. The elders and members are critical of the preacher's request. Should they be? Evaluate.

. . .

Travis Buckler was sixteen and in his first year of college when the depression struck. He married when he was nineteen and began preaching that same year. He worked hard at anything he could find to do. He returned to college for a short term, and became qualified to teach, and by degrees he completed his college work. He had no surplus money for anything while he was rearing and educating his children. He never learned to play. He did not give any attention to sports. He did not attend the movies—out of conviction, primarily. The only kind of recreation he enjoys is working—mowing grass and cutting wood. He is pressed with work, and he feels that he cannot take time for the physical labor which he enjoys. He is overweight. Has he failed his own body? Evaluate.

## Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?

Repeat the golden text.

Give time, places, and persons.

### Introduction

Define the term "recreation."

Differentiate between entertainment and recreation.

What great social changes have come about in the U.S.A. in the past forty years or so?

While many have more leisure time, others have less leisure time. Why?

Why do children now spend so much time on the school campus?

What great and pressing need is there in most families today?

Are there parents who very much need a program of recreation?

Discuss the questions which a Christian

should consider when choosing his entertainment and recreation.

### The Golden Text

What is the background of the golden text?

Why would the words of the golden text be a source of encouragement?

### Bodily Exercise Is Profitable

In what sense did Paul say that bodily exercise is profitable for little?

Discuss the Christian's need for bodily exercise.

### Jesus Needed Time for Rest

Give the background for the Master's need for rest.

How did he propose to take the needed time for rest?

Does this imply that often a Christian

must get out of town in order for rest and relaxation?

**Jesus Encouraged the Apostles to Rest**

What was the background for the above scripture reading?

Why did the apostles so very much need to rest?

What did they do in order to get the rest which they needed?

**Pertinent Evaluations**

What is your evaluation of each of the cases cited?

Do you see yourself in either of the cases?

**Lesson V—November 2, 1975**

**THE CHRISTIAN AS AN EMPLOYEE**

**Lesson Text**

**Mark 6:1-3; Acts 20:33-35; 2 Thess. 3:6-12**

1 And he went out from thence; and he cometh into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

2 And when the sabbath was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, Whence hath this man these things? and, What is the wisdom that is given unto this man, and *what mean* such mighty works wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended in him.

33 I coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

34 Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.

35 In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us.

7 For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

8 Neither did we eat bread for nought at any man's hand, but in labor and travail, working night and day, that we might not burden any of you:

9 Not because we have not the right, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you, that ye should imitate us.

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him eat.

11 For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies.

12 Now them that are such we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"My Father worketh even until now, and I work."* (John 5:17.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Col. 3:12-17.

**Daily Bible Readings**

- October 27. M..... Jehovah Worked in Creation (Gen. 2:1-3)
- October 28. T..... Christ Works (John 9:1-5)
- October 29. W..... Paul Worked (Acts 20:33-35)
- October 30. T..... Idleness Condemned (2 Thess. 3:6-15)
- October 31. F..... The Worthy Woman (Prov. 31:13-19)
- November 1. S..... Laborer Worthy of Hire (1 Cor. 9:1-18)
- November 2. S..... Works of God (Psalm 8:3-9)

TIME.—For Mark, A.D. 27-29; for Acts, about A.D. 56; for Second Thessalonians, early in A.D. 51.

PLACES.—For Mark, Nazareth of Galilee in Palestine; for Acts, Miletus, a seaport city of the province of Asia on the west coast of Asia Minor; for Second Thessalonians, Paul wrote from Corinth.

PERSONS.—For Mark, Jesus and his disciples, and those of the synagogue; for Acts, Paul and the elders of the church at Ephesus; for Second Thessalonians, Paul and the saints at Thessalonica.

## Introduction

The lesson for today is one that touches the lives and responsibilities of every Christian, except for one too ill or too senile to work. The lesson also touches on the Bible principles involved in the servant-master relationships, which relationships are referred to as labor and management relationships, and/or capital and labor relationships.

Management or capital has an obligation to provide for its employees a reasonable and justifiable living wage. This obligation lies with every employer, whether a housewife who employs a maid, or a corporation that employs thousands of workers.

The lesson today, however, is concerned with the Christian as an employee, and here the emphasis should lie for this lesson. One common criticism that stems from employers of all levels today is that many who are entering the labor market are unreliable and inefficient. The criticism is that many employees do little but take coffee breaks, watch the clock, and thereby loaf on the job. Employers charge that much of the work done is not only done sluggishly and grudgingly, but also that it is not done well.

Granting that allowance must be

made often for prejudice and selfishness on the part of the employers as they file their criticisms, yet the fact must remain that many of today's social order are unwilling to give an honest day's work for a reasonable and justifiable day's pay. The likelihood is that many Christians fall in this category.

The fact is that a generation or so of young men and women have been raised on and fed from a silver spoon. They do not know how to work, and they do not know the need for work.

The charge is often made that many on relief rolls are therein enrolled simply because they are too lazy to work. One thing is certain; namely, that any mentally and able-bodied person on relief should be ashamed of himself. Too many men today are known for their generative powers only. They leave the women to fend for themselves and the children that they have sired, and the women and children are in turn forced upon the relief rolls. The growing segment of such worthless men is a terrible blight on the present-day American society. The "quotes" at the close of the present lesson are worthy of consideration.

## The Golden Text

*"My Father worketh even until now, and I work."* Jesus had healed a man on the sabbath day, and the Jews were very critical of his having done so. The criticism called forth the words of the golden text. Jesus declared that his Father "worketh even until now," and he said, "I work."

True, God rested on the seventh day following his work of creation, but within the area of God's purpose and providence for mortal man, God never rests, nor does he make distinctions in the days of the week. Jesus also worked, both as a man and as Deity. The throngs had pressed upon him, and he had worked as a man for long hours and without time to eat and refresh his

physical body. If God and Christ so worked, then how careful every Christian should be to work hard and willingly. God wills that the Christian shall never spend his time in idleness.

Particularly, Christians should work in spiritual affairs. Retired persons who are in reasonable health should evaluate their responsibilities, especially with respect to their spiritual obligations. Housewives who spend too much time watching soap operas and talking over the telephone should take full thought of how that God and Christ work continually. Great responsibility lies at the feet of every Christian.

## The Text Explained

### Jesus Worked at the Carpentry Trade

(Mark 6:1-3)

*And he went out from thence; and he cometh into his own country; and his disciples follow him. And when the sabbath was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, Whence hath this man these things: and, What is the wisdom that is given unto this man, and what mean such mighty works wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended in him.*

Jesus had been teaching at Capernaum, and then he went into his own country, Nazareth. He entered the synagogue, and during that assembly he stood up and read where it was written from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." The eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. Then he began to say, "Today hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4:16-21.)

On this occasion many were astonished. They asked: "Whence hath this man these things?" They also asked: "Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary?" Thus by an incidental question, the student is put on notice that by vocation Jesus was a carpenter. Contemplate this fact! Jesus, the Son of God, from his teenage years until he began his personal ministry at about the age of thirty, worked at the carpentry trade.

Jesus thus put his stamp of divine approval on the dignity of work. The Jews of Christ's day believed that every father owed his son the obligation of teaching him a trade. There is a great lesson to be learned here. Parents should teach their children to work. Further, all Christians should work, they should be industrious and thrifty so that they can be of help to others.

### Paul Worked at His Trade of Tent-Making:

(Acts 20:33-35)

*I coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

Paul was on his way to Jerusalem, and the Holy Spirit testified through one and another of the prophets that bonds and affliction awaited him there. Though Paul had the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit which included the gift of prophecy, that measure revealed nothing to Paul with respect to his own personal needs, fortune, or future. Such revelations were given to others and related to Paul.

Paul arrived at Miletus, and he called unto him the elders of the church at Ephesus. When they had come to him, he placed on them some very heavy and serious obligations. He moved on to say that while he had been among them, he coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Then he declared: "Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." Paul was a tent-maker by trade. Like his Master, Paul, too, had been taught a trade in his youth. He regarded work as being an honorable thing, and thus with his own hands he had provided necessities for himself and for his companions as well, though he was entitled to a livelihood from his preaching while among them.

Paul declared that by his own work he had set an example for the Ephesian elders. He urged them to also labor or work so as to be financially able to help the weak. He also called to their minds the words of the Lord Jesus who said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Four points seem to deserve emphasis just here:

1. Paul was taught a trade when he was a lad.
2. Paul worked with his hands to support himself and his companions.



3. Paul set an example to the Christians in every age and clime since, to work as he had worked.

4. Paul called to the attention of the Ephesian elders that Jesus said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The lesson is obvious. Men today must work, and they must teach their children to work. They must work in order to give to others who are in need

#### Paul Commanded the Thessalonians to Withdraw from Loafers

(2 Thess. 3:6-12)

*Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; neither did we eat bread for nought at any man's hand, but in labor and travail, working night and day, that we might not burden any of you: not because we have not the right, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you, that ye should imitate us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you. If any will not work, neither let him eat. For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.*

Apparently some at Thessalonica, on being converted to Christ, had thought that he would immediately come again. They had quit work and were awaiting his coming. Paul exhorted: "About more and more; and that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your hands, even as we

charged you." (1 Thess. 4:10, 11.) There were, however, some few who had persisted in their course. They were loafers who went about and stood about, they were just hanging around and awaiting the Lord's return. They were meddling, busybodies, who spent their time spreading exciting news of Christ's immediate return, and they very likely were looking to the church to support them while they continued in their idle course.

Paul commanded: "Withdraw yourselves from them." The course of those loafers was a disorderly course. Paul reminded the loafers that while he was with them at Thessalonica, he commanded: "If any will not work, neither let him eat." Paul also reminded those Thessalonians:

1. That he and his companions did not eat bread for nought at any man's hand.

2. That he and his companions had labored night and day, laboring with their hands while they taught, that they might not be a burden to the Thessalonians, even though they had that right to live by and of their labor in teaching the word.

3. That the Thessalonians should imitate the work that he (Paul) and his companions had done.

4. That those who were idle and loafing—the disorderly—should with quietness do their own work and eat their own bread.

With this instruction Paul certainly made out a strong case for a Christian's obligation to be characterized by work and industry. Every Christian should learn early in life the dignity of work, and he should learn early the need for him to be thrifty and industrious. Only in this way can he be able to provide care for the poor and support for the preaching of the gospel.

