

BIBLE SCHOOL LESSONS

UNIFORM BIBLE LESSONS FOR CHURCHES OF CHRIST

# Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary

ON
UNIFORM BIBLE LESSONS
FOR THE
CHURCHES OF CHRIST

1976

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

## FIFTY-FIFTH ANNUAL VOLUME

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#### PREFACE

Since 1922, the Gospel Advocate Company has published an Annual Lesson Commentary based on a uniform Sunday school study of the Bible. The series began with E. A. Elam and was known as *Elam's Notes*. In 1932, the commentary came to be known as the Annual Lesson Commentary. The commentary has been edited from year to year over this long period of time by men known for their soundness in the faith and for their knowledge of the Bible.

The four quarters of this 1976 Annual Lesson Commentary divide into the following studies: (1) "Israel's Decline and Fall" (2) "Christ Versus the Law" (3) "Church Problems and Their Solutions" and (4) "How to Deal With Social and Civic Problems." The aim of the first-quarter study—"Israel's Decline and Fall"—is to note the outstanding events in this tragic period of Israel's history, and to consider the reasons for her decline and fall. The aim of the second-quarter study—"Christ Versus the Law"—is to consider, in detail, Paul's argument that justification is obtainable, not through the law of Moses, but only by means of the gospel of Christ. The aim of the third-quarter study—"Church Problems and Their Solutions"—is to study church problems, common to every age, dealt with in Paul's letters to the church in Corinth, and to note their solutions by the inspired apostle. The aim of the fourth-quarter study—"How to Deal With Social and Civic Problems"—is to awaken in us a deeper sense of Christian obligation to those about us, and around us, and to learn how our Lord wants us to carry out the duties involved therein.

The author of this fifty-fifth volume hopes that the lessons herein may contribute significantly to every one who studies them. He is thankful for the opportunity to prepare the lessons; and while the task is no small one, it is a rewarding one. This being the second year in which he has written the commentary, the author is cognizant of how much work goes into its preparation, and how much work goes into the preparation of the respective quarterlies, as well. He is also cognizant of the careful work of proof reading and editing—of the Annual as well as the respective quarterlies of the Sunday School Series—which J. Roy Vaughan, in conjunction with and under the supervision of B. C. Goodpasture, puts into those publications. The work that these men do-behind scenes, so to speak—is enormous. Their contributions to the cause of Christ over so long a period of time are exceedingly great. If brethren really knew the sincere work and dedication that goes into the Advocate Sunday School Series, as well as its other series, they would take heart, no doubt; and they would have even a greater appreciation for those men.

If and wherein this author may be found to have missed the mark with respect to truth, he will be truly regretful. The very opposite has been his desire and prayer. May God's blessings attend this commentary.

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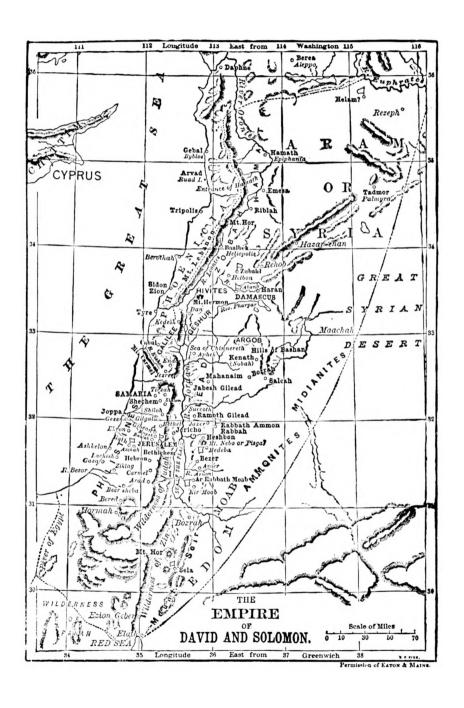
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## FIRST QUARTER

#### ISRAEL'S DECLINE AND FALL

Aim.—To note outstanding events in this tragic period of Israel's history, and to consider the reasons for her decline and fall.

## Lesson I-January 4, 1976

## SOLOMON BECOMES KING

#### Lesson Text

1 Kings 1:28-31; 11:4-13

28 Then king David answered and said, Call to me Bathsheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king.

29 And the king sware, and said, As Jehovah liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity,

30 Verily as I sware unto thee by Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; verily so will I do this day.

31 Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did obeisance to the king, and said, Let my

lord king David live for ever.

4 For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with Jehovah his God, as was the heart of David his father.

5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination

of the Ammonites.

6 And Solomon did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and went not fully after Jehovah, as did David his father.

7 Then did Solomon build a high

place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, in the mount that is before Jerusalem, and for Mo lech the abomination of the children of Ammon.

8 And so did he for all his foreign wives, who burnt incense and sacri-

ficed unto their gods.

9 And Jehovah was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned away from Jehovah, the God of Israel, who had appeared unto him twice,

10 And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which Jehovah commanded.

11 Wherefore Jehovah said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

12 Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the

hand of thy son.

13 Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but I will give one tribe to thy son, for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

Golden Text.—"Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind." (1 Chron. 28:9.)

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January	3.	<ol> <li>Solomon Dedicates the Temple (1 Kings 8:</li> </ol>	54-65)
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Time.—For 1 Kings 1:28-31, 972 B.C.; for 1 Kings 44:4-13, about 948 B.C. Only approximate dating is possible in this period of Bible history. For an understanding of the problems involved, the student should read the

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section on "chronology" in The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.

Place. - Jerusalem.

Persons. - For 1 Kings 1:28-31, David, Nathan, Bathsheba, and Solomon; for 1 Kings 11:4-13, Solomon and his idolatrous wives.

#### Introduction

King David had both sons and daughters, but only one daughter. Tamar, is named-in keeping with the ordinary rule that the name of a daughter was given only for some special reason. Tamar was the full sister of Absalom. Amnon, David's firstborn, by craft and force deflowered Tamar. (2 Sam. 5:13; 13:1-

David's sons that were born Hebron. in chronological were as follows:

Amnon, David's first son who was borne by Ahinoam, Jezreelitess.

Daniel or Chileab, David's second son who was borne of Ab-Carmelitess, the and former wife of Nabal.

- Absalom, David's third son who was borne of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king Gesher.
- Adonijah, David's fourth who was borne of Haggith, the dancer.
- Shephatiah, David's fifth son 5. was borne of Abital.
- Ithream, David's sixth son was borne of Eglath, the daughter of King Saul.

When David moved to Jerusalem, e expanded his harem, and his him nine concubines bore Further, his adulterous wife, sheba, bore him yet four sons after the death of their first born. The names of the sons by Bathshua, or Bathsheba, are recorded as Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon. The order of the list strongly indicates that Solomon was the youngest son David as borne by of Bathsheba. (2 Sam. 5:14; 1 Chron. 3:1-9.) A from 2 statement Samuel which reads, "And David comforted Bathsheba, his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon," has led some commentators to conclude that Solomon was the oldest of Bathsheba's sons, after the death of the first, rather than the youngest as indicated by the list Second Samuel and First Chronicles. When all of the references are considered, however,

very strong likelihood is the that some five or more years intervened Solomon was born; during time Shimea. Shobab. were Nathan born. Further, very strong likelihood is that selection of Solomon as a successor to his father's throne was made after Solomon was of sufficient age to give a definite indication of his spiritual and intellectual character.

Solomon was Jehovah's choice as successor to the throne of David. reads: "And record **Jehovah** loved him; and he sent by the hand Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, for Jehosake." (2 Sam. Further, David himself said: of all of my sons (for Jehovah hath given me many sons), he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of Jehovah over Israel. And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts; for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father." (1 Chron. 28:5, 6.)

At the point of this lesson, Adonijah was David's oldest surviving Absalom Amnon and and apparently Daniel died or else was too incapacitated to eligible considered for throne. Adonijah was thus heir apparent to the throne. Yet Jehovah chose Solomon, David's youngest son, to be heir to the throne. Solo-David's youngest mon had shown himself to be a remarkable young man, both spiritually and intellectually.

contemplation of the unusual character of the young man Solo-mon, the question of how to account for his sterling character and qualities naturally comes to the fore. To whom should the credit go? To his mother, Bathsheba? Perhaps, to a minimum degree the credit must go to her, but for the development of his true integrity of character there little likelihood that she any real contribution.

Bathsheba had been the wellknown wife of Uriah, a Hittite by race who had embraced the Hebrews' religion and who was one of David's thirty chief officers.

prophet Nathan inferred by his parable to David that Bathsheba was a woman of extraordinary beauty and that Uriah was passionately devoted to her. They lived in a house underneath the king's palace.

Though Bathsheba had a beautiful body, she had an impoverished soul. One indication of her impov-erished soul was her act of bathing in the uncovered court of a house in the very heart of the city, where those from houses on higher ground could or would, without plan or design, see her while she bathed. Her immodest and unwomanly act indicates the quality of daring exhibitionism—a marked perversion or tendency to indecent exposure.

David gazed upon her, lusted for her with an inordinate passion, inquired after her, and sent and took her; but he sent for her without any form of craft or threat of violence. The record in Samuel reads: "He took her; and she came in unto Apparently she came willingly. This was a case of adultery
-not forced rape. In actuality, the law defined adultery as the voluntary cohabitation of a married woman. Had David forced Bathsheba, only he would have been subject to the death penalty under the law of Moses, but Bathsheba was a willing participant, and she, too, was subject to the same death penalty. She was scrupulous in the performance of her act of purification as commanded in the law. (Lev. 15:18.) The best that can be said of her is that she remained faithful to David as a wife and bore him four sons after the death of their first born son. Her speech to David wherein she reminded him of his promise to put Solomon on the throne and her later request to Solomon that he give Abishag, David's concubine, to Adonijah is indicative of her involvement in court in of her involvement in court intrigue. In the capacity of David's wife, she maintained a controlling influence over him until the day of his death. (1 Kings 1:15-31; 2:13-25.)

Inheritance does not count for everything in the character and makeup of a person, but it does count for much, especially when it is coupled with example and environment. In a particular way, Bathsheba was the product of both

her inheritance and her environment. She was the daughter of Amniel and the granddaughter of the brilliant but unprincipled Ahithophel—the private counsellor of David whose wisdom was so highly esteemed that his counsel had the authority of a divine oracle. (1 Sam. 16:23.) Ahithophel's granddaughter apparently inherited his high degree of intellect and also partook, no doubt, of his designing character. Solomon's own precocious brilliance may very well have been inherited through his mother from his grandfather.

Ahithophel joined the conspiracy of Absalom, and except for the treachery of Absalom, nothing affected David more adversely than Ahithophel's defection. In a double reference prophecy of Ahithophel and Judas Iscariot, respectively,

David wrote:

"Yea mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, Who did eat of my bread, Hath lifted up his heel against

me." (Psalm 41:9.) In another Psalm, David wrote

Ahithophel:
"He hath put forth his hands
against such as were at peace
with him:

He hath profaned his covenant. His mouth was smooth as butter, But his heart was war:

His words were softer than oil,

Yet were they drawn swords." (Psalm 55:20, 21.)

Ahithophel counselled Absalom, among other things, to take possession of David's royal harem-the ten concubines whom David left to keep the palace when he made his hurried flight from Jerusalem. A tent was raised on the flat roof of the palace, and Absalom lay with the royal concubines in public view. On learning of the defection of his long trusted friend. David proved long trusted friend, David prayed Jehovah to turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness, and Hashai, David's trusted counterpoise, did counteract the counsel given by Ahitho-phel. The counsel called for a hurried march to overtake David while he was exhausted and his rescuers were disorganized. If Absalom had Ahithophel's counsel, followed David probably would have been overwhelmed and defeated. When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was rejected for that of Hashai, he

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put his house in order and hanged himself. He and Judas Iscariot were the only cases of suicide re-corded—except in war—in both the Old and New Testaments. (1 Kings

16:15; 17, especially 23.)

David, without doubt, did have a good and benevolent influence on his youngest son, Solomon, even though his crimes and adultery and murder, followed by the disintegra-tion of his family and his kingdom, bitterly compromised him. In one inordinate act of lustful pasone informate act of fustrul pas-sion, David had thrown away his good name. He was certainly capa-ble of greater things. He was an accomplished poet and musician, a great warrior, and a skillful ruler. From his early years he demon-strated a high regard for Samuel and the prophets. In his flight from Saul, he fled to Samuel at Ramah and dwelt with the young men en-rolled in the school of the prophets. The occasion of David's flight there is the last glimpse the Bible gives of Samuel, the father of the Schools of the Prophets. (1 Sam. 19:18-24.) With uncompromising dignity, David listened to the prophets. His respect for the prophets was dem-onstrated by the fact that he named his third son, borne of Bathsheba, Nathan, the name of the prophet who had so courageously declared to him: "Thou art the man." A significant matter just here is that

Matthew traced the lineage through Solomon; whereas. Christ traced Mary the mother of Luke through Nathan, the brother of Solomon.