#### Pertinent Quotes

"A man is a worker. If he is not then he is nothing." (Joseph Conrad)

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"I never did anything worth doing by accident, nor did any of my inventions come by accident." (Thomas A. Edison)

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"I believe in work, hard work and long hours of work. Men do not break down from over work,

but from worry and dissipation." (Charles E. Hughes) \*\*\*

"He who would really benefit mankind must reach them through their work." (Henry Ford) \*\*\*

"The greatest asset of any nation is the spirit of the people, and the greatest danger that can menace any nation is the breakdown of that spirit—the will to win and the

courage to work." (George B. Corleyou)

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"Folks who never do any more than they get paid for, never get paid for any more than they do." (Elbert Hubbard)

\* \* \*

"All growth depends upon activity. There is no development physically or intellectually without effort, and effort means work. Work is not a curse; it is the prerogative

of intelligence, the only means to manhood, and the measure of civilization." (Calvin Coolidge)

"Man must work. That is certain as the sun. But he may work grudgingly, or he may work gratefully; he may work as a man, or he may work as a machine. There is no work so rude, that he may not exalt it; no work so impassive, that he may not breathe a soul into it; and no work so dull that he may not enliven it." (Henry Giles)

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

Discuss the principle of the servant-master relationship.  
What are some of the criticisms of employers against their employees?  
Do you think that such criticisms are often justified?  
What is one of the greatest social problems of the present-day American society?

#### The Golden Text

On what occasion and under what circumstances did Jesus utter the words of the golden text?  
In what way does God work?  
Did Jesus work? How?  
Is Jesus working now?  
When and for whom did he promise to prepare mansions?

#### Jesus Worked at the Carpentry Trade

How do we come to know that Jesus was a carpenter?

Were those of his native city jealous of him? Discuss.  
What lessons may we learn from the fact that Jesus worked at the carpentry trade?

#### Paul Worked at His Trade of Tent-Making

Discuss the merits of the Jews in their teaching their sons a trade.  
Under what circumstances did Paul speak of his having worked with his hands?  
Did Paul have the right to live off his teaching?  
What lessons may we learn from Paul's labor with his hands?

#### Paul Commanded the Thessalonians to Withdraw from Loafers

What were the circumstances of the disorderly at Thessalonica?  
What did Paul say to do with them?  
Describe the attitude and influence of those disorderly loafers.  
What did Paul say about the man who would not work?  
What did Paul exhort?

## Lesson VI—November 9, 1975

# THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS PHYSICAL HEALTH

### Lesson Text

1 Cor. 6:15-20; 9:24-27

15 Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ? shall I then take away the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot? God forbid.

16 Or know ye not that he that is joined to a harlot is one body? for, The twain, saith he, shall become one flesh.

17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

19 Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own;

20 For ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body.

24 Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run; that ye may attain.

25 And every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things. Now they do *it* to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

26 I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air:

27 But I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Glorify God therefore in your body.” (1 Cor. 6:20.)  
DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17.

Daily Bible Readings

- November 3. M..... Daniel’s Determination (Dan. 1:8-21)
- November 4. T..... Example of the Rechabites (Jer. 35:1-19)
- November 5. W..... Abstaining Because of Others (1 Cor. 8:4-13)
- November 6. T..... Moderation to Be Practiced (Phil. 4:1-10)
- November 7. F..... Sobriety to Be Practiced (Tit. 2:1-10)
- November 8. S..... Live Soberly, Righteously, Godly (Tit. 2:11-15)
- November 9. S..... Rest Awaits God’s People (Heb. 4:1-11)

TIME.—Spring of A.D. 54 or 55.

PLACES.—Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor; and Corinth of Greece.

PERSONS.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

Introduction

Good health is more than the absence of disease and physical defects. It is total fitness for living. All men seek to unshackle themselves from illness and infirmity, but the Christian, especially, should seek for optimum physical well-being. Only through physical well-being can anyone attain unto optimum mental, social, and emotional well-being.

Many people can never attain unto such optimums because of inherent body weaknesses, or because of lingering and uncontrollable diseases. Many other people can never attain unto such optimums—or at least will not—because of the dissipating habits to which they have committed their physical bodies.

Maximum personal happiness and the greatest contribution to the church, the family, and the community can be realized only by the person who enjoys good health. Often young people who are in the very bloom and zest of life are loaded with frustrations, fears, and failures all because they do not feel well physically. They do not eat right, sleep right, exercise right, and, therefore, they just do not feel right.

When living in a college dormitory and without mother to rouse them out of bed, young people fail

to rise early enough to eat breakfast. They stay up too late at night to rise at the proper time in the morning. A former generation who did not go to college—except for a privileged few—ate, and worked, and slept. They developed strong bodies, and with those strong bodies their mental and emotional states were equally strong.

As with the child so with all, the body and the mind are not separate entities. Without question, a child’s intellectual attainments are related to his physical well-being. A hungry child cannot learn very well, nor can a sick child. The hungry and sick children become depressed. They do not perform well in school, as a general rule. When adults fail to care properly for their physical bodies, they experience like mental and emotional stresses just as children do.

All poverty cannot be eliminated, and all disease cannot be cured; but those who fall into the category with the hungry and diseased all for the want of their having taken the proper care for their bodies, stand to be severely criticized and reprimanded. Of a certainty, all of those who fall in the same category with the hungry and diseased for their having dissipated their physical bodies are to be condemned.

The Golden Text

“Glorify God therefore in your body.” The word “glorify” means “to shed radiance and splendor upon, to make glorious by presentation in a favorable aspect, to give glory as in worship.” The thought is that the Christian should use and

discipline his body so as to give great honor and respect unto God. This he cannot do if he dissipates his body, and this he cannot do in a significant way if he fails to take the proper care for his body.

## The Text Explained

### Glorify God in Your Body

(1 Cor. 6:15-20)

*Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ? shall I then take away the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot? God forbid. Or know ye not that he that is joined to a harlot is one body? for, The twain, saith he, shall become one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body.*

Corinth was famous for its immorality. It had long been noted for its system of prostitution. A thousand or more Aphroditic virgins regularly left their sandal marks in the sand which read, "Follow me," as they plied their very ancient trade.

Those "hospitable women," as the Greeks spoke of them, were still plying their trade when Paul entered the city of Corinth. No wonder then that Paul should warn the Corinthian Christians of the sin of joining their bodies to the bodies of harlots. He that joined himself to the body of a harlot was one body with the harlot, Paul declared. Such is lawful only in the marriage relationship.

In support of his condemnation of Christians who sought out the use of prostitutes, Paul emphasized that the bodies of Christians are members of Christ—that is, parts of his body. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit"—thereby denoting the very closest spiritual union with Christ. Paul said, God forbid, therefore, that a Christian should join himself to a harlot. "Flee fornication," Paul urged, and no wonder because the sin of fornication, unlike even the sins of drunkenness and gluttony which are of the body, external to the body, arises from within the body and is directly against the sanctity of the body. Then, too, children spring from such adulterous unions—the product of a Christian body prostituted with that of a harlot! Drunkenness

ends with the death of the physical body. Fornication, however, does not end with the death of the physical body, as a general rule at least.

Paul then raised the question. "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God?" In short, the Christian's body is a dwelling place of God. Shall a Christian, therefore, make common the temple of God with that of a harlot?

"Ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price." The price being the blood of the sinless Son of God. Therefore, "glorify God in your body," Paul urged.

The admonition, "glorify God in your body," joins with the topic for today's lesson. Since the physical body of a Christian is a part of the body of Christ, the Christian owes an obligation to his body—an obligation for its physical welfare. This obligation involves food, rest, exercise, medical care, and all other needs for the well-being of the physical body.

### Paul Buffeted His Body

(1 Cor. 9:24-27)

*Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run; that ye may attain. And every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air: but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.*

In keeping with the fact that the Christian's body is a part of the body of Christ, Paul buffeted his body and brought it into subjection, lest by any means after that he had preached to others he might be rejected. The word buffet means "to strike as with the hand, to strike repeatedly, to batter or contend against." Paul was determined to strike down every unholy inclination of his body. He was set on bringing all of the desires of his body in subjection to the rule of the spirit. To bring his body under complete subjection required that he strike down any craving of his

body for unlawful sex, or strong intoxicating drink, and for any gluttonous desire for food.

Paul was playing the game of life, and he was playing to win. Within this same context, Paul reminded the Corinthians of how that those who run in the races run all—that is all run—but only one receives the prize; whereas, in the race of life every person can receive the crown of life through faith and subjection of the body. Further, everyone who runs in the races or plays in the games exercises self-control—that is he trains, he eats the right kind of food, he gets his proper rest, and he puts all of his strength and might into each race or game.

The winner of the Grecian games received a corruptible crown, but those who win in the race of life re-

ceive an incorruptible crown. Do not run with uncertainty, Paul urged, or box as if beating the air. In short, Paul was saying run to win, box to knock out the opponent—which in a spiritual sense would be Satan. This was Paul's determination and course in life. He was training and disciplining his body to win that one great race of life.

The point and application of this scripture reading to the subject, "The Christian and His Physical Health," is that the Christian must buffet—strike down—all the sinful inclinations of his physical body. He must direct his body, care for it, buffet it, and therewith he can win the race of life with and through it. In short, the Christian must take thought for his health. Without a strong healthy body, he cannot do his best in the service of Christ.

### Pertinent Observations

Educators are well aware of the importance of good health. They are keenly aware of the needs of the physical body for proper food, rest, and exercise.

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School lunch programs for the undernourished, which include more children than those in poverty circumstances, grew out of the fact that hungry, undernourished children cannot learn well.

The advanced technology of this age has brought about such a high standard of living that the rank and file of society fail to get the proper amount of exercise. People ride short distances rather than to walk;

they live in darkened rooms and watch television rather than to play and work in the sunshine where they can breathe fresh air into their lungs; they press buttons to operate labor saving devices rather than to stretch and contract their muscles; and they live in apartments and condominiums rather than to cut grass, feed the dog, and put out the garbage.

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The Christian must glorify God in his body. He must, therefore, take the proper care for his body—the care for food, rest, and exercise. He must keep his body under control, thus free from a life of dissipation.

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject for today's lesson?

Repeat the golden text.

Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

Is good health more than freedom from disease? Explain.

Will ill health affect adversely a person's mental and emotional state?

Will the dissipation of the body through sinful practices bring on mental and emotional problems?

Do young people often abuse their physical bodies through their irregular habits?

Some physicians say that breakfast is the most important meal that a young person can eat. Do you agree? Why?

Are the body and mind separate entities?

#### The Golden Text

Define the word "glorify."

How may a Christian glorify God in his body?

#### Glorify God in Your Body

What circumstances or conditions prevailed at Corinth?

Would these conditions explain why Paul gave special warning against a Christian's being joined to a harlot?

What is the meaning of the statement, the Christian is joined unto the Lord in one spirit?

Discuss how that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Why is a Christian not "his own"?

What does the Christian owe his body? Why?

#### Paul Buffeted His Body

What does the word "buffet" mean?

What did Paul really mean when he said: "I buffet my body"?

Would Paul have lost his soul if he failed to buffet his body?

Paul made reference to the Grecian

games of that day. How was he playing the game of life?  
 How many won in the Grecian races?  
 Can everyone who will, win in the race of life?  
 What is required to win?

Pertinent Observations  
 Discuss the need of the body for food, rest, and exercise.  
 Discuss the problems that have come about as a result of our advanced technology.

Lesson VII—November 16, 1975

THE CHRISTIAN AND FALSE TEACHERS

Lesson Text

2 John 1-11

1 The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not I only, but also all they that know the truth;

2 For the truth's sake which abideth in us, and it shall be with us for ever:

3 Grace, mercy, peace shall be with us, from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

4 I rejoice greatly that I have found *certain* of thy children walking in truth, even as we received commandment from the Father.

5 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote to thee a new commandment, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

6 And this is love, that we should walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, even as ye

heard from the beginning, that ye should walk in it.

7 For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, *even* they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the anti-christ.

8 Look to yourselves, that ye lose not the things which we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward.

9 Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son.

10 If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into *your* house, and give him no greeting:

11 For he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"In the last time there shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts."* (Jude 18.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—2 John 12, 13.

Daily Bible Readings

- November 10. M..... Destructive Heresies (2 Pet. 2:1-11)
- November 11. T..... Teaching Error Condemned (1 Tim. 6:3-10)
- November 12. W..... God's Word Made Void (Mark 7:1-13)
- November 13. T..... May Neither Add Nor Subtract (Rev. 22:8-19)
- November 14. F..... Must Deal With False Teaching (Tit. 1:7-13)
- November 15. S..... False Teachers to Be Marked (Rom. 16:17)
- November 16. S..... Departures Condemned (Matt. 15:1-9)

TIME.—A.D. 85-90.

PLACE.—The epistle was written from some place in Macedonia to the province of Asia in Asia Minor. It may have been written as a circular letter to a number of churches.

PERSONS.—John and the saints of Asia Minor.

Introduction

From man's creation until now, he has been faced with false counterfeit religions and doctrines. Respecting any counterfeit one thing is certain: the counterfeit is always a far-out similarity of that which is real. The flood accounts of other nations and religions are

merely counterfeits of the true flood account as written by Moses. The existence of a counterfeit is by its very nature a tacit confirmation of the existence of the real thing. A counterfeit dollar bill testifies to the actual existence of legal *bona fide* dollar bills. Satan is a counterfeit

of righteousness and justice. He has a throne, he has angels, and he has ministers. Those ministers are counterfeit ministers of the gospel of Christ. (Rev. 2:13; Jude 6; 2 Cor. 11:15.)

When discussing false apostles and deceitful workers and how that they fashioned themselves into apostles of Christ, Paul said: "And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works." (2 Cor. 11:14, 15.) Within this same frame of reference Jesus had previously warned, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." (Matt. 7:15.) Paul wrote the Philippians: "Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision." (Phil. 3:2.)

The thrust of these scripture references, together with others that could be cited, is the fact that there are false teachers to be reckoned with in every generation, age, and clime of man. Satan is ever at work, and he attacks from land, sea, and air, as it were. Satan's greatest single attack against his arch enemy, Christ and his church, is through counterfeit righteousness and counterfeit doctrines which are written and spoken in the verbal character of the Bible record.

Every Christian must be aware, therefore, of false teachers, and to be sufficiently aware he must be confirmed in the true doctrine. Further, he must also be informed relative to his obligations with respect to false teachers. This responsibility lies heavily upon elders of the church. Their responsibility is to instruct the flock in the true doctrine and to warn them against the false teachers and the false doctrines. For example, Paul charged the elders of the church at Ephesus: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse

things, to draw away the disciples after them." (Acts 20:28-30.) Observe that false teachers would arise from among the elders, themselves.

The Christian, personally, and the church, universally, are constantly under attack by Satan and his false ministers of the gospel. False teachers are more dangerous today than ever in the annals of history. This is the case because the communication media serve to give speed and spread to their false doctrines. The communication media of today are so swift and reach so far that the false doctrines are heard throughout the whole earth.

The most dangerous of all the false teachers are those within the church. Unfortunately, many brethren are not sufficiently informed to recognize false teaching when they hear it, and when the false doctrines are pointed out and labeled, there is the tendency of some brethren to react with the shrug of the shoulder and the comment, "So what?" Their reaction seems to be that a little false doctrine is relatively innocent and never really condemned anyone. Anything in religion will go with many brethren in the church so long as the adherents really believe on Christ—anything that is, except the "legalistic sermons" and doctrines!

Elders, preachers, and Bible class teachers must be alert to the rise of false teachers and erroneous doctrines; and they must inform, warn, and indoctrinate the brethren against such error. The great problem is that elders and Bible class teachers—and at times the preachers—are often so lacking in a knowledge of truth and of their responsibility for the defense of the truth that they are not equipped to sound forth the warnings and to set forth the proper instructions. Elders of the respective churches are often so out-of-touch with what is taking place in the brotherhood that they are the last to know about the false teachers and the false doctrines. Such elders do not read the religious journals, and they do not attend meetings and special lectures where such matters are exposed. The situation is unfortunate! Elders are or should be shepherds

of the flock, not a mere board of directors who direct the affairs of

the church through the means of hired teachers.

### The Golden Text

*"In the last time there shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts."* The "last time" of this text has reference to the Christian dispensation. The Christian dispensation dates from the Pentecost of Acts 2 to the end of the world. Throughout this dispensation mockers will rise—men that mock, and jest, and scorn, and thus hold up for ridicule the simple and

clear doctrine of the Scriptures. This text should serve as fair warning, therefore, for Christians everywhere to be alert to the wiles, or diabolical cunningness, of Satan. Let every Christian beware of false teachers!—let him feel an obligation to keep abreast of the doctrinal problems which rise in the brotherhood.

### The Text Explained

#### The Elder and the Elect Lady

(2 John 1-4)

*The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not I only, but also all they that know the truth; for the truth's sake which abideth in us, and it shall be with us for ever: Grace, mercy, peace shall be with us, from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. I rejoice greatly that I have found certain of thy children walking in truth, even as we received commandment from the Father.*

The "elder" of this text is the apostle John. John wrote five of the books of the New Testament, but in only one—the Revelation—did he identify himself by name. The term elder here is used with respect to his advanced age, and not to the office of an elder or bishop.

The "elect lady" was not a church as some contend. The apostle John speaks of her children, of her sister, and of her sister's children who sent their greetings, he promises to visit her soon, and he warns her to refuse to receive false teachers into her house. None of these matters would reasonably apply to a church, as such. The American Standard Version indicates by footnote that the rendering "elect lady" may not be the proper rendering—that the proper rendering may be Cyria, the proper name of the woman.

The apostle John had great love and respect for this woman, and those who knew her and knew the truth—thereby implying a large number—also loved her. The implication is that this woman was either a widow or else her husband was an unbeliever, that she had

reared her children in faith and righteousness, that she was known for her hospitality, especially for her providing lodging for preachers, and that she needed to be warned against the lodging that she had provided, or might provide, for certain false teachers who were circulating from church to church.

Having extended greetings of grace, mercy, and peace from both God and Jesus Christ—thereby showing that Christ was one with the Father—in both truth and love; the apostle John then stated how joyful he was for certain of this woman's children who walked in truth as it was revealed from the Father—that is, as revealed through the inspired men. The statement "certain children" does not necessarily infer that some of her children were unfaithful; rather the thought may well be that John was acquainted with certain of her children—perhaps they lived at Ephesus where John lived and worshipped—and he knew by observation that they walked in the commandments that had come from the Father.

#### The Purpose of the Letter

(2 John 5-11)

*And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote to thee a new commandment, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we should walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, even as ye heard from the beginning, that ye should walk in it. For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the de-*



*ceiver and the antichrist. Look to yourselves, that ye lose not the things which we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward. Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works.*

With verse five, John moves to the purpose of his letter to this elect lady. He approaches the purpose of his letter by beseeching her that "we [John includes himself] love one another." This John explained was no new commandment; but rather, it was one that they had from the beginning. He then stated that love is walking after the commandments, and they had particularly one commandment from the beginning. That was to say that "love" was, and is, the summary of all of the commandments.

With this approach, the apostle John set forth the purpose of his letter to the elect lady. "Many deceivers are gone forth into the world," he explained. The deceivers that he specifically had in mind were those that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh." This doctrine is known in church history as Gnosticism. It had its beginning among the churches in Asia Minor in about A.D. 60, and at the time that Paul wrote his epistle to the small church at Colossae. Some twenty to thirty years had intervened, and the doctrine was doing its deadly work.

The Gnostics held that the physical body, as well as all matter, is unholy, and that the problems of life had their beginning when spirit and matter were combined. They reasoned, therefore, that Christ or Deity would never come in the flesh—that Deity could not and would not reside or abide in an unholy body of flesh. John designated those

false teachers as being antichrists.

John warned the elect lady: "Look to yourselves, that ye lose not the things which we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward." The meaning is that the elect lady and others should examine their hearts and reflect upon the certainties of truth lest they should succumb to those false teachers and, thereby, lose their standing with God. This sister in Christ, together with her personal acquaintances who shared with her, were in danger of losing their souls! What a loss that would be! Christians today are in the same danger when they countenance false teachers and false doctrines.

John then affirmed that "whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son." What could be more definite? more emphatic? Every Christian must give serious and full consideration to the fact that false teachers and those that countenance them and their doctrines hath not God. What a price sympathizers of false teachers must eventually pay! Already the time is late among churches of Christ with respect to certain false doctrines.

John's instruction to the elect lady was this: "If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching (that is the teaching that Jesus had come in the flesh), receive him not into your house [the implication is that she should at the outset interrogate the teachers that come, and that with specific and direct questions], and gave him no greeting (that is no encouragement, no hospitality): for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works." Observe! If she countenanced a false teacher, if she extended to him greeting and courteous best wishes, she would be a partaker of his evil works. This same principle applies today. May Christians everywhere beware!

### Some Pertinent Indictments

The Pentecostal movement among the churches of Christ—the speaking in tongues, the casting out of demons, and the like—is a very dangerous movement, and many brethren seem not to be alarmed.

The movement to fellowship all who believe on Christ, even though they do not subscribe to the doctrine of Christ, such as one church, one baptism, and observing the Lord's supper on the Lord's day, is also a very dangerous movement.

Here again many brethren, including elders, seem not to be alarmed.