Though David had been guilty of grave sins, he did believe in Jehovah, he did respect and listen to Jehovah's prophets, and he did genuinely repent. Jehovah forgave him, but righteous judgment demanded that he reap for the sins that he had

Solomon's birth signaled to David a period of peace. David had become an old man before his time. In his last years, he concentrated his energies on the preparation of plans for the building of the Temple, and the organization of the priests into classes and courses, as well as the musicians, doorkeepers and the like. In all of those plans he was, no doubt, in close associa-tion with his son Solomon, and he must have exercised a very good influence on Solomon as they worked together in their plans for the construction of the Temple. Many commentators conjecture that the prophet Nathan had much to do with the training of Solomon—which may very well have been the case—but, without doubt, to David must go much of the credit for the days lower at the case. development of Solomon into humble young man with sterling qualities.

#### The Golden Text

of "Know thou the God father, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind." (1 Chron. 28:9.)

addressed these words to David his son Solomon. The occasion was a short time after Adonijah, taking advantage of his father's failing strength, attempted to seize throne; and thereby, David structed that Zadok and Nathan anoint Solomon as king. Then David, sometime later, caused to be assembled at Jerusalem the tribes, the captains of all ranks, the officers, and all the mighty men of valor for his last public address.

his remaining Summoning strength, David stood and addressed assembly. He introduced son Solomon, their new king whom God had chosen to rule over them. and he then admonished Solomon and the whole assembly—in

words of the golden text—that they "serve him [God] with a perfect heart and a willing mind." Then he gave Solomon the model, plans, and materials for the temple and urged upon all of the great men assembled that they lend Solomon their support in the construction of it. The assembly closed with praise thanksgiving and anointing of Solomon.

Though David had been greatly compromised by his acts of adultery and murder, he was not out of character with himself when he urged upon Solomon the words of the golden text. Those very words represented the personal aim and goal of his own life, as a Psalm of his of earlier years-and that before

his fall—indicates; he wrote:

"I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way: Oh when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

will set no base thing before mine eyes:

I hate the work of them that turn aside;

It shall not cleave unto me.

A perverse heart shall depart from me:

I will know no evil thing.

privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I destroy:

Him that hath a high look and a proud heart will I not suffer.

Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me:

He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall minister unto me.

He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house:

He that speaketh falsehood shall not be established before mine

eyes." (Psalm 101:2-7.)
David failed miserably in reaching his goal, but he never really lost his lofty ideal, as his admonition to his son Solomon indicates.

### The Text Explained

### David Keeps His Oath to Bathsheba (1 Kings 1:28-31)

Then king David answered said, Call to me Bathsheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king. And the king sware, and said, As Jehovah liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, verily as I sware unto thee by Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; verily so will I do this day. Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did obeisance to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever.

Adonijah, David's fourth son, like Absalom was "very beautiful," he followed in his late brother's footsteps. Like Absalom, he sported horses and chariots. David had indulged Adonijah just as he had indulged Amnon and Absalom before him. Thus when David was old and infirm, Adonijah took advantage of his father's ill health and weakened physical condition to make himself king in the place of his father. He laid his plans for his ascension to throne. He began with a solemn sacrificial meal, and on that day fifty men ran before his horses and chariots. Joab the general and Abi-athar the high priest, together with half-brothers, Adonijah's other joined in the conspiracy.

Now, Solomon was both Jehovah's choice and David's choice for the successor to the throne, David had sworn to Bathsheba that he would place Solomon on the Nathan the prophet of Adonijah's conspiracy and in haste reported the matter to

Bathsheba. Together Nathan Bathsheba hurriedly made plans as to how they would inform David of Adonijah's conspiracy. The called for Bathsheba's approaching called for Bathsheba's approaching David to remind him of his oath that he would make Solomon king and therewith to inform him that Adonijah had made himself king; and at that point Nathan would enter to ask: "My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?" The outcome of the meeting before David was that he sware to Bathsheba: "Assuredly Solomon to Bathsheba: "Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; verily so will I do this day."

David proceeded to call to him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. He instructed those three men: "Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon: and let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel; and blow ye the trumpet, and say, Long live king Solomon." consequence thereby, Solomon was anoinfed king, and the uprising of Adonijah was repulsed.

Solomon, at the age of twenty, was anointed king over a powerful and extended monarchy for that day and age. He was an untried youth who had been raised in the court and lap of luxury, but he had shown himself to be a remarkable young man both intellectually and entiritially. He was destined to bespiritually. He was destined to become known as the wisest man that ever lived. The record of the Kings reads: "There came of all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, who had

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heard of his wisdom." (1 Kings 4:34.)

Soon after Solomon was anointed king, he went up to Gibeon where stood an altar and tabernacle-another altar and tabernacle, together with the ark of the covenant, stood at Jerusalem-and there he offered thousand burnt offerings altar. God was pleased with the offerings that he made at Gibeon, and he appeared or revealed himself unto Solomon in a dream by night and asked: "What shall I In a subconscious give thee?" dream—without waking desires, and pressures-there the greater probability that Solomon would reply from the inner recesses and desires of his He requested: "Give servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this my great people?" God was pleased with Solomon. He said: "Because this was in thy heart, . . . wisdom knowledge is granted unto thee." When Solomon awoke from his dream, he went to the tent of meeting in Jerusalem and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar. (1 Chron. 1:1-13.)

## Solomon Took Wives of Foreign Nations

(1 Kings 11:1-3)

Now king Solomon loved foreign women, together with daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites; of the nations concerning which Jehovah said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you; for surely will turn away your heart their gods: Šolomon clave these in love. And he hundred wives, princesses, hundred concubines; three his wives turned away his heart.

Alas! Solomon, the wisest and richest and most powerful king who ever lived, fell from his high and exalted position, and that under the hand of God who had given him wisdom above all other men. The great kingdom which David, his father, had fought so bravely and sacrificially to build up was dissi-

pated, crumbled and rent within a mere forty year period oi time.

How could a man endowed with such a high degree of intellect, coupled with the endowment of great wisdom from God, allow "his heart be turned away after gods"? Admittedly, the answer the question is difficult to come by. Two principles, however, which impinge upon the problem are certain. One certain principle is that every man, whether king or slave, is a free moral being, and must, himself, deliberately choose to obey God. There can be no obedience to God short of a person's own free choice him. Another principle is that when any man fails to make a positive use of God's gifts, those very gifts will be either dissipated or turned into opposition against God. A corollary of these two certain principles is that a man must with all his heart desire to serve God.

Solomon's fall was not the result of one overwhelming and unexpected temptation of lust, or of pride, or of fear and adversity. His defection was gradual—so gradual as to be almost imperceptible. The Lord's second appearance to Solomon by means of a dream, while being essentially a message of encouragement, carried a tone of threatening which indicated that his heart was already drifting into sin. (1 Kings 9:6.)

God had instructed through Moses that when the Israelites have come into the promised land and have a king over them, he shall not multiply horses nor wives, nor silver and gold. (Deut. 17:17.) gold. Solomon, however, multiplied gold and silver, in fact "he made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones." He also gathered horses in droves, together with chariots and horsemen, and further he loved many foreign His harem consisted seven hundred wives or princesses -in addition to Pharaoh's daughter, his legal wife-and three hundred concubines.

While Solomon "clave unto the women in love" there must have been other motivating factors for his exceedingly large harem. The wives which he took were calculated, no doubt, to cement alliances of trade and commerce as well as to

extend his name and fortune. His large harem was a status symbol.

Solomon died at an early age of not more than sixty, and this fact would mean that he was from fifty to fifty-five years of age when he acquired his very large harem. The moving force, which caused Solomon to multiply gold and silver, horses and chariots, and wives and concubines was, no doubt, motivated by an inordinate desire to excel all of the kings in the status symbols of that day. Solomon had excelled all other kings in knowledge and wisdom and glory, and he would excel them also with power of armies, and horses, and chariots, and particularly in the number of wives and concubines in his harem. Thus the lust of the eye and the pride of life made common cause to trigger his fall.

#### Solomon's Wives Turned Away His Heart to Serve Other Gods (1 Kings 11:4-8)

For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with Jehovah his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and went not fully after Jehovah, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, in the mount that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the children of Ammon. And so did he for all his foreign wives, who burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.

"It came to pass when Solomon was old"—old at the age of fifty-five to sixty! and the result, no doubt, of his gross sensuality—"that his wives turned away his heart after other gods." Solomon had chosen his wives or princesses from the foreign nations, and they worshipped and served idolatrous gods. Behovah had in prior time commanded: "Ye shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." (1 Kings 11:2.) How true the warning, but how dull and sim-

ple was this "wisest of all men" when he failed to discipline his heart!

Solomon built the altars for his wives as a means of humoring them, and thus the hills about Jerusalem were laden with idolatrous idols and altars. Solomon's defection, however, is not to be understood as being a complete renunciation of Jehovah; rather, it was a mixture of Jehovah-worship and idol-worship. He continued to offer solemn sacrifices three times a year, and that, no doubt, until the day of his death. (1 Kings 9:25.)

# God Was Angry with Solomon (1 Kings 11:9-11)

And Jehovah was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned away from Jehovah, the God of Israel, who had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which Jehovah commanded. Wherefore Jehovah commanded anto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

The hills about Jerusalem with their idol altars—to Ashtoreth, to Milcom, to Chemosh, and to Molech—stood as testimonies as to how Solomon defied the God who had blessed him with wisdom and riches and glory above all other men. Passion and pride had cooperated in making this "wisest of men" a dull-witted sensualist who followed his wives, like an excited stray dog, up the hills to their idolatrous altars. To Solomon must go the shameful dishonor of having established idolatrous idols and altars in the city of David.

God was angry with Solomon. Solomon of all men, with his superior wisdom and knowledge, should have known better; but Solomon had failed to control his heart, and thus his wisdom and knowledge and power were a liability to him. With fewer blessings and more and greater adversity, Solomon might have kept his heart with diligence.

As one committed fully and entirely to righteousness, justice and honor, Jehovah could be no other-

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wise than angry. Solomon's sin could not, therefore, go unpunished; wherefore Jehovah said unto him, "I will rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant." Thus the kingdom was to be rent from Solomon's son, except that one tribe was to be left, the tribe of Judah, for David's sake and for Jerusalem's sake.

### A Homily

During David's reign and to the time of the completion of Solomon's Temple, there were two tents or tabernacles and two altars. With the destruction of Shiloh, the Israelites had no central place of worship-no sanctuary. The ark of the covenant was in the hands of the Philistines. The Levites seem have salvaged the tent and perhaps some of the vessels as is later incidentally indicated by the mention of the city of priests located at Nob tabernacle was the without the ark of the covenant and without the ephod. (2 Chron. 1:6; 1 Sam. 21:6; 4:2; 22:20; 23:6.)

Saul had Later, after massacred priest of Nob. the tabernacle moved to Gibeon and an altar built. But when and how is revealed. (2 Chron. 1:3-6.) In the meantime David had erected in Ierusalem tabernacle an

The glory of God filled Solomon's Temple when it was completed. (1 Kings 8:10-

11.)

Nob that escaped the massacre Saul, had gone with Dani's from Saul, had gone with David, and he carried with him the ephod and the breastplate with the Urim and Thummin attached, which David consulted. Sam. (1 22:11-19. 23:6, 9.) Still later, David brought to the tent of meeting in Jerusalem the ark of the covenant. (2 Sam. 6:12-18.)

Solomon, on being anointed king, worshipped at the tabernacle in Gibeon and also at the tabernacle in Jerusalem. (1 Kings 3:4, 5, 15; 2 Chron. 1:3-6.) Thus the worship of Jehovah was conducted at both tabernacles—Gibeon and Jerusalem, respectively—until Solomon's temple was completed and the presence of Jehovah had filled it. Solomon is a type of Christ, and Solomon's Temple is a type of Christ's church, as follows:

The glory of God filled the

began on Pentecost. (Acts 2:1-4.)

church that

### Solomon's Temple—A Type of Christ's Church

Solomon 3 Temple 11 Type o	y Christ's Church
Israel's adversaries were conquered be- fore Solomon's Temple was built. (1 King 5:3-4.)	Christ's adversary was conquered before the church was built. (Matt. 12:29; Rev. 1:18; Matt. 28:18-20.)
The material for Solomon's Temple came from the Kingdom of Tyre. (1 Kings 5:6, 10.)	The material for Christ's church came from the Kingdom of Israel. (Matt. 3:1-2.)
Solomon's servants had the measurements for the Temple. (1 Chron. 28:11-19; 1 Kings 5:18.)	Christ's servants had the measurements of the church. (Matt. 28:19-20; John 1:11-13.)
Solomon's servants worked with the servants of another kingdom. (1 Kings 5:6; 1 Kings 5:18.)	Christ's disciples worked with the disciples of John the Baptist. (John 1:29-37; John 4:1-3.)
The material for Solomon's Temple was cut and sized under Hiram while it was in another kingdom. (1 Kings 5:6-10.)	The material for Christ's church was cut and sized (prepared) by John the Bap- tist while it was in another kingdom. (John 1:11-13; Mark 1:4.)
Solomon paid Hiram, King of Tyre, for the material for Solomon's Temple while it was still in Tyre. (1 Kings 5:10-12.)	Christ paid for the material for the church while it, the subjects, were in another kingdom. (Acts 20:28; John 19:31-37.)
The material for Solomon's Temple was transferred by the water of the Mediterranean Sea to be fitted into the Temple. (1 Kings 5:8-10.)	The subjects of Christ's kingdom were transferred by the water of baptism to be fitted into the church. (Mark 1:4; John 1:11-13; Acts 2:38.)
The material prepared by Hiram fitted into Solomon's Temple without the sound of a hammer. (1 Kings 6:7.)	The material prepared by John the Baptist fitted into the church without the sound of a hammer. (Acts 1:15; Acts 2:41.)

#### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

Name David's sons born in Hebron. Name the sons borne by Bathsheba.

Why is it likely that Solomon was the youngest of David's sons by Bathsheba rather than the oldest?

Why did God choose Solomon to be king

over the older sons of David? Should credit for Solomon's given to his mother, Bathsheba? Who was Bathsheba's father? character be

was Bathsheba's father? Her grandfather?

Who was Ahithophel, and what role did he play at David's court? Whom did Ahithophel counsel in the conspiracy against David?

o whom must the credit go for mon's character and outstanding

The Golden Text

Whose words are these, and to whom were they spoken? what occasion was this admonition

hat did David give Solomon time? given? What

What other passage shows that these timents summed up David's aim in life? sen-

David Keeps His Oath to Bathsheba

How did Adonijah plan to ascend to his father's throne?

How did David learn of Adonijah's plans? What was David's oath to Bathsheba?

hat were the arrangements which David made for the anointing of Solo-What which mon?

What Solomon's first act after was anointing? When what

God Solomon. appeared to did he ask Solomon? What was Solomon's request? Was

granted?

Solomon Took Wives of Foreign Nations

did Solomon's spiritual How status change? hat two

hat two principles show could allow "his heart away from Jehovah"? What show how Solomon to be

What statutes of the law of Moses Solomon disobey?

How many wives and concubines did Solomon have? What motivation probably

mon to acquire so many wives? Solomon's Wives Turned Away His Heart to Serve Other Gods

What did influence Solomon's wives have upon him?

What did they lead Solomon to do? Was Solomon's turning away fr vah a complete renunciation of him? from Jeho-

God Was Angry with Solomon

What grave dishonor is laid to Solomon? What basic sin of Solomon caused Jeho-

nat vasic sin of Solomon caused Jehovah's anger to be against him? That punishment did Jehovah pronounce upon Solomon? What limitation was placed on the pun-ishment? For whose sake?

A Homily

Of whom is Solomon a type? How?

what is Solomon's Temple a type? How?

# Lesson II—January 11, 1976

# A DIVIDED KINGDOM

#### Lesson Text

1 Kings 12:12-20

12 So Jeroboam and all the people me to Rehoboam the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come to me again the third day.

13 And the king answered the roughly, and people forsook the counsel of the old men which they

had given him,

And spake to them after the of the young men, saying, made your yoke heavy, father I will add to your yoke: my but father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

So the king hearkened not unto the people; for it was a thing brought about of Jehovah, that he might establish his word, which Iespake by the Ahijah Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

16 And when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents.

17 But as for the children of Israel dwelt in the cities of Judah,

Rehoboam reigned over them.

Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the men subject taskwork; and Israel all him to death with stones. And king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

So Israel rebelled against the

house of David unto this day.

And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was returned, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

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Golden Text.—"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life (Prov. 4:23.)

Devotional Reading.—1 Kings 12:1-11.

#### Daily Bible Readings

Division of Kingdom Predicted (1 Kings 11:1-13)
Politics Profanes Religion (1 Kings 12:25-33)
Destruction of Jeroboam's Dynasty (1 Kings 15:25-30)
Blessings of Peace (Psalm 133:1-3)

Time. - 933 B.C.

Place.—Shechem, a city in the territory of Ephraim and not far from Shiloh, the place the Lord chose for the Tabernacle during the period of the Judges. (Josh. 18:1.)

Persons.-Rehoboam, Jeroboam, and the people.

#### Introduction

Kingdom of Israel divides naturally, as well as categorically, namely: The United of history, namely: The United Kingdom, a period of 120 years; The Divided Kingdom, a period of some 250 years, and the Kingdom of Judah, a period of about 150 years. The pe-riod of the united kingdom is so called because all the tribes were united under one king—the Saul, then David, and then Solomon. The period of the divided kingdom is so called because the nation had divided. There was on the north a kingdom comprised of ten tribes with the capital city in Samaria and known as the King-dom of Israel. There was on the south a kingdom comprised of the tribe of Judah, the major popula-tion of the tribe of Benjamin, the tribe of Levi, and the faithful from all ten northern tribes of Israel, and known as the Kingdom of Judah. Later, however, only one of those two kingdoms stood. Israel, in 721 B.C., was carried into Assyrian captivity never to return. Only the tivity never to return. Only the Kingdom of Judah was left. Judah stood for about 150 years longer, and it was carried into Babylonian captivity for a period of seventy years, or until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths.

The rending of Israel was bad, very bad in fact; but on the other hand that rending was good. The sins which called forth the dividing of the nation in order to meet the demands of justice were bad, but that division so necessary for the preservation of even a remnant of the righteous was, after all, good. It

was good because it did procure the preservation of a remnant. From a human point of view there were numerous factors and/or contributions which brought about the rending of Israel, namely:

For one thing, King Solomon contributed to the rending of Israel—in fact he was directly responsible it. Solomon had married many foreign wives, and to humor them, he erected in Israel idolatrous idols. altars, and centers of heathen worand those heathen turned his heart away from serving God. God sent prophets to Soloraised up adversaries mon and against him in an effort to deter him from his evil course, but Solo-mon did not repent. In turn God said: "Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but

I will give one tribe to thy son, for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen." (1 Kings 11:11-13.)

For another thing, Jeroboam con-

tributed to the rending of Israel. This he did through his skillful maneuvers and unholy ambitions. Like in prior years when Samuel secretly anointed David as king, the prophet Ahijah met Jeroboam in an open field apart and secretly in-

formed him that Jehovah had ap-

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pointed him to be king over ten of the tribes of Israel; but unlike David who discreetly kept his anointment to himself and continued in his complete loyalty to King Saul, Jeroboam spread the news of his appointment so that Solomon received word of the matter, and put forth his hand to put Jeroboam to death. The prophet Ahijah informed Jeroboam of how that Jehovah would make, or keep, Solomon prince all of the days of his life. "But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand," Jehovah said. Nonetheless, Jeroboam's ambitions would not wait, and in turn he was compelled to flee to Egypt to save his life. While in Egypt, he dwelt in the court of King Shishak and married the sister of the king's wife.

Jeroboam was no ordinary man. He was industrious and also a mighty man of valor. (1 Kings 11:28.) He was sufficiently skilled to maintain the respect of his brethren, the arrogant and ambitious Ephraimites, while exacting or conscripting labor from them at the direction of King Solomon. He was well pleasing not only to the Ephraimites but also to King Solomon as well. On hearing that Solomon was dead, Jeroboam returned to Ephraim. When Rehothe new king went Shechem, to be made king (this was a second anointing for the benefit of those in the north of Palestine who were not at Jerusalem for the original anointing), Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and requested that their grievous yoke of taxation be lightened. "We will serve you," they promised. Jeroboam was much too skilful to allow the request to be accompanied with a threat. Jeroboam had anticipated, likely, that the new king would not reduce the tax load, and especially the conscription of labor. He calculated, no doubt, that with such an earnest request to the new king, and with that request's being accompanied with a pledge of loyalty, the assembly would be led to a spirit of rebellion if their petition should be rejected. No wonder then that on hearing Rehoboam's announcement of rejection the assembly in unison answered: "What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now

see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed to their tents." (1 Kings 12:16.)

For a third thing, Rehoboam contributed to the rending of Israel. Rehoboam was the son of Solomon by the Ammonite princess Naamah. (1 Kings 14:21, 31; 11:43.) He succeeded to the throne at the age of forty-one and reigned for seventeen years. Having been raised in the luxury of Solomon's extravagant court, he knew nothing of the burdens and hardships that the common man had to bear; and, too, he had no idea of how disagreeable and galling was the task of responding to the demand of conscriptive labor. Rejecting the counsel of the old men and adopting the counsel of the young men, he spoke "roughly" to Jeroboam and the people when they returned three days later. He proclaimed: "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." Rehoboam could not, by any other response, have played more completely and foolishly into Jeroboam's hands. Rebellion, therefore, was the negative response of the Israelites to his ill-chosen decision and his roughly-spoken words.

For a fourth thing, the ambitious ad influential tribe of Ephraim contributed to the rending of Israel. Ephraim was a favored tribe from the start. Ephraim, along with the tribe of Manasseh, had descended from Joseph, thereby giving it a distinct position, and further, those distinct position, and further, those two tribes received the birthright Jacob. from (1 Chron. Joshua was also of the tribe of Ephraim, and this fact added further lustre and position to the tribe. In addition, the tribe received the richest and most enviable and geo-graphically protected land grant of graphically protected land grant of all the tribes. Its land lay in the very fertile and central portion of Palestine. The land grant was protected on the east by the desert, on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, on the north by the Northern tribes—Manasseh, Gad, Issachar, Zebulon, Asher, and Naphtali—and on the south by the southern tribes—Simeon Ludah Reuben Benjamin and eon, Judah, Reuben, Benjamin, and Dan. The tabernacle was first stationed in Shiloh of the tribe of Ephraim, and there it remained for

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more than three hundred years. During those three centuries the men of Israel went three times a year to Shiloh in Ephraim to wor-ship, and this fact gave Ephraim

very great distinction.

The arrogance, jealousy, and love of pre-eminence characteristic of Ephraim is reflected in both books of Joshua and the Judges. Until the time of David, Ephraim and Manasseh had furnished the outstanding leaders of Israel — Joshua, Ďeborah, Gideon, Abimilech, and Samuel. Further, when Saul was chosen as the first king of Israel, Ephraim regarded the selection as having been made from its own number, so closely had the small tribe of Benjamin come to be with Ephraim. Benjamin had been reduced to six hundred men, and no women. The tribe was in a hopeless strait until it was revitalized by means of the men's lying in wait and catching wives of the daughters in Shiloh in Ephraim, as per the counsel of the elders of Israel. Those elders had vowed by oath that they would not give their

daughters to Benjamites for wives. When the Benjamites snatched the daughters from Shiloh, the tribe was revitalized and made viable without the elders having broken their oaths. (Judges 21:20, 21.)

Ephraim had refused for seven years after the death of Saul to give its allegiance to David, and even when it did, the people chafed under the loss of their prior exalted position. From a high and lofty position, the tribe had descended to the point where it was subjected to the conscription of labor from its able men for work in the building of Millo. Along with Jeroboam, Ephraim was ready for rebellion.

all matters are considered, Israel was however, rent asunder because God decreed it. God rent Israel asunder because there is strength in unity for evil just as there is strength in unity for good. When the unity of evil and evil forces are gathered together, nothing short of division can save them. Division, that which is so bad and so sad, is often the only means of saving, even at best, a remnant.

#### The Golden Text

"Keep thy heart with all dili-gence; for out of it are the issues of

life." (Prov. 4:23.)

Man is a personality with two natures-the outward man and the inward man, or the physical man and the spiritual man. The physical heart is the central organ of the human body, and just so, the spiritual heart is the seat of moral affections and goodness. As the physical heart pumps blood into the arterial system and to the extremities of the body, just so from the spiritual heart, the moral seat of affections, course the affections and goodness of the "issues of life." No wonder then that Solomon counselled: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." To keep the heart with all diligence is to keep it more than any other keeping-or more than all things and before all things and above all things. To keep the heart is to discipline it with all one's might.

Solomon himself, failed by his own counsel. Though he was blessed with a brilliant mind and wisdom from God, he failed to keep or discipline his own heart. Wisdom from God did not remove him from his responsibility as a free moral agent. He was obligated to keep his heart, but he failed to so do. From his heart coursed driving passions, craving pleasures, striving ambitions. His heart succumbed to pride and passion, and these were his issues of life.

## The Text Explained

Rehoboam's Despotic Reply (1 Kings 12:12-14)

Jeroboam and all people the to Rehoboam the third day, came the king bade, saying, Come to me again the third day. And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given him,

spake to them after the counsel father the young men, saying, Mų made your yoke heavy, but I add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but chastise you with scorpions.

Rehoboam had gone to Shechem for a second anointing. The north-

ern tribes claimed this privilege.

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They did not choose their king, but they did expect to confirm him by means of a public proclamation. The occasion afforded the elders, under the leadership of Jeroboam, the opportunity to request that their burdens be lightened, and they promised, "and we will serve thee."