The fact that so many members of the churches of Christ have no objection to the use of the instrument in the worship can only mean that those members have not been

sufficiently taught on the subject of acceptable worship and of what acceptable worship consists. Churches have demanded sermonettes, and psychological-sociological briefs, to the point that a preacher could not develop a subject matter sermon, even if he were inclined to so do. The time is late! Very late in fact!

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give the time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

In what way is a counterfeit the confirmation of the existence of the real thing? Discuss.  
How is Satan a counterfeit?  
What attitude does the Christian have toward false teachers?  
What responsibility do elders have toward false teachers?  
Who are the most dangerous of all the false teachers?

#### The Golden Text

What is the "last time" of this text?  
In what way is this text a warning to us?

#### The Elder and the Elect Lady

Who is the "elder" of our lesson? Discuss.  
Who is the "elect lady"?

Describe the elect lady.  
Give John's attitude toward the children of the elect lady.

#### The Purpose of the Letter

Give John's definition of love.  
Who were the deceivers John had in mind?  
Define Gnosticism, and tell the time of its beginning.  
Discuss the warning given by John to the elect lady.  
What price must false teachers and their sympathizers eventually pay?  
What attitude must one have toward a false teacher?

#### Some Pertinent Indictments

Name two movements within the church which should alarm Christians today.  
Discuss.  
What evidence exists that brethren have not been sufficiently taught?

## Lesson VIII—November 23, 1975

# THE CHRISTIAN AND PERSECUTION

### Lesson Text

#### 2 Cor. 11:23-33

23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep;

26 In journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28 Besides those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches.

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is caused to stumble, and I burn not?

30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern my weakness.

31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed for evermore knoweth that I lie not.

32 In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes in order to take me:

33 And through a window was I let down in a basket by the wall, and escaped his hands.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Heb. 11:32-40.

**Daily Bible Readings**

- November 17. M..... Paul's Suffering for Christ (2 Cor. 11:23-33)
- November 18. T.....Peter and John Persecuted (Acts 4:1-22)
- November 19. W..... All Apostles Are Persecuted (Acts 5:17-32)
- November 20. T.....Saul, The Persecutor (Acts 8:1-8)
- November 21. F.....Glorification Follows Suffering (Rom. 8:16-25)
- November 22. S.....Suffer for Well-doing (1 Pet. 2:18-25)
- November 23. S.....Persecuted for Righteousness Sake (Matt. 5:10-12)

TIME.—A.D. 54-55.

PLACE.—The epistle was written from some place in Macedonia to the church at Corinth in Greece.

PERSONS.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

**Introduction**

The persecutions of God's people are not limited to a particular era or dispensation. Persecutions prevailed during the days of the Old Testament period. Jesus spoke of "the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, . . . from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zechariah." (Luke 11:50, 51.) The Hebrew writer recorded concerning certain Old Testament worthies how that they "had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword: they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated, . . . wandering in deserts and mountains and caves, and the holes of the earth." (Heb. 11:36-38.)

The period from the close of the Old Testament to the opening of the New, was a period of ruthless and cruel persecutions. The persecutions were brought upon the Jews because of their fidelity to God. The persecutions which those patriots suffered for their dedication to the law of Moses and thus for their refusal to embrace idolatry is almost beyond the comprehension and imagination of a Christian of middle-class U.S.A. The spirit of those fearless Jews is well expressed by Jonathan, the high priest, who said: "We have no need of human help . . . having for our comfort the sacred Scriptures which are in our hands." (1 Macc. 12:9.) Mothers, during the reign of terror under Antiochus Epiphanes IV, B.C. 175-167, were prohibited from circumcising their male children, and when they did—many did as a matter of fact—the heathens dashed the babies to death and then tied their

legs as bracelets around their mother's necks, and in turn and time they put those mothers to death. Those of the Pharisaic sect of Christ's days on earth were the descendants of those of the Hasidin or Chasidim sect of prior generations.

When Christ came upon the scene of action, he foretold again and again how that persecutions were certain to come. He asked his disciples on one occasion, "Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink? or to be baptized with the baptism [that is, suffering and death], that I am baptized with? And they said . . . We are able. And Jesus said unto them, The cup that I drink ye shall drink; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal ye shall be baptized." (Mark 10:38-39.) Jesus signified that those apostles would suffer persecutions and death.

The faith of the saints of the New Testament period has been written in blood: John the Baptist was beheaded; Christ, the Son of God, was crucified; Stephen was stoned to death, and that at the consent of Saul, later called Paul; James, an apostle and brother of John, was slain with a sword; all of the apostles suffered martyrdom save John; thousands of Christians suffered martyrdom during the Neroian persecution; thousands of others suffered the same fate during the Domitian persecution; still thousands of others during the Decian persecution, and thousands more during the Diocletian persecution.

Persecutions were not then nor now confined to punishment by death. Christians were reviled. Contempts and disparagement were heaped upon them. Illegal arrests were imposed upon them. They were falsely accused, slandered, in-

suitied, scourged, imprisoned, tortured, and put to death.

Persecution was then, and is now, the acid test of true discipleship. There are today, no doubt, many fair-weather Christians who

would fail to stand when in the throes of the enemy. Let every man examine himself! After all Peter declared to the Lord, "Others may deny you, but I never will," but he did deny the Lord.

### The Golden Text

*"Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecutions."* No true Christian will for very long escape persecutions. The more involved a person is in a leadership role in the kingdom, the more frequent the persecutions will arise and the more trying they will be. In many in-

stances the persecutions will rise from false, jealous, and ambitious brethren. Peter's words under such circumstances are encouraging. He said: "If a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name." (1 Pet. 4: 16.)

### The Text Explained

#### Persecutions from Without (2 Cor. 11:23-27)

*Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.*

No Christian has ever suffered more for Christ, and that over a longer period of time, than the apostle Paul. Further, no Christian has ever established more churches in more countries, and in more cities than did the apostle Paul.

Paul was not without his opponents in the church at Corinth. Those opponents were deceitful workers, men who had fashioned themselves as ministers of righteousness. Paul took no delight in commending himself, but the charges of his opponents forced him to speak of his works, his trials and hardships, his sufferings, and his persecutions. There often comes a time in the life of a Christian when he is morally obligated to answer his opponents, lest truth and his good name shall suffer.

Paul's defense of himself gives

the student an insight into the life of Paul which would never have been known otherwise. The present brief study is actually a lengthy in-depth commentary on Paul, the persecuted. Paul's defense reveals the following:

1. Paul was a minister of Christ more than others.

2. He had labored more abundantly than others.

3. He had been in prisons more often than others.

4. He had received stripes on his body above measure.

5. He had been often in the throes of death.

6. He had on five occasions received forty stripes, save one, from Jews.

7. He had been beaten three times with stones.

8. He had been stoned on one occasion.

9. He had suffered shipwreck.

10. He had been a night and day in the deep.

11. He had been in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from his countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, and in cold and nakedness.

What a commentary this information is with respect to the trials and persecutions of Paul! How unfortunate would be the case if the information contained herein had not been revealed and preserved. Christians should take encouragement and direction from the

life and works of Paul. If he could suffer so much, surely Christians today can suffer a little.

**Cares from Within**  
(2 Cor. 11:28-33)

*Besides those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is caused to stumble, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed for evermore knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes in order to take me: and through a window was I let down in a basket by the wall, and escaped his hands.*

Paul had cares from within. The churches which he had established were a source of concern to him. He was anxious for their spiritual welfare, and those anxieties pressed upon him daily.

Paul asked: "Who is weak, and I am not weak?" Paul meant by this that if a weak brother suffered or abused his liberty, he suffered with that weak brother as if he too were weak.

Paul asked: "Who is caused to stumble, and I burn not?" Paul meant by this that if a brother was caused to stumble, he made the case of that brother as if he had himself stumbled.

Thus Paul declared: "If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern my weakness"—which were in reality great spiritual strengths. He further affirmed that God the Father and the Lord Jesus knew that he was telling the truth. He said: "I lie not."

Paul then proceeded to relate how that after his conversion at Damascus, the governor guarded the city of the Damascenes to take him, but the brethren let him down and out of the city by means of a basket let down through a window by the wall. This was a further testimony to the stress and circumstances of his life.

**Pertinent Reflections**

What if Christ had come down off of the cross? What would be the lot of all mankind \* \* \* today?

More is known of the personal and emotional lives of Jeremiah and Paul than any other characters of the Bible. This is occasioned by their having been subjected to more persecutions and that over a longer period of time than any other Bible characters.

\* \* \*  
Persecutions and sufferings are a spiritual purifying process. Patience and reliance on God rise out of such

experiences.\* \* \*  
Preachers, of all men in the church today, tend to be subjected

to unfair criticisms, summary actions, and want of genuine appreciation. Many able preachers no longer give their full-time to the ministry and the related fields to the ministry. The condition is alarming, and brethren should ask, "Why?" On the other hand, preachers should remember that Christ did not come down off the cross.

\* \* \*

Christ became the more near and the more dear to those who suffered. Through the endurance of persecutions the Christians demonstrated that "the faith" is immortal, even in this world. Those who suffered are witnesses to Christians as to the reality of a life after death.

**Questions for Discussion**

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

**Introduction**

Describe some of the persecutions encountered by God's people in the Old Testament.

Describe some of the persecutions encountered by the Jews in the period between the Testaments.

How did Christ prepare the disciples for persecutions?

In what way was the faith of early saints written in blood?

Name and discuss persecutions other than death itself.

How is persecution the acid test of discipleship?

**The Golden Text**

What determines the frequency of the Christian's persecutions?

From whom do persecutions rise?

Persecutions from Without

Why was Paul forced to speak of his works, trials, and persecutions?  
 List and discuss the characteristics of Paul which we learn through his defense.  
 What lesson should the Christian learn from Paul's persecutions?

Caros from Within

Describe Paul's cares from within.  
 Give the meaning of Paul's statement, "Who is weak, and I am not weak?"  
 In what would Paul glory? Why?

Pertinent Reflections

Discuss the results of Christ's coming off of the cross had he chosen to so do.  
 Why do we know more of Paul and of Jeremiah than we know of any other characters of the Bible?  
 How are persecutions and sufferings beneficial to the Christians? Discuss.  
 What questions and observations should be raised when brethren and preachers are involved in unfair criticisms and persecutions?  
 Why did Christ become more dear to those who suffered?

Lesson IX—November 30, 1975

THE CHRISTIAN AND WORLD PEACE

Lesson Text

Isa. 2:2-4; Acts 17:22-28; Gal. 5:13-15

2 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.

3 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.

4 And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their spears into plowshares, and their swords into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

22 And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said,

Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious.

23 For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you.

24 The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

26 And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation;

27 That they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us:

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said.