"Depart yet for three days, and then come again to me," Rehoboam replied to the assembly. In the meantime he took counsel first with the old men and then with the young men. The young men were hot-headed fools. Their counsel was the exact opposite of the counsel of the old men. They counseled that Rehoboam should say unto the people: "My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. . . . My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." Rehoboam chose the counsel of the young men, and when Jeroboam and the people returned the third day, Rehoboam spoke roughly to them and replied with the words of the hot-headed young men. What stupidity this was! What utter lack of sympathy and understand-ing of the hardships of the common man was demonstrated by Rehoboam's harsh attitude and What an unworthy ruler Rehoboam

# The Reply—A Thing of Jehovah (1 Kings 12:15)

So the king hearkened not unto the people; for it was a thing brought about of Jehovah, that he might establish his word, which Jehovah spake by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

God makes the wrath of man to praise him. Though not responsible for Rehoboam's irresponsible and despotic reply, God used the reply to bring about his own purposes as had already been announced by the prophet Ahijah, the Shilonite.

# Ephraim's Pride and Resentment (1 Kings 12:16-17)

And when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children

of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

The pride, arrogancy, and jealousy of Ephraim was made evident by their sarcastic question, "What portion have we in David?" Ephraim had smarted under the ascendancy and rule of Judah from the very beginning. Seizing upon the emotionally charged situation and led by the skilful maneuvers of the ambitious Jeroboam, the Ephraimites led the northern tribes in a secession from the nation. "So Israel departed unto their tents." All Israel except those who were living in the territory of Judah. Rehoboam reigned over them.

# Rehoboam's Further Foolhardiness (1 Kings 12:18)

Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the men subject to taskwork; and all Israel stoned him to death with stones. And king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Ierusalem.

Adoram was over the levy for taxes and for servile work. Apparently Rehoboam was so fool-hardy that he sent Adoram to collect taxes as a summary means of demonstrating how that he was not to be turned from his purpose by the rebellion of the people. He would, as he had declared, resort to his whips of scorpions.

In turn, all Israel stoned Adoram to death. His was the first and the only death in this rebellion, but his death by stoning struck fear to the heart of Rehoboam, and he fled in his chariot to Jerusalem. He was forced to realize that the rebellion

was real.

# Result of the Rebellion (1 Kings 12:19-20)

So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day. And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was returned, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

The student should read 2 Chronicles 10:16-11:17 in conjunction with the above verses. At the point of the rebellion, Judah stood alone. "There was none that followed the

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house of David, but the tribe of Judah only." Soon, however, the tribe of Benjamin was aligned with Judah. (2 Chron. 11:2.) Benjamin's position begs some explana-Geographically, Benjamin belonged to Israel, and Bethel, the southern city where Jeroboam later chose to erect one of his golden calves as a place of worship was in Benjamin, or at least on the line of Benjamin. The population of Benjamin, however, was, in the main, on the line between Benjamin and Judah at the point of the Temple in Jerusalem. Though Benjamin was by kinship very close to Ephraim and Manasseh, there were two compelling factors that caused the majority of the population to align with Judah. One factor was arbition. The presence and influence of the temple where Jehovah had put his name was quite compelling. Another factor was economics. Those who came from long distances for the three annual periods of worship often provided for their animal sacrifices by purchasing animals from those who lived near the temple. This fact made for a lucrative trade for those near the temple, as was the case with the major portion of the population of Benjamin. The area was adapted to the grazing of sheep and goats and the growing of vineyards. Men are essentially the same in all ages and climes, and as the matter of economics is a major factor in making decisions now, so the case was with the Benjamites then.

In a short time all of the tribe of Levi came to be aligned with Judah, for Jeroboam and his sons cast off the priests and prohibited them from executing the priests office. In turn, he appointed priests of those who were not of the tribe of Levi. (2 Chron. 11:14-15.) From Jeroboam's position, he could not afford to permit the Levitical priests to continue their functions because they would undermine his new places and orders of worship

by advising the people that Jerusalem was the place where men ought to worship. Thus, "the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to him [Rehoboam] out of all their border. For the Levites left their suburbs and their possessions, and came to Judah and Jerusalem." (2 Chron. 11:13, 14.)

While there were from the beginning members of all the tribes living in the territory of Judah who remained with Judah, many from all of the tribes left Israel when Jer-oboam inaugurated his new places and orders of worship. The Chron-icle writer recorded: "And after them, out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek Jehovah, the God of Israel, came to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto Jehovah, the God of their fathers. So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, three years; for they walked three years in the way of Šolomon." (2 Chron. David and 11:3, 16, 17.)

The fact remains, therefore, that the kingdom of Judah was constituted or composed of all the thirteen tribes of Israel. Those people knew the tribes from which they had sprung. Anna of the New Testament was the daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher. Simeon was probably of the tribe of Simeon. (Luke 2:36, 25.) To say the least of matters, when James wrote "to the twelve tribes of the Dispersion" he was not writing in an accommodated sense. The original twelve tribes did have an existence within the tribe of Judah.

All Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned from Egypt. He was called before the congregation, and the people made him king. Thus, the words of the prophet Ahijah came to pass. There were from that time onward until the Assyrian captivity two kingdoms—the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah.

#### A Homily

Unity Vs. Division

- I. Introduction
- A. Unity among brethren is much to be desired.
  - David sang of how good and pleasant it is for brethren to

dwell together in unity. (Psalm 133.)

2. The early church in Jerusalem with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer. (Acts 1:14.)

- 3. Paul admonished the church at Rome to "be of the same mind one toward another." (Rom. 12:16.)
- 4. Peter wrote the sojourners of the Dispersion that they should be likeminded, compassionate, and loving as brethren. (1 Pet. 3:8.)
- 5. Paul charged the Philippians that they "be of the same mind having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." (Phil. 2:2.)
- B. The evils of division are enormous and far reaching.
  - The influence and evils of division cannot be contained within a single generation.
  - Many divisions—such as the division in Israel—have been carried forth for centuries.
  - 3. If all the evils of division were enumerated, the list would be too numerous and too long to set forth in one lesson. The list would necessarily include the following:
    - a. Division is unpleasant.
    - b. Division is a strong deterrent to progress.
    - c. Division leads to other sins of all sorts.
    - d. Division has an evil and devastating influence on "babes in Christ."
    - e. Division drives Christ out of the church.
- II. Unity is Possible.
- A. Unity of brethren is possible, but only upon certain basic principles. To illustrate:
  - 1. Unity is possible when it is sincerely desired.
  - 2. Unity is possible when the Word of God is resorted to as the only and all-sufficient guide.
  - Unity is possible when Jesus is recognized as the head of the church.
  - 4. Unity is possible when there is a definite program for the spirit of unity. The spirit of unity should be breathed into:
    - Every song that is sung.
    - Every prayer that is prayed.
    - c. Every lesson that is
    - d. Every deed that is done.

- B. Unity is one thing, and union is quite another.
  - The denominational world has union, but it does not have unity.
  - The churches of Christ are without an overhead or ecclesiastical order of government, but they are characterized by the unity of doctrine, the unity of worship, the unity of organization, and the unity of work.
- III. Unity is Not Without Its Limitations.
- A. Christ did not come to bring peace and unity at all costs.
  - True, the angels sang: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men. . ." (Luke 2:14.)
  - Jesus said, however, "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." (Matt. 10:34.)
  - The meaning is that Jesus came not to send peace only, but rather he came to send a sword as well.
    - a. Jesus came to send peace to all who would follow him.
    - b. He came to send a sword unto all those who refused to follow him.
- B. Jehovah divided Israel.
  - He divided Israel because there is strength in unity for evil just as there is strength in unity for good.
  - 2. He divided Israel as a means of saving a remnant.
- C. Sin is the base of all division.
  - In the absence of sin there will not be, there cannot be, any division.
  - 2. Some of the sins that lead to division are:
    - a. Idolatry, as per the case with Israel.
    - b. Pride, as per the case with Solomon and the tribe of Ephraim.
    - c. Selfishness and ruthlessness, as per the case of Rehoboam.
    - d. Unholy ambitions, as per the case of Jeroboam.
    - e. Personal grudges.
    - f. Want of respect for the word of God.

#### IV. Conclusion

- One observation is that while sin at the roots of all division. division is not all bad. In fact, division may be very much to be prevailing under certain circumstances.
- Another observation is those who are pleading for unity limitations with few or no are

pleading for that which will, if lead the pursued, church into complete apostasy.

- A third observation is that while division is bad, it is not as bad as complete apostasy.
- A fourth observation is that division is often the only means of salvaging a remnant from apostasy.

#### Ouestions for Discussion

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

#### Introduction

Into what three periods is the history of Israel naturally divided? How long was each period?

Why is each period of Jewish named? history so

Name and discuss four major contributors to the rending of Israel.

Discuss how each of the above men made his contribution.

Who, ho, more than any ble for Israel's division? other, was responsi-Why was the division of Israel necessary?

#### The Golden Text

Name the two natures of man. parallel the physical between heart and the spiritual heart. Why must the spiritual heart be kept more than any other keeping?

How did Solomon fail to live by his own counsel?

#### Rehoboam's Despotic Reply

Why was Rehoboam in Shechem?

opportunity did give What the occasion the elders of the people? What was Rehoboam's first answer to the Those advice did Rehoboam matter? elders? Whose this take in

What was their advice?

The Reply – A Thing of Jehovah

Why was this thing "brought about of Jehovah

Ephraim's Pride and Resentment

With what question did the people swer Rehoboam?

For or what purpose use this situation? did the **Ephraimites** 

Who led the Ephraimites in this?

Over whom did Rehoboam become king?

#### Rehoboam's Further Foolhardiness

Who was Adoram?

foolish For what reason did Rehoboam send him among the people?

the What reception did people give Adoram? What was Rehoboam's reaction?

#### Result of the Rebellion

stood alone Which tribe with Rehoboam at first?

Who soon joined them?

What third tribe also aligned themselves with the other two with Rehoboam? Why?

What \* factor characterized the other people who joined the southern kingdom?

Who was made king over the people who had seceded?

Name the two kingdoms which from the rebellion.

#### A Homily

Why is unity to be desired? Name some evils of division. How is unity possible?

does unity have limitations? Give some examples.

Why is division not always bad?

What is worse than division?

# Lesson III—January 18, 1976

# JEROBOAM, WHO MADE ISRAEL TO SIN

#### Lesson Text

### 1 Kings 12:25-33

Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill-country of Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and he went out from thence, and built Penuel.

26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now will the kingdom return

to the house of David:

If this people go up to offer the house of Jehovah sacrifices in at Jerusalem, then will the heart of people turn their again unto lord, even unto Rehoboam king of

Judah; and they will kill me, return to Rehoboam king of Judah.

28 Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold; and he said unto them, It is much for you to go up to Jerusalem: thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

29 And he set the one in Bethel,

and the other put he in Dan.

30 And this thing became a sin;

for the people went to *worship* before the one, even unto Dan.

31 And he made houses of high places, and made priests from among all the people, that were not of the sons of Levi.

32 And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he went up unto the altar; so did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he

Golden Text.—"My little children, John 5:21.)

Devotional Reading. —1 Kings 13:1-10.

had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made.

33 And he went up unto the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart: and he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and went up unto the altar, to burn incense.

guard yourselves from idols." (1

## Daily Bible Readings

January 12. M	Jeroboam's Unlawful Altars (1 Kings 13:1-4)
January 14. W	The Prophet's Disobedience (1 Kings 13:11-19)
January 15. T	Jeroboam's Evil Influence (1 Kings 13:20-34)
January 16. F	The Reproach of Sin (Prov. 14:34-35)
January 17. S	Israel's End Foretold (Amos 8:1-14)
January 18. S	Faithful Priests Reject Jeroboam (2 Chron. 11:13-16)

Time. — About 932-931 B.C.

Places.—Shechem and Penuel in the territory of Ephraim; Bethel, a city in Benjamin on the border of Ephraim, and Dan in the northern portion of the territory of Naphtali.

Persons.—Jeroboam, and priests chosen from among the people.

#### Introduction

Jeroboam was a mighty man of valor—a man of strength and characterized by activity and industry. He was the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite, and his mother's name was Zeruah or Sarira. Concerning his mother, the Septuagint reads: "The name of his mother was Sarira, a harlot."

While construction was underway on the fortifications of Millo, Soloobserved the personality, keenness, and industry of Jeroboam and appointed him as superintendent over the conscription of all the labor from the house of Joseph—that is the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. Though the house of Joseph chafed bitterly under Solomon's conscription of labor, Jeroboam was able to maintain the respect and esteem of his fellow tribesmen while exacting from them.

On an occasion when Jeroboam had gone out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah found him alone in a field. The prophet proceeded to rend the new garment which he was wearing into twelve pieces, and he advanced and said to Jeroboam:

"Take thee ten pieces; for thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, "Take for thus Behold I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee (but he shall have one tribe, for my servant David's sake and for Jerusalem's sake . . .). I will make him [Solomon] prince all the days of his life, . . . but I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and I will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. And unto his son I will give one tribe. . . . And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shall be king over Israel. ... I will be with thee, and will build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel thee." (1 Kings Jehovah's purposes with respect to "a sure house" for Jeroboam were, course, contingent upon Jeroboam's faith and obedience.