For we are also his offspring.

13 For ye, brethren, were called for freedom: only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another.

14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."* (Matt. 26:52.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Mic. 4:1-8.

Daily Bible Readings

- November 24. M..... Peace in Jehovah's House (Mic. 4:1-5)
- November 25. T..... Peaceful Reign of Messiah (Isa. 11:1-9)
- November 26. W..... Peaceful Principles (Matt. 5:1-9)
- November 27. T..... Christ's Kingdom World-wide (Mark 16:15, 16)
- November 28. F..... Christ, The Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:1-6)
- November 29. S..... Live Peaceably (Rom. 12:17-21)
- November 30. S..... Be at Peace (Mark 9:50)

TIME.—For Isaiah, B.C. 758-720; for Acts, A.D. 49-50; for Galatians, A.D. 55-56.

PLACES.—For Isaiah, Jerusalem in Judea; for Acts, Athens of Macedonia; for Galatians, Paul wrote from Macedonia to the churches of Galatia—Antioch of Pisidia; Iconium of Phrygia; Lystra and Derbe of Lycaonia; and Perga of Pamphylia.

PERSONS.—For Isaiah, the prophet Isaiah; for Acts, Paul and the Athenians; for Galatians, Paul and the saints in the churches of Galatia.

### Introduction

The subject, "The Christian and World Peace," is calculated to raise the longings of people who have for decades now been adversely affected in one way or another by wars and rumors of war. Many people raise the question, "Is world peace possible?" Some ask, "Will the time ever come when the world powers will 'beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and learn war no more', as the prophets promised?" Nationwide and worldwide evangelists excitedly explain, in the case of each war or political confrontations of nations, how that the prophets' messages are being fulfilled and that the affairs of nations are hastening to the time when there will be worldwide peace on earth.

The fact of the matter is that the prophets have never predicted that the nations, as such, would beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. The prediction was made of Christians only. Temporal governments have been founded by and must stand by the sword.

World War I was fought to end all wars, and evangelicals excitedly pointed out how that the predictions and promises of Isaiah and Micah were being fulfilled before their eyes.

In the plans for a continued worldwide peace, the United States agreed to scuttle several of its warships to bring its navy to a five-three parity with England and Japan, and for several years it did nothing in the way of military preparation, except to keep up its parity. While the United States scrapped its navy, Japan scrapped the treaty. Japan bought up the iron which the United States scrapped and built up a strong navy and air force. The outcome is known to all. This bit of history is not related to raise hostility of thoughts against Japan. It is related in order to point up two perti-

nent considerations: (1) There were interpreters of Scripture relative to world events some seven decades ago, and they missed the mark just as the radio interpreters of today will miss the mark; and (2) those who expect a world peace through the course of the nations having beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks are being downright naive.

True, a multitude of angels, on the announcement of the Saviour's birth, sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased." (Luke 2:13, 14.) Jesus did come to bring peace among men, but he did not come to bring peace at any price. In fact he warned: "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace [that is he came not to send peace only], but a sword." Jesus came to send peace to those who were worthy of it and entitled to it, and he came to send a sword to those who were faithless and rebellious. (Matt. 10:34-36.)

World peace is possible, but it is possible only through the power and influence of the gospel. If and when the gospel comes to be predominate within the societies of all the nations of the earth, there will then be little likelihood of wars and rumors of war. Men are "free moral agents, and the choice is theirs. The immorality which prevails in the United States today, to say nothing of the state of affairs in other nations, does not bid fair to expect such a desirable state of society to be brought about any time soon.

Many voices are now being heard urging Christians to enter into governmental affairs so as to straighten out the ills of this nation, but the thing that is really needed is for would-be Christians to straighten up their lives and thereby straighten

up the kingdom of God. The security of the United States, or any nation for that matter, lies in its leaven of righteousness, for righteousness exalteth a nation. The

fewer Christians there are, the less leaven there is. The real need of men is the gospel of Christ. Let every Christian teach and preach the gospel!

### The Golden Text

*"Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."* These words Jesus addressed to Peter. When Judas and the soldiers came to the garden of Gethsemane to arrest Christ, Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest. Jesus touched the man's ear and healed him, and he told Peter to put up his sword because all that take the sword shall perish with the

sword.

One lesson to be derived from the golden text is that the sword is disallowed as a means of defending truth or of advancing the kingdom. Another lesson that is to be derived from the golden text is the universal principle that they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Through the means of the truth, the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, shall man conquer and live thereby. (Eph. 6:17.)

### The Text Explained

#### Isaiah's Vision of Peace

(Isa. 2:2-4)

*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 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. And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

"And it shall come to pass in the latter days."—the latter days of this prophecy has reference to the Christian dispensation. The Pentecost of Acts 2 marked the beginning of the last days.

"That the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills;"—Jehovah's house is the church, for Paul identifies the "house of God" as being the "church of the living God." (1 Tim. 3:14, 15.) Here the prophet describes the exalted position of the church. It was in the "eternal purpose of God," and there is no institution or relationship on

earth that has ascendancy over it, and there is no relationship that a mortal man can sustain to any person or to any institution that can be comparable in consequences to his relationship with Christ and his body, the church. The church is as "a city set on a hill" which cannot be hid. (Matt. 5:1-15.)

"And all nations shall flow unto it." The point of this statement is that peoples from all nations (the term nations is the same as in the great commission which reads, "Go teach all nations") would flow into the house of the Lord, the church. The emphasis is on "flow"—meaning that a steady stream of converts from all nations would continuously flow into the church.

"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;" Here the prophet speaks of the evangelistic spirit and program of the church. The converts would be continuously engaged in leading lost souls to Christ.

"And he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths;" Here the prophet speaks of the edification program and spirit of the church. The converts would be learning more and more about the word of God and would the more walk in the paths of that word.

"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." Here the prophet speaks of the basis of his predictions—the house of the Lord would



be established in and go out from the city of Jerusalem. This was the basis of his vision of peace.

"And he [Jehovah] will judge between the nations [this is between the peoples from the nations that flow into the church—Christians of the various nations in other words] and will decide [or judge] concerning many peoples [that is the peoples that flow into the church]; and they [the peoples that flow into the church] shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks I figurative expressions indicating the people's peaceful nature]; nation shall not lift up sword against nation [that is those of the respective nations that flow into the church will do good for evil—they will be men of peace], neither shall they learn war any more." Here is the crux of the matter with respect to world Deace. Those who flow into the church will learn war no more. If a large segment of every nation of the world should flow into the church there would be little, if any likelihood of wars and rumors of war.

### God—the Source of All Nations

(Acts 17:22-28)

*And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said. Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said. For we are also his offspring.*

The above reading is clear and needs little explanation or exposi-

tion. Paul was speaking from Mars Hill, and particularly to the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers that were present.

The Greeks thought that one specific god formed or made a particular nation while other gods formed or made other nations. They were not willing, therefore, to ascribe full power, completeness, and independence to any single one of the gods. They thought of the gods as vying and fighting against each other, but Paul affirmed that all nations were derived from the same source—the God who could not be served by man's hands, as if he, the giver of all things, needed anything.

God "made of one every nation of men to dwell on the face of the earth," and Paul declared that "he [God] is not very far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being."

With respect to the lesson, "The Christian and World Peace," the point here is that God was the creator of all men. He would not will, therefore, that one nation should be warring against another. Rather, he wills that all men and nations would be at peace through him. Only when nations become lawless and evil does he set one nation as his rod of vengeance against another.

### Love—the Source of All Righteousness

(Gal. 5:13-15)

*For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.*

With respect to the theme, "The Christian and World Peace," the point to be emphasized from this reading is that "the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even this: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'" Here lies the solution to man's quest for peace. Here lies the solution to the revolting bloodshed and hatred that ferments throughout the whole earth. "Love thy neighbor as thyself!" What if men did! This old sinful earth would become a utopia.

If instead of love, men bite and devour one another, then they are certain to be consumed one of another. This is the selfish, sinful

course of man, except for those truly converted to Christ. May their number grow and fill the whole earth!

**Pertinent Quotes**

"Peace is the happy, natural state of man; war, his corruption, his disgrace." (Thompson)

"Peace does not dwell in the outward things, but within the soul; we may preserve it in the midst of the bitterest of pain, if our will remain firm and submissive. Peace in this life springs from acquiescent, not in an exemption from suffering." (Finelon)

"Peace is the evening star of the soul, as virtue is to the sun; and the two are never far apart." (Colton)

\* \* \*

"Peace rules the day, where reason rules the mind." (Collins)

"Nothing can bring you peace yourself; nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles." (Emerson)

"If there is righteousness in the heart there will be beauty in the character. If there is beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home. If there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation. Where there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world." (Chinese proverb)

"No peace was ever won from fate by subterfuge or agreement; no peace is ever in store for any of us but that which we shall win by victory over shame or sin,—victory over sin that oppresses, as well as over that which corrupts." (Ruskin)

**Questions for Discussion**

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

**Introduction**

Are the events among the nations leading to a worldwide peace, according to the prophets?  
Of whom was the prediction concerning beating swords into plowshares made?  
What observations should be made concerning the predictions of some preachers relative to World War II and the coming of world peace?  
(Christ came to bring peace to whom?)  
Only through what power is world peace possible?  
What is really needed among Christians today?

**The Golden Text**

Why did Christ tell Peter to put up his sword?  
Is the kingdom to be advanced by the sword? Discuss.

**Isaiah's Vision of Peace**

What time is the "latter days"?  
What is the "house of God"?  
How exalted is the position of the church?  
Who would flow into the church?  
Describe the evangelistic spirit of the church.  
Describe the peaceable nature of the church.

**God—the Source of All Nations**

What beliefs did the Greeks have toward "gods"?  
Since God created all men, what attitude does he desire that all men and nations have toward each other?

**Love—the Source of All Righteousness**

What is the solution to bloodshed and hatred?

**Pertinent Quotes**

What is the happy, natural state of man?  
How can man bring peace unto the world?

**Lesson X—December 7, 1975**

**THE CHRISTIANS EXAMPLE  
IN MEETING TEMPTATION**

**Lesson Text**

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

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Abstain from every form of evil.” (1 Thess. 5:22.)  
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Dan. 1:8-20.

Daily Bible Readings

- December 1. M..... Luke’s Report (Luke 4:1-13)
- December 2. T.....How to Resist Temptation (Prov. 1:10-19)
- December 3. W.....Way of Escape (1 Cor. 10:1-13)
- December 4. T..... Pray When Tempted (Mark 14:32-42)
- December 5. F..... Jesus, Our Heavenly Attorney (1 John 2:1-4)
- December 6. S..... Christian’s Armor (Eph. 6:10-20)
- December 7. S.....Devil Always Active (1 Pet. 5:1-8)

TIME.—A.D. 26.

PLACE.—The wilderness of Judea in Palestine.

PERSONS.—Jesus and Satan.

Introduction

The subject, “The Christian’s Example in Meeting Temptation,” very naturally introduces the tempter, who is designated “devil” in the Greek and “Satan” in the Hebrew. Liberals deny that a real personal Satan exists or has ever existed. Christians in the main, seem to have little concept of this evil personality. Without doubt, there is a place and a need for a rather serious indepth study of Bible doctrines which would necessarily include the study of such subjects as the nature of God; the cardinal doctrines of Christianity—that is the virgin birth, the vicarious death, the atoning blood, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ; the Holy Spirit, angels, Satan, demons, miracles, providence, and the like.

Many questions relative to temptations and sin arise in the minds of Christians, such as, “Is Satan really real?” “Did God create Satan?” “If so, why would God bring such an evil force into the world?” “If not, how did Satan come to be?”

Prior to the creation of the earth, God created a company or hosts of angels, and they serve as the minis-

ters of his providence. To illustrate, God asked Job: “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? . . . , When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (Job 38:4-7.) Observe that the “sons of God” shouted for joy when God laid the foundations of the earth. Adam was not created until the sixth day of creation. Who, therefore, were these sons of God? Without doubt they were angels. Paul wrote: “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.” (Eph. 3:14, 15.) This scripture affirms that God has a family, and part of the family is in heaven, and part is on earth. The Hebrew writer recorded: “Ye are come unto Mount Zion, ... to the innumerable hosts of angels.” (Heb. 12:22, 23.)

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.

Angels, like man, were created in the image of God, and they were, therefore, free moral agents. Had they been created otherwise than in the image of God, they would have been mere robots controlled by some means analogous to animal

instinct. Since angels were created in the image of God, they were necessarily placed under law, else they would not have had the freedom of will. David wrote: "Bless Jehovah, ye his angels . . . that fulfill his word, . . . that do his pleasure." (Psalm 103:20, 21.) Jude wrote: "And angels that kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude 6.) Peter wrote: "God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." (2 Pet. 2:4.) Jesus said: "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven." (Luke 10:18.) Ezekiel, when speaking of the king of Tyre, the personification of Satan, said: "Thou wast in Eden, the garden of God; . . . Thou was the anointed cherub that covereth: . . . Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee. . . . Thy heart was lifted up because of

thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I have cast thee to the ground." (Ezek. 28: 13-17.)

While space here permits only a simplified abridgement of the study of Satan, the following conclusions are in harmony with the other passages of scripture on the subject:

1. Satan was an angel—created together with all the hosts of angels whose number remains the same.

2. He was or became one of the archangels—a cherub in rank.

3. He was perfect in righteousness from the time of his creation until he sinned.

4. He was lifted up with pride—he chose his own will above the will of God.

5. He led a rebellion in heaven, and he and the angels that joined him were cast out of heaven.

6. He was on hand in the garden of Eden, and by his innuendoes and expressions of doubt, he led Eve to sin.

7. He is known for his wiles—his diabolical cunningness.

### The Golden Text

*"Abstain from every form of evil."* This admonition by Paul should lie heavily on the heart of every Christian. All forms of evil are of Satan, and those who conform thereto are servants of Satan.

Christians live in a present evil world, but they must not be of and like the world. Righteousness exalteth a nation, and it will build up the kingdom.

### The Text Explained

#### The Background for Satan's Temptation of Christ

(Matt. 4:1, 2)

*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered.*

Jesus had been baptized by John the Baptist so as to fulfill all righteousness. The Spirit had descended upon him in the form of a dove, and the voice of God had sounded forth from heaven with the words: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The time was at hand for Jesus to enter upon his personal ministry.

At this point Jesus was led—drawn by an irresistible compulsion—into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He had come to the earth in the form of man, and he was to be tempted in all things as

man is tempted. The wilderness was the barren, uninviting land along the western shore of the Dead Sea. In that foreboding land Jesus wandered and fasted for forty days, and he hungered.

#### The First Temptation of Satan

(Matt. 4:3, 4)

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

The tempter, Satan, the father of lies and a murderer from the beginning, came to him. How or in what form he came, that is whether in bodily form or without body, is not known. Angels had no corporeal bodies, and they could not be seen

by the unaided human eye. Then too, as a human being along with Christ, how did they climb to the pinnacle of the temple without being detected as trespassers? To say the least of matters the personality of the tempter was present.

Satan's first temptation was one that raised despairing doubts. It was in principle the same approach which Satan made to Eve: "Hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?" Thus to Christ Satan said: "If thou art the Son of God," observe the doubt expressed, "command that these stones become bread." Satan questioned the divinity of Christ. Jesus was hungry, and the proposal was an appeal to his appetite.

Jesus repulsed Satan's temptation with the words, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The quotation was from Deuteronomy 8:3. Here Jesus gave the very highest sense of authority to the written word. With the written word he was to conquer Satan.

If Jesus had turned stones to bread, he would have performed a selfish miracle. The power of God was never used in this way. Paul did not heal himself, nor did the Spirit reveal to him the sufferings and imprisonments which would befall him.

### The Second Temptation of Satan

(Matt. 4:5-7)

*Then the devil taketh him into the holy city; and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple, 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. Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God.*

Satan's second temptation began with another "if." It was a temptation to vain glory—to presumptuous display. "If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down." Satan knew the Scriptures. They were in his mind, but they were not in his

heart. He quoted Psalm 91: 11, 12. Those who have a flair for pomp, display, fame, fortune and fashion would fall for such a temptation, but not Christ. He did not question the quotation, but instead he replied with the words, "It is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God." For a second time Jesus met Satan with an "it is written."

### The Third Temptation of Satan

(Matt. 4:8-11)

*Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.*

Satan's third temptation carried a third "if." It was a compromise, both moral and spiritual. All the kingdoms of the world, and the glory thereof had been presented to Jesus. "All these things I will give thee," proposed Satan, "if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Satan was willing to sacrifice the kingdoms of the world, as delegated to him by Adam, if Jesus would only worship him. What vanity! Pride and vanity caused the fall of Satan in the first place.

Jesus could have taken a shortcut by worshipping Satan. He could have been king of the Jews and king of the Gentiles, and all that without suffering. Jesus, however, was roused to a point of righteous indignation. "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Jesus demanded. Satan left Jesus. Through the power of the word, Jesus put Satan to silence. The word will work for Christians today.

Angels came and ministered to Jesus. Satan had lost a battle. He would lose others, and eventually he will be completely destroyed.

### Pertinent Quotes

"Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his

brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in

things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered *being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.*" (Heb. 2:17, 18.)

\* \* \*  
 "For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but *one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*" (Heb. 4:15.)

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
 Repeat the golden text.  
 Give time, place, and persons.

#### Introduction

Give the Greek and Hebrew designations for the tempter.

What attitudes do the liberals have toward Satan?

Whom did God create prior to the creation of the earth?

Who were the "sons of God" who shouted for joy at the creation?

Where is God's family?

How were the angels created in the image of God?

What was the result of Satan's fall?

Give seven observations concerning Satan. Discuss.

#### The Golden Text

Who are the servants of Satan?

#### The Background for Satan's Temptation of Christ

Describe Christ's baptism by John.

"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.*" (James 1:13.)

\* \* \*  
 "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but 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.)

Why was Christ's temptation necessary?

#### The First Temptation of Satan

In what form did Satan come to Christ?

What was the design of the first temptation of Satan?

Why did Christ answer Satan as he did?

#### The Second Temptation of Satan

What was the intent, or design, of the second temptation?

Discuss Christ's reply.

#### The Third Temptation of Satan

What was the design of the third temptation?

What characteristic of Satan did his proposal display?

Discuss Christ's reply to this temptation.

#### Pertinent Quotes

Why is Christ able to succor us who are tempted?

Does God tempt man? Discuss.

How much will God allow the Christian to be tempted?

## Lesson XI—December 14, 1975

# THE CHRISTIAN AND TRUE GREATNESS

### Lesson Text

Matt. 20:17-28

17 And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples apart, and on the way he said unto them,

18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and scribes; and they shall condemn him to death,

19 And shall deliver him unto the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify: and the third day he shall be raised up.

20 Then came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee with her sons, worshipping *him*, and asking a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What wouldest thou? She saith unto him, Command that these my two sons

may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink? They say unto him, We are able.

23 He saith unto them. My cup indeed ye shall drink: but to sit on my right hand, and on *my* left hand, is not mine to give; but *it is for them* for whom it hath been prepared of my Father.

24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation concerning the two brethren.

25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the

rulers of the Gentiles Lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.

26 Not so shall it be among you; but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister;

27 And whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

GOLDEN TEXT. — "In honor preferring one another." (Rom. 12:10.)

DEVOTIONAL READING. — 1 Pet. 5:1-11.

Daily Bible Readings

- December 8. M.....Humility Rewarded (1 Pet. 5:1-7)
- December 9. T.....Religion Serves (James 1:19-27)
- December 10. W..... Greatest in the Kingdom (Mark 9:33-37)
- December 11. T..... Last First (Mark 10:23-31)
- December 12. F..... Greatest Profit (Matt. 16:24-28)
- December 13. S..... Humility Taught (Matt. 18:1-5)
- December 14. S..... Job, Greatest from the East (Job 1:1-5)

TIME. — A.D. 30.

PLACE. — Perea in Palestine.

PERSONS. — Jesus, the twelve, the mother of the sons of Zebedee—James and John.

Introduction

A lesson on "True Greatness" involves God's reversal of man's prevailing appraisal of position and what constitutes greatness. In man's appraisal and priorities, the older is preferred above the younger, and the man of high esteem is preferred above the man of average or low esteem.

God reversed the order. To illustrate, Isaac the younger was chosen over Ishmael, the older; Jacob the younger was chosen over Esau, the older; Ephraim the younger was chosen over Manasseh, the older; and David the youngest was chosen over Eliab, the oldest.

In the New Testament, Jesus said: "The last shall be first, and the first last," and "whosoever shall be first among you, shall be servant of all." Paul joined his message with the announcement of Jehovah to Rebecca with the words: "The elder shall serve the younger," and he further wrote: "The children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." (Matt. 20:16; Mark 10:44; Rom. 9:12; 2 Cor. 12: 14.)