Though the prophet specifically stated that Jehovah would make Solomon "prince all the days of his life," Jeroboam's ambitions would not wait. He proceeded to plant the seeds for a rebellion. (2 Chron. 13:6.) When word reached Solo-

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mon relative to Jeroboam's conspiracy, he determined to put him to death. Jeroboam fled to Egypt and remained there until Solomon's death. While in Egypt Jeroboam lived in the court of King Shishak, and the king gave him the Queen's sister to wife.

On returning to Ephraim, Jeroboam led a successful revolution in Israel. A new or second kingdom was organized; Jeroboam was made king; and only one death—Adoram, Rehoboam's chief treasurer—resulted therefrom. Ahijah's promise or prediction had come to pass, and Jeroboam should have felt secure in his new and coveted position, but

he experienced grave fears.

Instead of taking Jehovah at his word, instead of combining his faith with thankful obedience, Jeroboam feared that if the people should continue to go to Jerusalem to worship they would renounce their loyalty to the new government, would kill him, and would turn again to Rehoboam. From a purely human standpoint, his fears were quite well-founded, but from a spiritual standpoint, his fears reflected the kind of man that he was—cunning, bold, and void of spiritual inclinations or depth.

Jeroboam was not a religious man. Religious sensitivity and conscience for righteous principles were not a part of his nature. He was a man of the world with only worldly aspirations and ambitions. He was an early pragmatist who reasoned that the desired ends jus-

tified the means.

Rationalization relative to the central system of worship at Jerusalem likely was not the only base for his fears. He had led his people their redress against high taxes and the conscription of labor, but the people were no better off financially than when they were under Rehoboam. The overthrow of Solo-mon's kingdom brought about an abrupt commercial decline throughwhole Palestinian the Then, too, the people of the northkingdom necessarily had bear the expense for a new capital city for their new order of government and also a new palace king. There was, therefore, possibility distinct that thev would come to realize that they were really better off financially

when they were under Solomon's repressive government.

After the fall of Shiloh, during the period of the Judges, altars of sacrifice and worship were erected on high places in local centers, and Jeroboam seized upon the old practice as a means of deterring the people from going to Jerusalem to worship. Moved by the forces of rationalization and the implications of expediency, he affected grave concern for the welfare of his people. "It is too much for you to go to Jerusalem," he said. Then he proceeded to set up places, Dan in the north and Bethel in the south, where the people should go to worship.

Jeroboam changed the worship of Jehovah, and "the thing became a sin." His sin consisted of the fol-

lowing changes:

1. He changed the place of worship.

2. He changed the object of worship.

3. He changed the time of worship.

4. He changed the priesthood.

# The Places of Worship—Bethel and Dan

Jeroboam chose Bethel and Dan as the places of worship. His choice was not without design. Both Bethel and Dan were hallowed by many memories, and this was especially the case with Bethel. When Abraham had first come into the land, he pitched his tent and erected an altar on the mountain east of Bethel, and on his return from Egypt, he journeyed "even to Bethel . . . unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first." (Gen. 12:8; 13:1-3.)

Jacob had slept at Bethel when he saw in a dream a ladder and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. When he was returning from Haran with his wives and children, God instructed him to "go up to Bethel, . . . and make there an altar unto God." (Gen. 28:1-17; 35:1.)

In the settlement of the tribes in the land of Canaan, Bethel lay in the division line between Ephraim and Benjamin, and belonged to Benjamin until the time when all Israel went out to war against Benjamin. The city passed at that time into the hands of the Ephraimites

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where it remained. The elders of Israel at that time resorted to Bethel where "they lifted up their voices and wept." (Josh. 16:1-2; Judges 1:22-26; 20:26; 21:1-2.)

After the overthrow of Shiloh, Samuel returned to Ramah, his home city, and "he went from year to year on a circuit from Ramah, to Bethel to Gilgal, and to Mizpah." An altar of sacrifice was again erected at Bethel, and there was a school of the prophets located there. (1 Sam. 7:15.)

Dan also was hallowed by memories, but not to the extent of Bethel. In the division of the land by Joshua, the seventh lot fell to the tribe of Dan. The Danites went out as far as Leshem, or Laish, a quiet city, and without defense where the inhabitants were engaged in commerce, and where there was consecrated a place of image worship. The city fell an easy prey, and the Danites conferred their own name upon their new acquisition. Thus the city of Dan became the acknowledged extremity of the northern kingdom—thus the expression "from Dan to Beersheba" came to be current throughout the nation of Israel during the period of the Judges. In short, the location and fame of the city of Dan made it the strategic location for a place of worship in all of the northern kingdom.

# The Object of Worship—Two Calves of Gold

The second of the ten commandments reads: "Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth (Deut. 5:8.) Jeroboam, "made two the image-worship which Aaron introduced for the people at Mount Sinai, and he set one of the calves in Bethel and the other he set in Dan. His action was a calculated disarming way of introducing his new order of worship under the guise of its being a resumption of the worship which the high priest Aaron had introduced centuries before at Mount 20:4; 32:4.) "Behold gods"-or behold this is thy God-"O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," he admonished.

Jeroboam was not an idolater; he was an opportunist. He intended the golden calves to serve as national shrines, or rallying points, so as to solidify his people's loyalty to him, and also their place of worship within the bounds of his own nation. His was an appeal to tradition, but the calf worship was a sin. It was a positive and outright violation of the fundamental law of the Old Testament.

#### The Time of Worship—One Month Later

The Israelites were to observe three national feast days, namely:

(1) The feast of the passover which was to be observed on the four-teenth day of the first month—the month of Abib or Nisan: (2) the feast of weeks which was to be observed fifty days after the passover and thus on the sixth day of the third month—the month of Sivan: and (3) the feast of ingathering or tabernacles which was to be observed on the fifteenth day of the seventh month—the month Ethanim or Tishri. (Lev. 23.i

In Jeroboam's determined effort to keep his people from the worship at the temple in Jerusalem, he introduced his new system of worship with the Israelites' national observance of the feast of tabernacles, but he caused the observance to be held on the fifteenth day of the eighth month—the month of Bui or Marchesh instead of the fifteenth day of the month of Ethanim or Tishri. Thus, through Jeroboam, Israel observed the national days of worship for the passover, pentecost, and the tabernacles, one month later than the observances in Judah.

#### The Access of Worship—Priests From Among the People

After the construction of the tabernacle, God selected the tribe of Levi to keep the charge of the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, to do the service of the tabernacle, and to keep the priesthood. (Num. 3.)

The Levitical tribe was divided into three sections, but only the sons of Aaron were consecrated to serve as priests. All the priests were Levites, but not all the Levites were priests.

Jeroboam, in his determined effort to keep his people from the 26 LESSON III

worship at Jerusalem, cast off the Levites from executing the priests' office unto Jehovah. In fact he could not afford to allow them to serve in their God-appointed capacity. They, of all people, would insist that the temple in Jerusalem was the only acceptable place to worship. When Jeroboam and his sons cast off the Levites from the priests' office, they resorted to Rebeam. The record reads: "And The record reads: "And the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to him [Rehoboam] out of all their border. For the Levites left their suburbs and their possessions, and came to Judah and Jerusalem." (2 Chron. Judah and Jerusalem." 11:13-14.)

priests Jeroboam made among all the people that were not of the sons of Levi. Apparently many in Israel were moved with

righteous indignation and left Israel so as to be able to worship at the Temple in Jerusalem. Concerning "And the matter we read, "And after them, out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek Jehovah, the God of Israel, came to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto Jehovah, God of their fathers." Chron. 11:16.)

The resorting of the Levites from Israel to Judah was especially unfortunate for the nation of Israel. Their removal from Israel left the nation without teachers and spiritual leaders. The people of Israel were destined to become more and more idolatrous, violent, and repro-bate. The dark ages of Israel had begun. Prophets rose in an effort to stem the tide of idolatry, but primarily in vain.

The Golden Text

"My little children, guard your-selves from idols." (1 John 5:21.)

Jeroboam made two images-two calves of gold, and he placed one image in Bethel and the other in Dan. He then called upon the people in Israel to worship at those idols or images. An idol is a thing of nought, an object or image without power to think, to speak, or to

Men of common sense should be able to discern without instruction that there is no power in a mere image, but when John wrote, centuries later, men were still worshipping before their hand-made gods, their idols, and thus John's admonition to "guard yourselves from idols," was quite pertinent.

One does not have to bow down, however, to an image of stock or stone in order to be guilty of idolatry. Anything that a person places before or above God is an idol. Paul wrote: "Covetousness is idolatry," and he also wrote of those "whose god is the belly." (Col. 3:5; Phil. 3:19.) Let Christians today beware!

#### The Text Explained

Jeroboam's Capital (1 Kings 12:25)

Then Jeroboam built Shechem the hill-country of Ephraim, dwelt therein; and he went from thence, and built Penuel.

Jeroboam, upon his being chosen as king over Israel, chose Shechem in Ephraim for the site of his capital, and he fortified it. He then chose Penuel across the Jordan for his second capital and fortified it, likely to maintain his hold on to maintain his hold Amon and Moab.

Shechem lay in the valley between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, and it was the chief city of Ephraim. The city was known for its antiquity. Abraham had centuries before raised an altar in the valley. Jacob later had bought there of the sons of Hamor a parcel

of ground, and there he had digged a well. Joseph's grave was there, and Joshua had caused all the words of the law to be read there; the blessings of the law were resounded from Mount Gerizim and the cursings of the law were resounded from Mount Ebal.

The city of Shechem, however, not without its dishonor. During the period of the Judges, the men of Shechem made Abimelech king. He was the son of Gideon by his concubine of the city of Shechem. After three years the Shechemites dealt treacherously with Abimelech. Though the Shechemites had enthusiastically hailed Jeroboam as their king, he must have found them equally as fickle as they had been in Abimelech's day, else why did he move his capital from

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Shechem to Tirzah? (1 Kings 14:17.) Jeroboam was buried in Tirzah, and the city apparently continued as the capital during the reigns of Nadab, Baasha, Elah, and Zimri. (Judges 9:6; 22:24; 1 Kings 15:21, 33; 16:8, 9, 15.)

Omri succeeded next to the throne of Israel. He reigned six years in Tirzah, and then he bought the hill of Samaria and built his capital there. Samaria continued to be the capital city of Israel until the nation's complete fall in 721 B.C., which was the sixth year of King Hezekiah. At that time Israel was carried into Assyrian never to return.

## Jeroboam's Decision (1 Kings 12:26, 27)

And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now will the kingdom return to the Now will the kingdom return to the house of David: If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, then will the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah; and they will kill me, and return to Rehoboam king of Iudah.

From a human point of view, Jeroboam's rationalization relative to his people's going to Jerusalem to worship was well-founded. could have waited upon Jehovah who had made him king in the first place, but he was not a man of faith; rather, he was a man of self-will and shrewd policy. As a representative of an oppressed people, he had successfully brought about a political alienation of the ten tribes from the tribe of Judah, but there was no lasting alienation, he reasoned, short of a religious alienation.

### Jeroboam's Decision (1 Kings 12:28-30)

Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold; and he said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought they was attached. brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin; for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.

The statement, "whereupon the king took counsel," is quite revealing. King Jeroboam took counsel,

but not of Jehovah. "He . . . cast me behind his back," God said. (1 Kings 14:9.) He affected great concern for his people: "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem," he said. Aaron had made a calf of gold at Sinai, probably like the figure Mneuis, the sacred calf of Helinolis. Associating his action Helipolis. Associating his action with that of Aaron of centuries past, Jeroboam erected calves of gold—one at Bethel and the other at Dan. Then he urged: "Behold thy gods, O Israel, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." The thing became a sin, and it was calculated to far-reaching influence. Jeroboam not only sinned, but also he made Israel to sin. (1 Kings 14:16.) Eighteen kings succeeded Jeroboam, and it was said, or implied, of each that "he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin." (2 Kings 13:11.)

#### Jeroboam's Changes (1 Kings 12:31-32)

he made houses of high And he made houses of high places, and made priests from among all the people, that were not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he went up unto the altern so did he in Bethal coefficients. altar; so did he in Bethel, sacrific-ing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he

The changes in worship Jeroboam made have been related in detail in the introduction of this lesson. To reemphasize them is not amiss. The changes that Jeroboam made are as follows:

1. He changed the place of worship.

2. He changed the object of worship.

3. He changed the time of worship.

## 4. He changed the priesthood.

#### Jeroboam's Sacrifice (1 Kings 12:33)

And he went up unto the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart: and he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and went up unto the altar, to burn incense.