The mother of the sons of Zebedee—or the mother of James and John—requested: "Command that these my two sons may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, "ye know not what ye ask . . . [it] is not mine to give." The meaning is that for one to be first, he must serve the most. This position Jesus could not in fairness

and righteousness give. It was a position that had to be earned. There is a great lesson here. There are many areas where Christ's statement, "it is not mine to give," must be applied. For example:

1. One man prays for his daily bread and a degree of economic security, but this is not alone the Lord's to give. The man must be industrious and thrifty before the Lord can bless him.

2. Another man prays for knowledge, but this too, is not alone the Lord's to give. That man must earnestly study the Word before the Lord can bless him.

3. A third man prays for the Lord to bless him in the rearing of his family, but this, also, is not alone the Lord's to give. The man must teach his children and set the proper example before them before the Lord can bless him.

4. A fourth man prays for a noble character, but this, further, is not alone the Lord's to give. That man must be humble, kind, thoughtful, and honest before the Lord can bless him.

The examples could be expanded, but those presented here will suffice. The real point of emphasis is that true greatness is not something alone for the Lord to give. It must be earned and that by the person himself. A father cannot pass algebra for his son, nor can he be great for his son. Just so the Lord cannot credit a person with greatness who is not great.

### The Golden Text

*"In honor preferring one another." To be really great, a person must seek to honor his brother rather than to be honored himself.*

The person who prefers himself to his brother lacks the embodiment and essence of unselfishness.

### The Text Explained

#### Christ Foretells His Death

(Matt. 20:17-19)

*And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples apart, and on the way he said unto them. Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him unto the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify; and the third day he shall be raised up.*

Jesus separated the twelve from the multitude that had been following him. He had a message for the twelve, but it was the kind of message which should not be known and repeated everywhere. He was going up to Jerusalem, and he would be put to death there by the chief council. If all of his disciples should hear, they might provoke a riot in the city. Thus Jesus revealed only to his twelve disciples the fact that he would be put to death. His prediction of his death, the inhuman manner of it, and the fact that he would rise on the third day, was calculated to restrain or to remove any materialistic ambitions which his disciples might entertain, or had already entertained.

#### Mother of James and John Makes Request

(Matt. 20:20, 21)

*Then came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee with her sons, worshipping him, and asking a certain thing of him. And he said unto her. What wouldest thou? She saith unto him, Command that these my two sons may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy kingdom.*

James, John, and their mother, Salome, came worshipping him. The mother's request was just what might be expected of a mother whose heart was set on the material interests of her sons. Jesus, of course, knew what the mother's request would be before she stated it, but he nonetheless required that it

be specifically stated. It could then be exposed and rebuked.

Jesus had previously spoken of thrones and how that the apostles would sit upon them, and the apostles interpreted the words of Jesus in the light of a materialistic kingdom. James and John were near relatives to Christ, and they presumed upon that relationship to have their mother request for them the two highest possible positions in the new kingdom.

#### Jesus Says, "Ye Know Not What Ye Ask"

(Matt. 20:22, 23)

*But Jesus answered and said. Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink? They say unto him, We are able. He saith unto them, My cup indeed ye shall drink; but to sit on my right hand, and on my left hand, is not mine to give; but it is for them for whom it hath been prepared of my Father.*

James and John were asking to be first in Christ's kingdom, and thus Christ's reply: "Ye know not what ye ask." The most humble, subservient, and serving servants of all would be first in Christ's spiritual kingdom. James and John were not asking for such humble positions; they were asking for positions of materialistic distinction and honor.

Jesus asked: "Are ye able to drink the cup," which here designated an assigned portion of suffering and death, "that I am about to drink?" The two distinguished brothers replied: "We are able." They were very self-confident, but they really did not understand what they were saying. They, no doubt, thought that Jesus was asking as to whether or not they could muster the physical courage that would be required for the conflict that would naturally ensue when Jesus moved into the high position as king of the Jews.

"My cup indeed ye shall drink," Jesus replied, "but to sit on my



right hand, and on my left hand, is not mine to give." In short, the rewards of the kingdom were not to be distributed on the basis of kin and favoritism, there would be no favorites in Christ's kingdom. Only those who earned rewards, or were fitted in character and service, would have rewards conferred upon them. Such positions of distinction as James and John requested could be conferred only as they had been earned, only as they had paid the price for them.

**The Other Disciples Were Moved with Indignation**

(Matt. 20:24-28)

*And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation concerning the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister,*

**Pertinent Considerations**

The Hebrew writer entered in the "Hall of Faith" seventeen Old Testament characters. If the first twenty names of New Testament characters were being nominated for a "Hall of Humility," which names should be entered?

\* \* \*

No New Testament character subjected the church to more havoc in his early years than the apostle Paul. He persecuted the church, and made havoc of it. He committed Christians to prison, and he was responsible for putting certain ones to death. When he was converted to Christ, he made a complete

*and to give his life a ransom for many.*

Upon learning of the selfish request presented to Christ by the mother of James and John, the other ten disciples were stirred to a position of jealousy and indignation. They were also ambitious for positions of dignity and honor. They, therefore, resented the unfair advantage that James and John held by their close kinship with the Lord.

Jesus held a conference with his disciples. All twelve were present, and he took opportunity to differentiate between his kingdom and the kingdoms of the world and the opportunity to correct the disciple's false views and unholy ambitions. In the earthly kingdom the measure of greatness lies in distinction, honor, and authority; whereas, in Christ's kingdom the measure of true greatness lies in humility and service. He that would be the greatest in Christ's kingdom must be servant of all.

The disciples would be called upon to imitate their master. He came into the world to minister, not to be ministered unto. The highest honor in his kingdom would go to the person most like him.

change, and no man suffered more, travelled more, and accomplished more in the kingdom than he did.

The history of the church is written with the blood of martyrs. Christians in the United States really know nothing about persecutions from the powers that be. No Christian is called upon to die as a martyr as Paul and Peter and all the apostles, except John, were called upon to die. What a blessing! If, however, such persecutions should break forth, how many Christians would have sufficient faith to stand and die for the Lord?

**Questions for Discussion**

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, place, and persons.

**Introduction**

Contrast man's idea of greatness with God's thought of greatness. Illustrate. Whom did Christ say would be first? Give Paul's message on the subject. Discuss Christ's answer to the mother of the sons of Zebedee, "It is not mine to give."  
Give some areas where Christ's state-

ment, "It is not mine to give," must be applied.

**The Golden Text**

What is meant by the statement, "In honor preferring one another"? What great characteristic is embodied therein?

**Christ Foretells His Death**

Examine fully the message given by Christ to his apostles; why not give the message to the multitude?  
Why was it given to the apostles?

Mother of James and John  
Makes Request

In what way did the apostles interpret Christ's statement concerning their sitting upon thrones?

What did they hope to accomplish through their mother's request?

Jesus Says, "Ye Know Not What Ye Ask"

What was the nature of the positions requested by James and John?

In what way did they misunderstand Jesus' question, "Are ye able to drink the cup?"

In what way were the rewards of the kingdom to be administered?

The Other Disciples Were Moved  
with Indignation

Give the reaction of the other disciples toward the request of James and John. Why?

Contrast the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of the world; contrast the marks of greatness in each.

Pertinent Considerations

Who is the greatest servant the church has known?

Name some martyrs who have written the history of the church in their blood.

Whose name is entered into the "Hall of Humility"?

Lesson XII—December 21, 1975

CHRISTIAN LOVE

Lesson Text

1 Cor. 13:1-13

1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am becoming sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.

2 And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3 And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part;

10 But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things.

12 For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now

I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known.

13 But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three: and the greatest of these is love.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three: and the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13:13.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 John 4:7-21.

Daily Bible Readings

- December 15. M..... Love of Brethren (1 John 4:7-21)
- December 16. T..... Love for Enemies (Matt. 5:43-48)
- December 17. W..... Love to God and Man (Mark 12:28-34)
- December 18. T..... Love, A Badge of Discipleship (John 13:34, 35)
- December 19. F..... Love, Its Test (John 15:1-13)
- December 20. S..... Love, The More Excellent Way (1 Cor. 12:28-31)
- December 21. S..... Love of Christ for the Church (Eph. 5:22-33)

TIME.—Spring of A.D. 54 or 55.

PLACE.—Paul wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor, to the church at Corinth in Greece.

PERSONS.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

## Introduction

The subject, "Christian Love," is one of the greatest themes in all the Bible. God demonstrated his love for fallen man by giving his Son to die in the place of man. Concerning God's love for man, Jesus said: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." In turn, Jesus loved man. He said, "Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you: abide ye in my love." The Hebrew writer confirmed the love of Christ for man by stating that Christ, "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (John 3:16; 15:9; Heb. 12:2.)

*Love is the great commandment.* When during the passion week the Pharisees sought to ensnare the Master, they said: "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" This question had been one of debate among the rabbis for centuries, and the Pharisees thought surely that Christ's answer to the question, regardless of what it might be, would call forth wranglings and disputings among his disciples and others and would, therefore, discredit him. Jesus answered forthrightly. In reply he said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neigh-

bor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets." Jesus gave the right and perfect answer. The Pharisees were put to silence. (Matt. 22:37-39.)

*Love is the bond of perfectness.* Paul wrote the Colossians: "And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." (Col. 3:14.) The thought is that love unites Christians and moves them toward perfection, or full-grown maturity in Christ Jesus.

*Love covereth a multitude of sins.* Peter wrote: "Above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves; for love covereth a multitude of sins." (1 Pet. 4:8.) The thought is that love stretches out as a blanket to cover the sins of brethren. True love fervently demonstrated on the part of all brethren will call forth confessions of sins and forgiveness of sins. It will call forth horror for sins and thereby reformations from sin, thereby actually covering a multitude of sins.

*Love is the badge of discipleship.* Jesus said: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Observe here the intensity of the love that is urged. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:34, 35.) The kind of love that Christ described would necessarily distinguish those characterized thereby. That kind of love would be as a badge of discipleship.

## The Golden Text

*"But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."* Paul discussed love in contrast to the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. The miraculous gifts would cease with the completeness of revelation, but faith, hope, and love, would continue so long as the

earth stands. The greatest of the three graces is love. When the earth is no more, faith will be lost in sight, and hope will be lost in realization, but love will continue. Faith and hope are human, but love is divine, for God is love.

## The Text Explained

### Love Contrasted with Spiritual Gifts

(1 Cor. 13:1-3)

*If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge;*

*and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.*

The Corinthians came not a whit behind any church in the matter of

spiritual gifts. There was a total of nine gifts which the apostles conferred. (See 1 Cor. 12:4-11.) Those with spiritual gifts were quite proud and exulting because of their gifts, particularly those with the gift of speaking in tongues. The Lord's day worship of the church had been disturbed as a result of abuses which certain brethren had made of their spiritual gifts.