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Jeroboam reserved the first sacrifice, the inauguration of the new order of sacrifice, for himself. He devised in his own heart the time for the beginning of sacrifices under the new order—the fifteenth day of the eighth month. The law of Moses called for the observance on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. Jeroboam sinned grievously. Ahijah announced to Jeroboam's wife: "Behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam,

and I will cut off from Jeroboam every man-child, him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel, and will utterly sweep away the house of Jeroboam, as a man that sweepeth away dung, till it be all gone." (1 Kings 14:10.) When Baasha assassinated Nadab, the son of Jeroboam, he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed. Ahijah's announcement came to pass. Jeroboam paid a terrible price for his presumptuous sins.

#### A Homily

#### Scriptural Worship

#### I. Introduction

- A. Man is a worshipful being.
  - 1. All men worship.
  - Multitudes, even today, worship the gods of nature, and they still bow to images of stock and stone.
  - 3. The angel that John saw said: "Worship God." (Rev. 19:10.)
  - No man can hold any hope for himself beyond the grave unless he is a consecrated worshipper of God.
- B. God is a spirit, and those who worship him "must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:24.)
- C. Worship may be defined as honor, reverence, and homage in thoughts and in feelings and in acts, paid by man to God.
  - Observe that worship is a thing to be paid to God.
  - 2. Worship is not just an inward feeling.
  - While worship involves attitudes and feelings, it also demands expression, and it requires action.
  - 4. Worship within itself is not necessarily acceptable.
    - a. Some worship may be classified as vain worship. (Matt. 15:19.)
    - b. Some worship may be classified as ignorant worship. (Acts 3:17.)
    - c. Some worship may be classified as true worship.
- II. Prerequisites of Acceptable Worship.
- In every dispensation, there have been certain prerequisites of acceptable worship.
  - For one thing, the worship

- must be that—and only that —which is due God.
- For a second thing, the worship must proceed from the heart—the seat of one's affections.
  - a. The prophet Joel called upon the people of Judah to "rend your heart, and not your garments," or not your garments only. (Joel 2:12-14.)
  - b. The church at Ephesus was condemned because it was without feeling—that is the hearts of the people were not actually involved in the work and worship characteristic of them. (Rev. 2:1-7.)
- B. God has always been jealous of the kind of worship that men should offer to him.
  - 1. The kind of worship which he has demanded includes the how, the when, and the where.
  - Only God, himself, knows the kind of worship that is due God.
- C. There are numerous instances that can be cited which show that God is jealous for the how, the when, and the where of worship. To cite a few:
  - 1. God consumed Nadab and Abihu for having violated the "how" of worship. (Lev. 10:1-11.)
  - God had not respect for Cain's worship because the "how" too, violated is worship—that the failure to make a blood sacrifice. (Gen. 3:3-5.)
  - God's anger was kindled against David and Uzzah for

David's presumption in worship. (2 Sam. 6.)

God utterly destroyed house of Jeroboam for the his having changed:

- a. The place of worshipb. The object of worship The time of worship
- d. The priesthood.

#### III. Conclusion

- A. God is still jealous for the how, the when, and the where of worship.
  - Respecting the "how" of New Testament worship, the worship must proceed from humble and sincere heart.
  - "when" Respecting the worship, the worship must be daily with a special observ-

ance each first day of week.

- 3. Respecting the "where" of worship, the worship must be within the church that Christ purchased with his blood.
  - The worship cannot be denomination within a with its man-made innovations.
  - b. The worship cannot be church-that outside the is a person cannot be a Christian and an acceptable worshipper outside the church.
- Christians should learn a lesson from Nadab and Abihu, from Cain, from David and Uzzah, and from Jeroboam.

#### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

Whose son was Ieroboam?

these places?

Jeroboam's Describe personality and

character. What office did he hold under Solomon? In what way did God send Jeroboam the message that he was to be king over

hat promise did boam? ten tribes of Israel? What God make to Iero-

Solomon After learned of Ieroboam's conspiracy, where did Jeroboam go? transpired the events that upon

Jeroboam's return. What were Jeroboam's fears concerning

the people? How did Jeroboam rationalize changes in the worship of Jehovah?

What four factors constituted the sin Jeroboam?

The Places of Worship-Bethel and Dan What places did Jeroboam choose places of worship for Israel?
Why did these places especially
Jeroboam's design? as fit into What events had taken place at each of

#### The Object of Worship-Two Calves of Gold

What guise did Jeroboam use to introduce the calf-worship? How was Jeroboam an opportunist? How was this act a sin?

The Time of Worship-One Month Later

Name the three national feast days which Jehovah had commanded for the people.

How ow did Jeroboam arrange the feast days in his new system?

#### The Access of Worship

What were God's commandments Israel concerning the priesthood? What was Jeroboam's reason for off the Levites from their priestly office? casting

#### Jeroboam's Decision

What statement reveals much about Jero-boam's character? What factors made Jeroboam's sin such a far-reaching one?

#### Jeroboam's Changes

the changes that Jeroboam made Name in the worship.

#### Jeroboam's Sacrifice

Who made the first sacrifice in the new order of worship? (I Kings 12:33.) By whom and to whom was Iehovah's pronouncement of punishment upon Jeroboam made?

#### A Homily

prerequisites of acceptable some worship.

Give some examples of God's jealousy the how, the when, and the where for worship.

Is God jealous today of the how. when, and the where of worship?

30 Lesson IV

## Lesson IV - January 25, 1976

## WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES

#### Lesson Text

1 Kings 15:25-30; 16:23-26

25 And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah; and he reigned over Israel two years.

26 And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

27 And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon

were laying siege to Gibbethon. 28 Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him,

and reigned in his stead.

29 And it came to pass that, as soon as he was king, he smote all the house of Jeroboam: he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him; according unto the saying of Jehovah, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite;

Golden Text.—"Sin is a reproach Devotional Reading.—1 Kings 15:16-22.

30 For the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and wherewith he made Israel to sin, because of his provocation wherewith he provoked Jehovah, the God of Israel, to anger.

23 In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, and reigned twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.

24 And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver; and he built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill. Samaria.

of the hill, Samaria.
25 And Omri did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and dealt wickedly above all that were

before him.

26 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sins wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke Jehovah, the God of Israel, to anger with their vanities.

to any people.' (Prov. 14:34.)

# Daily Bible Readings

2 tilly 212 ie iteutilings	
January 19. M	Wicked King Rebuked (1 Kings 14:1-16)
January 20. T	Other Wicked Kings (1 Kings 15:1-34)
January 22. T	
January 23. F	Lessons for Us (Rom. 10:1-10)
January 24. S	Warnings to Spiritual Israel (Rom. 11:1-22)
	Overthrow Decreed (Amos 4:6-13)

Time.—For 1 Kings 15:25-30, 910 B.C.; for 1 Kings 16:23-26, 875 B.C. Places.—For 1 Kings 15:25-30, Shechem or Tirzah in the tribe of Ephraim; for 1 Kings 16:23-26, Samaria in Ephraim was made capital of the nation of Israel.

Persons.—For 1 Kings 15:25-30, Nadab, king of Israel and Baasha his conspirator; for 1 Kings 16:23-26, Tibni and Omri.

#### Introduction

Jeroboam not only sinned, but he also made Israel to sin. The prophet Ahijah announced: "He [Jehovah] will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, which he hath sinned, and wherewith he hath made Israel to sin." Eighteen kings succeeded Jeroboam, and the prophets and writers either said or implied of each, except Hoshea, that "he walked in all the way of Jero-

boam the son of Nebat, and in his sins wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke Jehovah, the God of Israel, to anger with their vanities." (1 Kings 14:16; 2 Kings 17:1-2; 1 Kings 16:26.) A very fitting text for the subject of this lesson, "Wickedness in High Places," would be: "He departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin:

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but he walked therein." (2 Kings 13:11.)

At the close of last Sunday's lesson, Jeroboam had set up his two calves of gold, one at Bethel and the other at Dan, and he had ordained a feast for the children of Israel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, which date was derived not from Jehovah but of his own heart, and he went up unto the altar to burn sacrifices.

Having introduced grave dastardly innovations, and standing by the altar of his own making, Jeroboam was in the daring act of assuming sacerdotal functions, such functions as belonged only to the priests of the tribe of Levi, when a prophet out of Judah, emerging through the crowd, cried against the altar, "O altar, thus saith Jehovah: Behold, a son shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he sacrifice the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall they burn upon thee." The prophet gave a sign as a means of confirming his message: "Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out," the prophet said; but the king was not to be frightened by such an announcement. In the true character of a usurper and tyrant who knows only the power of force, the king, putting forth his hand, commanded: "Lay hold on him," but suddenly his hand was dried up, and he could not draw it back to him. In conjunction with that miracle, altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of Jehovah."

King Jeroboam earnestly entreated the man of God relative to his withered hand. "Entreat now the favor of Jehovah thy God," he said, "and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me again." So, the prophet "entreated Jehovah, and the king's hand was restored."
Now, the pronouncement of the prophet from Judah, and the three miracles performed by him in sup-port of his pronouncement, were from Jehovah in an effort to deter King Jeroboam from his shameless, highhanded, and wicked course, but even after the encounter with the prophet, "Jeroboam reprophet, "Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again from among all the people priests of the high places." (1 Kings 13:3, 4-6, 33.)

Time passed: just how much time is not known, but Jeroboam had already moved his capital from Shechem to Tirzah. (1 Kings 14:17.) His son Abijah fell sick. Though the son is called a "child," he should not be thought of as an infant or as one very young. One meaning of the term "child" is "a person not yet of legal age." Abijah was Jeroboam's oldest son, the crown prince, as indicated by the statement, "All Israel shall mourn for him." He was, no doubt, born before Jeroboam left Egypt. Further, he was of the age of accountability, for the prophet Ahijah said: "He only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward Jehovah." The words of the prophet imply that Abijah was not only a young man of piety, but also one who dissented from his father's unlawful policies. A tradition among the Rabbis of the Southern Kingdom is to the effect that the young man, in disobedience to his father's command, refused to hinder people from the Northern Kingdom who traveled to Jerusalem to keep the feasts.

Jeroboam had "done evil above all that were before him," and the illness of his beloved son Abijah was judicial in nature. The finger of God was in the son's illness as one of the penalties of Jeroboam's disobedience. If someone inquires, did Jehovah cause a pious son to suffer for the sins of a wicked father, the fact should be stressed that Abijah was approved of God, and his good future was determined.

The mother of Abijah, upon the suggestion of Jeroboam, went in disguise to Shiloh to the prophet Ahijah to inquire. "What shall become of the child?" Jehovah appeared to Ahijah in advance of the Queen's arrival and gave him a message to be delivered to Jeroboam. Abijah would die when the mother's feet entered the city, the prophet announced. Further, the prophet said: "Go tell Jeroboam, thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel, and rent the kingdom away from

LESSON I

the house of David, and gave it to thee, and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes, but has done evil above all that were before thee, and hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back: therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every man-child, him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel, and will utterly sweep away the house of Jeroboam, as a man sweepeth away dung, till it be all gone." (1 Kings 14:1, 2, 4, 5, 12, 7-10.)

Jeroboam reigned twenty-two years, and Nadab his son reigned in his stead. Nadab's reign was short—only two years in fact. He did evil as his father had done, and Baasha, the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him and smote him at Gibbethon and reigned in his stead. Baasha in keeping with the prophet Ahi-

jah's pronouncement, proceeded to smite all of the house of Jeroboam "He left not to Jeroboam any that breathed." (1 Kings 15:25-29.)

What a sad commentary on the life of Jeroboam, a man chosen by Jehovah to lead and command his people! What a sad and foolish forfeiture Jeroboam made of Jehovah's promise to build him a sure house as he had built for David Jehovah had said: "If thou will hearken unto all that I command thee ... as David my servant did . . . I will be with thee, and will build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee." What a price Jeroboam paid for his short and inglorious reign

(1 Kings 11:37-38.)
Jeroboam's rebellious and evil influence blazed a trail of violence, bloodshed, and rebellion throughout the Old Testament period. The trail continued through the intertestament period and finally came to an end with the woman at the well and the preaching of Philip to

the Samaritans.

#### The Golden Text

"Sin is a reproach to any people."

(Prov. 14:34.)

Whatever is sin to or in an individual is also sin to a nation is calted, but such righteousness must begin with the individual persons who make up the nation. There is no such thing as a Christian nation. If all who make up a nation were righteous, or even if the majority were, a nation could

be said to be characterized by right teousness, and it would become exalted through the righteousness of the people that make up the nation. The thoughtful person will recognize that the increasing immorality, dishonesty, and crime characteristic of the United States of America stem from the people themselves. Christians should ask themselves the question as to where their influence actually lies.

# The Text Explained

#### Baasha Assassinates Nadab (1 Kings 15:25-28)

And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah; and he reigned over Israel two years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin. And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon. Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha

slay him, and reigned in his stead.

Having related the history of the kings of Judah from Rehoboam to the death of Asa (chapters 14:21-15:24), the author of First Kings turns to record the contemporary history of the kings of Israel, which included Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri. Though the accounts of these five kings are quite brief, they show how the reigns were characterized by the blackest of crimes, namely, conspiracy and bloodshed. The wicked were punished with the rod of the wicked.