Paul wrote the Corinthians: "But desire earnestly the greater gifts. And moreover a most excellent way show I unto you." (1 Cor. 12:31.) That "most excellent way" was love. Thus Paul contrasted the miraculous spiritual gifts—tongues, gift of prophecy, knowledge, and faith—with love. If he had all of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, and even if he gave his body to be burned, but had not love he would be nothing. The gift of tongues, of speaking in languages which he had not studied, would be as sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal, if the gift was not accompanied by love.

#### Love Analyzed

(1 Cor. 13:4-7)

*Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

Paul thus proceeds to analyze love. Love is beautiful. It has in-depth qualities, like suffering long, being kind, and being free of envy. Further, love has no qualities of show or ostentation. Love is void of vaunting and pride, and unseemly behavior or bad manners. Then, too, love is unselfish; it seeks not its own, and it does not love its temper. For another thing, love is not ill spirited and vindictive; it does not imagine evil things of others; it does not rejoice when some brother is overtaken in sin, and it takes no stock or part in any kind of unrighteousness.

Love is positive, cheerful, hopeful, and good; it rejoiceth when truth prevails; it bears wrongs without complaint; it believes or places the kindest construction on the conduct of others; it looks with hopeful expectation for the best

qualities of everyone, and it endures the heavier burdens and afflictions of life as would a rugged soldier.

#### Love Championed as The Supreme Gift

(1 Cor. 13:8-13)

*Love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I fell as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, darkly: but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known. But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three: and the greatest of these is love.*

Love would never fail, but the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, like prophecies, tongues, and knowledge, would pass away. "We know in part, and we prophesy in part," Paul declared. This reflects the divine economy by and through which inspired truth was revealed as the need and occasion arose. At the time Paul wrote this, only a part of the truth had been revealed. Thus Paul could teach or prophecy only that truth which to that time had been revealed. His statement, "That which is in part shall be done away" looked forward to the time when all of the truth would be completely and fully revealed and the miraculous gifts would cease, the miraculous age of the church would pass.

When all truth had been revealed, when all problems in principle common to man and the church had been raised, and when the Holy Spirit through miraculously inspired men had given inspired solutions to those problems, there was no further need for the miraculous age of the church. The complete New Testament, therefore was "that which is perfect."

Paul gave the three illustrations to support his affirmation. He said in effect that the miraculous age of the church compared to his child-

hood, that his present "seeing darkly as in a mirror" answered to the then present miraculous age of the church when only a part of the truth had then been revealed, and that his knowing in part answered to the fact that only a part of the truth had been revealed. The perfect age of the church would answer to Paul's adulthood; it would answer also to his seeing in the mirror

as "face to face"; and it would further answer to time when he would know fully. This is to the time when the full revelation had been made.

"Now abideth faith, hope, and love, . . . and the greatest of these is love." Love will prevail when this earth and the works therein have been burned up! Thus Paul championed "love" as being the supreme gift.

**Pertinent Quotes**

"The fact that the three great doctrinal writers of the New Testament—Paul, Peter, and John—all agree that the highest of the Christian graces is love is remarkable and thought provoking, indeed." (Unknown)

"All three—Faith, Hope, Charity—are of God; but Charity alone is in God. He implants Faith and Hope in us: He shares Love with us." (Unknown)



"Love is most like God. In creation. God is love. In the fall of Adam, God is love. In the giving of his Son, God is love. In glory. God is love" (Unknown)

"Love never reasons, but profusely gives; gives like a thoughtless prodigal, its all and trembles then lest it has done too little." (Hannah More)

**Questions for Discussion**

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

How were the Corinthians misusing these gifts?  
What was the "most excellent way"?

**Introduction**

How have God and Christ demonstrated their love for man?

**Love Analyzed**

List and discuss the characteristics of true love.

How did Christ answer the Pharisees concerning the great commandment?

Love Championed as the Supreme Gift

When would the miraculous age of the church pass?

How is love the "bond of perfectness"?

List and discuss the three illustrations used by Paul to support his affirmation that when the complete New Testament was revealed the miraculous would cease.

Describe love's ability to cover a multitude of sins.

What makes love the "badge of discipleship"?

**The Golden Text**

How was love greater than the miraculous gifts, faith, and hope?

**Pertinent Quotes**

On what do Paul, Peter, and John agree concerning love?

**Love Contrasted with Spiritual Gifts**

Of faith, hope, and charity, which one is in God?

How many spiritual gifts were conferred by the apostles?

What attitude does love have toward giving?

**Lesson XIII—December 28, 1975**

**THE CHRISTIAN HOPE**

**Lesson Text**

2 Cor. 5:1-10

1 For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.

4 For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life.

2 For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven:

5 Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

6 Being therefore always of good

courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight);

8 We are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.

Golden Text.—“We shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is.” (1 John 3:2.)

Devotional Reading.—1 John 3:1-3.

### Daily Bible Readings

December 22. M.....	Hope in Christ (Col. 1:24-29)
December 23. T.....	Hope of Eternal Life (Tit. 1:1-4)
December 24. W.....	The Future Home (John 14:1-6)
December 25. T.....	At Home with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:1-10)
December 26. F.....	Triumph Over Death (1 Cor. 15:50-58)
December 27. S.....	Hope Set Before Us (Heb. 6:18-20)
December 28. S.....	No Tears in Heaven (Rev. 21:1-4)

Time.—A.D. 54-55.

Place.—Paul wrote Second Corinthians from Macedonia. The letter was to the church at Corinth of Greece.

Persons.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

### Introduction

The term “hope” is often used quite carelessly and inaccurately. To such questions as, Are you a Christian? or Are you saved? the reply is often: “I hope so.” Such a reply, however, is an inaccurate use of the word “hope.”

A lesson on the subject, “The Christian Hope,” necessarily calls for a definition of the term. *Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* defines the term “hope” as “to desire with expectation of fulfillment.” *Vine’s Expository Dictionary* defines “hope” as “favorable and confident expectation ... of the unseen future, . . . the happy anticipation of good.” The apostle Paul wrote: “For in hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” (Rom. 8:24, 25.)

The thrust of these definitions is that a man cannot hope for that which he already has; he cannot hope for that which he already is; and he cannot hope for that which is already past. Hope necessarily includes both desire and expectation. Every person expects to die, but he does not desire to die, this is not hope. A good man will desire the salvation of all men, but he cannot expect it, this, too, is not hope.

9 Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him.

10 For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

While hope must always have the elements of desire and expectation, the objects of hope may vary exceedingly. The young woman may hope to get married—here is desire and expectation. The young man may hope to be admitted to graduate school.

There are three adjectives which are used to describe hope—namely, good, blessed, and living. To the Thessalonians, Paul wrote: “Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.” (2 Thess. 2:16, 17.) To Titus, he wrote: “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; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works.” (Tit. 2:11-14.) The apostle Peter wrote: “Blessed be the God and

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a *living hope* by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Pet. 1:3-5.)

Hope is the anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast. (Heb.

6:18, 19.) There is no greater sustaining and transforming influence on man for good than hope. Truly, hope is the anchor of the soul. Without hope life becomes a fearful and dreadful ordeal of existence. The earnest desire and strong expectation of every Christian is heaven, the eternal home of the soul. He can endure the heartaches and vicissitudes of life through his great hope that there is a better and happier place for him beyond this life.

### The Golden Text

*"We shall be like him; for we shall see him ever as he is."* Death is a separation of the spirit from the body. Death will be conquered when each person receives his body again. Paul wrote: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural

body, there is also a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:42-44.)

Within this same context, John wrote: "Beloved, now are we the 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.) While no Christian can know what his spiritual body will be like, he can be sure that his body will be like that of the Master.

### The Text Explained

#### The Earthly Tabernacle

(2 Cor. 5:1)

*For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.*

The "earthly house of our tabernacle" is the human body. The body is dissolved by death, but though it is dissolved by death the Christian will receive another body, a tabernacle, a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.

#### The Heavenly Tabernacle

(2 Cor. 5:2-4)

*For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life.*

Here the apostle contemplates life on earth and life after death. He longed to be clothed upon with the spiritual body which shall be given

at the time of the resurrection. A number of questions can be raised at this point, like for instance, "Is the Christian's spirit without a body from the time of death until the general judgment?" "What is the state and activity of the righteous dead from the time of death until the time of the resurrection?" Relative to the resurrection of the body, little is revealed, and no one can afford to be too dogmatic in his conclusions.

#### The Earnest of the Spirit

(2 Cor. 5:5)

*Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit.*

God's plan for man includes man's putting off his earthly tabernacle in order that he may be clothed upon from on high, and man longs with groaning to be so clothed. God has given man the earnest of the Spirit as a guarantee that he will in time be clothed upon with an indissoluble spiritual body.

#### Home with the Body is Absence from the Lord

(2 Cor. 5: 6-8)

*Being therefore always of good*

*courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.*

The soul of man has two dwelling places—the physical body and the spiritual body. Of the two dwelling places, the spiritual body is much to be preferred, but the spiritual body is not to be attained or provided until the general resurrection day, and that will be the day when death is conquered. There seems to be a state of disembodied spirits—a state of those who die. This state of the dead is much to be preferred to life in the present physical body, but the state after the general resurrection will be even far greater.

### Paul's Resolution

(2 Cor. 5:9-10)

*Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him. For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

Paul's aim was to please Christ whether at home in the body or absent, whether conscious of his presence or not. Paul recognized that in time everyone will be called upon to be manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ. The purpose of the judgment appearance will be that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

### Pertinent Quotes

"But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake." (Phil. 1:23, 24.)

...

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold. I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twin-

king of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 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. O death, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:50-55.)

### Questions for Discussion

What is the subject of today's lesson?  
Repeat the golden text.  
Give time, places, and persons.

#### Introduction

How is "hope" often misused?  
Define hope.  
What two elements must hope always have?  
Discuss the three adjectives used to describe hope.  
How is hope the anchor of the soul?

#### The Golden Text

What is death, and when will it be conquered?  
Our spiritual bodies will be like whose body?

#### The Earthly Tabernacle

What is the "earthly house of our tabernacle"?

#### The Heavenly Tabernacle

By what did Paul long to be clothed?

Why should one not be dogmatic about his conclusions relative to the resurrection of the body?

#### The Earnest of the Spirit

What guarantee does man have that he will be clothed with an indissoluble spiritual body?

#### Home with the Body Is Absence from the Lord

Give the two dwelling places of the soul of man.  
Which place is to be preferred?  
Does a place of disembodied spirits likely exist?

#### Paul's Resolution

What was Paul's aim, whether present in the body or absent?  
What influence did the judgment have upon the life of Paul?

#### Pertinent Quotes

What must happen before one can inherit the kingdom of God?