Nadab, the son of Jeroboam, reigned two years or less. He was evil as his father was, and Baasha

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assassinated Nadab. The dastardly deed was committed at Gibbethon, a city in Dan, which had been formerly a Levitical city. Jeroboam had manifested contempt for constituted authority, and the same contempt came in turn to be visited upon his son. Within a single generation the entire Jeroboam dynasty was destroyed from off the face of the earth. What an end to a dynasty which could have had a sure house as David had!

### Baasha Smites All the House of Jeroboam (1 Kings 15:29, 30)

And it came to pass that, as soon as he was king, he smote all the house of Jeroboam: he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him; according unto the saying of Jehovah, which, he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite; for the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and wherewith he made Israel to sin, because of his provocation wherewith he provoked Jehovah, the God of Israel to anger.

Baasha smote all the house of Jeroboam. He left not to Jeroboam any that breathed—that is he destroyed both males and females of the house of Jeroboam. The destruction was in keeping with the word of Jehovah which he had spoken by the prophet Ahijah. Baasha executed his ruthless massacres in order that he could maintain his own security. His seat and sovereignty were not safe and secure, he no doubt reasoned, so long as a single descendant of Jeroboam was left alive. The prophet Ahijah, speaking for Jehovah, had said: "I will utterly sweep away the house of Jeroboam, as a man sweepeth away dung, till it be all gone." (I Kings 14:10.) The house of Jeroboam was all gone. His son Nadab had been no better than himself. Nadab, too, had provoked Jehovah to anger as Jeroboam had done.

#### Wars Between Israel and Judah Continue (1 Kings 15:31-33)

Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the books of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of

Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, and reigned twenty and four years.

The intent of the author in these statements was to show that war had prevailed between the northern and southern kingdoms all of the days from Jeroboam and Rehoboam to the days of Baasha and Asa. Jeroboam reigned twenty-two years; Nadab reigned two years; and Baasha reigned twenty-four years—a total of forty-eight years or less.

"Baasha slept with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah; and Elah his son reigned in his stead." (1 Kings 16:5.) Elah's reign, like Nadab's reign was short—a duration of only two years. He, too, was evil. He departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, and further he gave him?elf to debauchery and drunkenness. Instead of his being with his army on the occasion of his death, he was in the house of Arza—probably allured there by Arza—probably allured there by Arza—drinking himself to drunkenness when Zimri, the captain of half of the chariots, assassinated him. As Baasha, Elah's father, had conspired against Nadab, so Zimri conspired against Elah, Baasha's son. Zimri only did what Baasha had done, and thus blood took hold of blood. The case was that the wicked rose up to punish the wicked.

Zimri was even more ruthless than Baasha had been. He not only put to death all of Baasha's descendants, but he also put to death all who would resent Elah's having been murdered. Zimri's action was the fulfillment of Jehovah's word by the prophet Jehu, but, of course, Zimri had no thought or intent of fulfilling the word spoken by the prophet.

### Omri Becomes King (1 Kings 16:23-26)

In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, and reigned twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah. And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver; and he built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill, Samaria.

Zimri, Elah's murderer, reigned only seven days. When word of Zimri's conspiracy had spread, "All Israel made Omri, the captain of

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the host, king over Israel that day in camp. And Omri went up to Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah," the capital. When Zimri saw his plight, he went into the palace, or king's house, and burnt it over him with fire. This was a desperate act and demonstrated his contempt of death. Adolf Hitler was not the first to make for himself and those with him, a funeral of fire.

With the army's choice of Omri for king, the army divided. Those under Omri's command chose him, but others of the military chose Tibni, the son of Ginath. Thus a civil war broke out which seems to have lasted more than four years. The text states, "So Tibni died, and Omri reigned." Josephus recorded

that Tibni was slain.

Omri reigned twelve years. He reigned in Tirzah for the first six years, but during some four years or more of this time, anarchy prevailed. At the close of the civil war, he bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer, and he built and fortified there his palace and made the city the capital of Israel. A summary of Omri's acts should include the following:

 Omri was selected king over Israel by the army under his command.

2. A civil war ensued for a period of some four years or more, and Omri came out the victor. He thus became the sixth king of Israel.

3. Instead of rebuilding the palace at Tirzah which Zimri had

burnt over himself, and instead of restoring the embattled fortifications of the capital city, Omri chose a new city for the capital of the nation and a new site for the king's palace.

4. The place or city chosen was called Samaria, thus Israel in time had three different capitals. The first was Shechem, the second was Tirzah, and the third was Samaria.

uniru was Samaria.

 Samaria continued to be the capital of Israel until the nation fell to the Assyrians in 721 B.C.

6. Without question, Samaria was a superior location to the other two capitals. It was almost impregnable as was evidenced by the fact that the city held out against the Assyrians for three years.

King Omri is infamously known for his having been more evil than all the kings before him. He walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, and he exceeded Jeroboam in the matter of evil. The prophet Micah wrote, some seventy years later, of how "the statutes of Omri are kept, and all of the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their coun-(Mic. The 6:16.) of Omri" were, therefore, a further departure from the faith and worship which King Jeroboam had so ingloriously corrupted. Omri, doubt, had systematized and finalized the idolatrous calf worship bevond that which Jeroboam had instituted.

## A Homily

# The Punishment of the Wicked by the Wicked

#### I. Introduction

- A. One universal law of heaven and earth is that the innocent suffer for the guilty.
- B. Another universal law of heaven and earth is that God will not clear the wicked.
  - Moses admonished: "Keep thee far away from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked." (Ex. 23:7.)
  - 2. We are not to understand that God delights in the condemnation of the wicked.

- In Ezekiel, we read: "As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked."
- wicked must 3. The purge themselves. Thus wrote: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isa. 55:7.)
- C. A third universal law is that the wicked punish the wicked.
  - 1. Solomon wrote: "The righteousness of the perfect shall

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direct his way; but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness." (Prov. 11:5.)

- Solomon also wrote: "The righteous of the upright shall deliver them; but the treacherous shall be taken in their own iniquity." (Prov. 11:6.)
- 3. Paul wrote: "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." (Gal. 6:7-8.)
- Jesus said: "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." (Matt. 7:2.)
- II. The Wicked Punish the Wicked.
- A. The case of the early kings of Israel confirm the fact that the wicked punish the wicked.
  - Jeroboam in his haste to become king over Israel, rebelled against constituted authority, and in turn Baasha rebelled against Jeroboam's son Nadab and slew him. (1 Kings 15:25-30.)
  - Baasha assassinated Nadab and slew all of his house, and in turn Zimri assassinated Elah, Baasha's son, and slew all of his house together with all who in any way resented the murder. (1 Kings 15:8-14.)
  - 3. The army turned against Zimri, and he burned the castle upon himself. (1 Kings 15:15-20.)
- B. God chose Assyria, a wicked and ruthless nation, to serve as his battle-ax with which to punish sinful Israel.
  - 1. God said: "Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation! I will send him against a profane nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets." (Isa. 10:5, 6.)
  - Assyria, however, did not intend to so serve Jehovah's purpose.

3. Jehovah said: "Howbeit he [Assyria] meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few. For he saith, Are not my princes all of them kings?" (Isa. 10:7, 8.)

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4. The king of Assyria carried Israel away unto Assyria and put them in Halah, and on the harbor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Modes.

5. Jehovah caused Assyria to do this because Israel "obeyed not the voice of Jehovah their God." (2 Kings 18:9-12.)

C. God chose the Chaldeans, an arrogant, and bitter and hasty nation, to serve as his caldron—his washing pot—so as to boil out the idolatrous sins of Judah.

1. Jehovah asked Jeremiah, "What seest thou?" Jeremiah said: "I see a boiling caldron: and the face thereof is from the north." (Jer. 1:13.)

2. Then Jehovah said: "Out of the north [that is from Babylon] evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land." (Jer. 1:14.)

- 3. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, Jehovah revealed to Jeremiah that "the whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years." (Jer. 25:11.)
- 4. All the prophecies of Jeremiah concerning Babylon came to pass.
- The Chaldean nation completely destroyed the city of Jerusalem and also Solomon's Temple.

#### III. Conclusion

- A. We should observe that the use of the wicked as instruments of punishment against other wicked does not necessarily turn either class of the wicked from its wickedness.
- B. We should observe that the wicked follow .the steps of the wicked and thereby become more wicked.
- C. We should observe that as sin gathers strength by exercise and

age, just so righteousness also gathers strength by exercise and

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- We should observe that all of God's punishments are merciful in that the intent of his punish-ments is to turn men from sin and to point them to righteous-
- We should observe that the punishment that the wicked inflict upon others will in turn be inflicted up themselves in a very similar wav.
  - Nineveh inflicted punishment on Israel and Judah, and then fell never to rise again.
  - Babylon inflicted punishment on Judah, and then fell never to rise again.

#### We should observe that the sentence against the wicked is not always executed speedily.

- The wise man wrote: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedilv, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." (Eccles. 8:11.)
- Paul wrote: "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance unto me; I will belongeth recompense, saith the Lord." (Rom. 12:19-20.)
- Let all honest, earnest believers beware and take full warning.

## **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

kings succeeded Jeroboam, How ow many and how ways? many many did not walk in his

What would be a fitting text for this lesson?

While Jeroboam was in the act of assumtook the priestly function, what place?
What was predicted at this time?
the sign to con

What was the sign to confirm this prediction?

What was Jeroboam's reaction?

Upon Jeroboam's action what two things took place?

Thy were these signs done? successful in their purpose? Were thev Give a brief description of Abijah's char-

hat was the purpose of Abijah's illness and death? acter. What

What message did the prophet A give the mother of Abijah when traveled in disguise to inquire a Ahiiah she about the child's future?

Relate the events which transpired in the fulfillment of Ahijah's prophecy.

#### The Golden Text

How do these words apply to us as individuals today?

#### Baasha Assassinates Nadab

Name the kings of this lesson that succeeded Jeroboam.

By what were the reigns of these kings characterized?

What principle is shown in the assassination of Nadab?

#### Baasha Smites All the House of Jeroboam

did To what extent Baasha smite the house of Jeroboam? How do we know he was not purposely fulfilling God's prediction?

Wars Between Israel and Judah Continue

How long did war prevail between the Northern and the Southern kingdoms? How did the wicked punish the wicked in the case of Elah, Baasha's son? Tell of Zimri's character.

#### Omri Becomes King

How long did Zimri reign after his assassination of Elah?

During the siege of Omri upon Tirzah,

how did Zimri escape his assassins?

Relate the events that followed immediately after Zimri's death.

After Almri's death.
How long was Omri's reign?
Where did Omri build his capital?
Name the three capitals of Israel.

Why was Samaria the of the three? superior location

the were outstanding characteristics of Omri's reign over Israel?

#### A Homily

Name the three universal laws in heaven and earth concerning the wicked. God's using

ive three examples of wicked to punish the wicked. What

That are some observations that we as Christians can make concerning the use of the wicked as instruments of punishment against other wicked people?

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## Lesson V-February 1, 1976

## AHAB, A COVETOUS KING

## Lesson Text 1 Kings 21:1-16

1 And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab

king of Samaria.

2 And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house; and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it: or, if it seem good to thee, I will give the worth of it in money.

3 And Naboth said to Ahab, Jehovah forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers

unto thee.

- 4 And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.
- 5 But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?
- 6 And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him. Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee *another* vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard.

7 And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat broad and let thy heart be morry.

bread, and let thy heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Na-

both the Jezreelite.

8 So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the

elders and to the nobles that were in his city, and that dwelt with Naboth.

9 And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Na-

both on high among the people:

10 And set two men, base fellows, before him, and let them bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst curse God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him to death.

11 And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who dwelt in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, according as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them.

12 They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the peo-

ple

13 And the two men, the base fellows, came in and sat before him: and the base fellows bare witness against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did curse God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him to death with stones.

14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead.

- 15 And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead.
- 16 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

Golden Text.—"Covetousness, which is idolatry." (Col. 3:5.) Devotional Reading.—1 Kings 21:17-29.

## Daily Bible Readings

	Example of Covetousness (Luke 12:13-25)
January 27. T	Warnings Against Covetousness (1 Tim. 6:6-10)
January 28. W	
January 30. F	
January 31. S	Warnings Regarding Materialism (James 4:13-17)
February 1. S	Warnings Regarding Materialism (James 4:13-17) Sin of Covetousness (Rom. 7:7-13)

38 LESSON V

Time.—About 856 B.C.

Place.—Naboth's vineyard in Jezreel and hard by the palace of Ahab, king of Samaria.

Persons.—Naboth, Ahab, Jezebel, the elders of the city, and two base

fellows.

#### Introduction

"Ahab, A Cove-Today's lesson, tous King," would really be incomplete without certain overviews and connecting links, links that involve Omri, and especially King Ahab, Queen Jezebel, and Elijah the The sudden appearing disappearing Elijah, seemingly out of nowhere, was the most excitthe most romantic, and longest remembered of all the Old Testament prophets. His name has been a household word throughout the history of God's chosen people, and even today, a Jewish custom provides that at the passover supper a young child is instructed to open the door so that Elijah may enter.

#### Omri—A Connecting Link

With respect to the suggested connecting links, the first one lies in the case of King Omri. The brief concerning him "Omri did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and dealt wickedly above all that were before him." (1 Kings 16:25.) Now, the pertinent consideration is the question of the "how" that Omri was more wicked than the five kings before him. Was Omri more violent than the kings before him? Were there more conspiracies? Did more blood touch blood? Was there more warfare? The fact is that folthe four-year civil lowing war, Omri, the successful aspirant, brought to a close the half century of blood-letting which had prevailed among the Israelites as a result of their wars with Judah and conspiracies among King Omri's reign may, some reservation, be nated a reign of peace. The era of begun by Omri continued through the reign of his son Ahab, and as a result, Jehoshaphat, the royal reformer of Judah, came to be involved on peaceful terms with Ahab and Israel so that he clared: "I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses." (1 Kings 22:1-4.)

What then was the wickedness of Omri more than the other five kings before him? A very definite clue is given by Micah who wrote some He seventy years later. charged: "For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels; that I may make thee a deso-lation, and the inhabitants thereof a hissing: and ye shall bear the reproach of my people." (Mic. 6:16.) short, Omri's extended wickedness involved a further commitment and an extension of idolatry. Jeroboam's two calves of gold, as national shrines, came to be relatively innocent compared to Omri's statutes. The calves of gold actually fell into a position of disfavor or disrepute with those of the court.

Omri was intent upon making his nation secure and prosperous. He was a wise, energetic, and benevolent ruler, if judged by human standards. He maintained a position of strong royal power; he built a new capital and a new palace on the hill of Samaria; he put an end to a half century of war and strife and blood-letting; and he brought his nation to the point of material wealth and prosperity.

The material prosperity of Omri's reign came about, in a substantial part, by his alliance with Ethbaal of the Phoenicians. The alliance was sealed by a marriage-the marriage of Ahab the crown prince of Israel with Jezebel the princess of the Though Phoenicians. skillful promoting peace, Omri proved him-self to be very reckless and wicked in religious matters. The Baal and Ashtoreth worship of the Phoenicans held no fear for him. the eye and bent of a pragmatic politician, Omri looked on one religion as being, within itself, as good another. Whatever religion fered the greater peace and prosperity to his nation was acceptable with Omri. Thus through his alliwith the Phoenicians, which ance provided for the marriage of Ahab. to King Omri opened the daughter, Jezebel, floodgate for all of the corruptive idolatry and witchcraft of the

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Phoenicians to flow headlong into the nation of Israel.

From a human point of view, the alliance was prudent for both nations. Phoenicia had experienced a parallel course of political revolutions such as had been the course of events in Israel—one king and then another had been assassinated; the strength of the nation had been impaired; the more affluent and influential families had emigrated to North Africa and parts; and the nation was faced with a threat of invasion by the very powerful king of Damascus. As in the case of Omri, Ethbaal had just mounted to the throne. The two nations had experienced the same blood-lettings, both faced the same strong enemy; both had the same needs— the needs for political and economic stability—and both had for offer that which the other needed. Israel had for offer the produce of its fertile soil-its bread-basket, so to speak-and Tyre of Phoenicia had for offer the channels of commerce of Israel s produce. The alliance provided for a mutual relationship of sympathetic common cause, for a mutual participation through means of commerce, and for a mutual political security through the means of a cooperative protection in case of invasion by an enemy.

#### Jezebel-Another Connecting Link

The second connecting link lies in the case of Jezebel. She was the daughter of Ethbaal, a priest of Ashteroth prior to his seizure of the throne through his having murdered his predecessor and brother, Phelles. As a priest's daughter, she was a zealot for the gods of her own nation, Baal and Ashteroth, which was natural in a priest's daughter, and also a thing to be expected.

Jezebel caused to be built in Samaria a house to Baal. The house had a great pillar and enclosed walls, and it was vast in size—sufficient to house the worshippers of Baal who were in all parts of the nation. There were four hundred fifty priests who wore their vestments and administered at the altar. Ahab attended in state and worshipped at the altar of Baal. (1 Kings 18:19; 2 Kings 10:22; 10:18-28.)

Jezebel also caused to be built in

Jezreel the temple of Asherah. There were four hundred priests who ministered in the courts and made offerings on its obscene altars. Baal was the name of the principal male divinity of the Phoenicians, and Ashtoreth was the name of the principal female divinity. The Asherah was the name of, or the image of, or the symbol of Ashtoreth, the female goddess.

Jezebel was the Lady Macbeth of the Old Testament—able, ambitious, and unscrupulous. She was haughty and vindictive of manner, and she was equally commanding, fierce, and arrogant in her determinations. She slew the prophets of Israel without the slightest com-

punction of conscience.

## Ahab—A Third Connecting Link

The third connecting link lies in the case of Ahab. He was not by nature a cruel blood-thirsty tyrant, though at first thought he might seem to be. He truly repented of his part in the murder of Naboth—a murder perpetrated by his imperious wife—and God forgave him, and spared him of death and of the experience of the extinction of his entire house. To Elijah, Jehovah said: "Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days; but in his son's day will I bring the evil upon his house." (1 Kings 21:27-29.)

Ahab was not especially cruel; rather, he was passive—a man of weak character and of an impotent will. He loved peace and delighted in the beauty of nature, as well as in the refinements and indulgences of court life. He was a mere tool, an instrument, in the hand of Jeze-hel.

Ahab, like his father Omri, was a patron of peace. His nation was at peace with Judah. The record of the Chronicles reads: "Now Jehoshaphat . . . joined affinity with Ahab." The affinity between the two nations was so strong and binding that the great reformer of Judah, King Jehoshaphat, went to Ahab's defense and fought to recover for him Ramoth-gilead, which had been seized by the king of Syria. (1 Kings 22.) As in the case of the alliance between King Ethbaal and King Omri, which alliance was sealed by a marriage, so

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the case seems to have been of the alliance between King Ahab and King Jehoshapaht. To say the least of matters, Jehoram, the firstborn and crown prince of Judah, was married to Athaliah, the princess daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. (2 Chron. 21:1-6.)

Ahab was a builder, and in his days Jericho was rebuilt by one Hiel, the Bethelite. Hiel laid the foundation with the death of his firstborn, and he set up the gates with the death of his youngest born, according to the word of Joshua. (1 Kings 16:33-34.) Ahab built an ivory house for himself in Jezreel, and he built a number of cities.

## Joshua. and Jezebel. Ahab called him "the built an troubler in Israel." Elijah became Jezreel, the most exciting prophet of all Old

Testament history.

"Covetousness, which is idolatry." (Col. 3:5.)

Ahab, as the lesson will show, was very covetous! What a cheap man he was to expect Naboth to depart with the inheritance of his fathered.

Covetousness, however, is not confined to the actions of an evil king of the eighth century B.C. Actually, all of the sins of man may be included under the one heading, "covetousness." The members of the outward man which were to be put to death, as per Paul's state-

The Golden Text ment in verse five, were "fornicauncleanness, passion, evil desire, . and covetousness, which is idolatry." The point is that the first four sins itemized are summarized by the sin of covetousness, which sin is the base of all sins. Every sin rises from the base of selfishness. When a man follows the bent of his carnal nature, he becomes a servant and worshipper of self instead of God. All idolatry. Let the Christian beware!

Elijah – A Fourth Connecting Link

The fourth connecting link lies in the case of Elijah. At the time of the introduction of the Baal worship, Elijah suddenly appeared, seemingly out of nowhere, to an-

nounce to Ahab in a face-to-face confrontation that "as Jehovah, the God of Israel, liveth, . . . there shall not be dew nor rain" for a period of

three years and six months. (1 Kings 17:1; James 5:17, 18.) His prediction came to pass. He played a dramatic role in the lives of Abia.

## The Text Explained

# Ahab Desires Naboth's Vineyard (1 Kings 21:1-3)

And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house; and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it: or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, Jehovah forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.

King Ahab had built for himself a palace in Jezreel. He retained his capital and palace at Samaria as indicated by the statement to Elijah: "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who dwelleth in Samaria." (1 Kings 21:17.) Thus the palace in Jezreel was used, no doubt, primarily as a summer residence.

Naboth, of an illustrious family,

according to Josephus, had a vine-yard in Jezreel which apparently joined the king's palace. Ahab came to be possessed with a strong desire to acquire the vineyard for himself. His plan was to make it into "a garden of herbs" or a vegetable garden. He proposed to Naboth to trade another garden for it or else to purchase it for a price; whereupon, Naboth declined to either trade or sell the vineyard, not only for its personal and sentimental value, but also for religious reasons as well. On the face of matters, and judged from a human point of view, King Ahab's offer to trade or buy, as the case might be, would seem to men of the business world today to be quite in order. There were, however, two considerations: (1) Naboth had the right to desist from the sale of his property, and (2) he had the religious obligation to desist from the sale of it.

Respecting Naboth's religious obligation, the law of Moses prohib-

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ited the sale of such family property. To illustrate, the law read as follows: "And the land shall not be sold in perpetuity; for ye are mine: for ye are strangers and sojourners with me." Further, the law read: "So shall no inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe; for the children of Israel shall cleave every one to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers." (Lev. 25:23; Num. 36:7.) Naboth was thus bound by the commandment of God to desist from the sale of his vineyard, but Ahab could not have cared less for the commandment of God.

## Ahab Reacts Like a Spoiled Child (1 Kings 21:4)

And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no hread

Like a spoiled child, King Ahab went to his house heavy and displeased. He went to bed, turned his face to the wall, and refused to eat. There is no indication that he meditated evil against Naboth. He had apparently accepted the fact of Naboth's refusal to trade or sell his property. The king was simply giving a childlike expression to his disappointment.

## Jezebel Takes Matters in Hand (1 Kings 21:5-7)

But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? And he said unto her. Because I spake an to Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thy heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

Jezebel seems to have taken thought for Ahab's whereabouts. She probably observed that he was not present at the banquet hall and sensed thereby that something was wrong. On finding him in bed with

his face to the wall, she inquired as to why he was so sad that he refused to eat. Ahab related how that Naboth had refused to trade or sell his vineyard, but did not explain that Naboth's refusal was based on the law of God.

Jezebel then asked: "Dost thou govern the kingdom of Israel?" Her question was shrouded with irony. She intended it to sting Ahab. The question carried the thought. "You are the king; now whet up your courage and exercise your right and position as the king—make your power to be felt." "Arise, eat, and be merry," Jezebel then urged Ahab. "I will see that you get the vineyard of Naboth," she asserted.

#### Jezebel Writes Letters to the Elders and Nobles of the City (1 Kings 21:8-10)

So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, and that dwelt with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying. Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people: and set two men, base fellows, before him, and let them bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst curse God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him to death.

The use of a seal as a means of authentication is as old as history itself. Jezebel wrote letters Ahab's name and affixed his seal thereto in order to authenticate her demands to the elders and nobles of the city. Was Ahab privy to her acts? No one can really be absolutely certain that he was, though a strong presumption would be that he was, in a measure at least, cognizant of her acts. He may have relieved his conscience on the basis that he did not actively participate. Elijah later interrogated Ahab with the words: "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?" The writer of the Kings also recorded: "But there was none like Ahab, who did sell himself to do that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." (1 Kings 21:19, 25.) There can hardly be any doubt, Ahab must have been sufficiently cognizant of Jezebel's acts for him to have rescued Naboth

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from the death sentence, had he desired to so do.

The letters were addressed to the elders and nobles that dwelt in the city with Naboth. Jezebel's instructions to those men may be itemized as follows:

 Proclaim a fast. The fast would give the impression that there was wickedness in the city of such nature so as to anticipate its doom if the wickedness were not immediately removed.

2. Set Naboth on high among the people. The intent of this order was that Naboth should be tried legally before the court. Every step in the proceedings was to be clothed with utmost legality. Naboth was to be placed in a distinguished place before the court as a means of exhibiting absolute impartiality.

Set two men-base fellowsbefore him to bear witness against him. The two men were to be set before Naboth confronters or accusers. Jezebel unwittingly bore testimony to the Pentateuch by demand, for the law read: "At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is to die be put to death; at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death." (Deut. 17:6.)

4. Bear witness that he did blaspheme God and the king. Such a charge, if true, would warrant the death penalty. Jezebel was intent on having Naboth's death penalty meet all legal requirements.

Then carry him (Naboth) out

and stone him that he may

#### The Reaction of the Elders and Nobles (1 Kings 21:11-13)

And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who dwelt in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, according as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. And the two men, the base fellows, came in and sat before him: and the base fellows bare witness against him, even against Na-

both, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did curse God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him to death with stones.

The elders and nobles, as the text above will show, complied step by step with the orders of Jezebel's letter. A person may very well ask, "How far and how deep can mortal men fall into moral degradation?" The action of those elders and nobles not only showed the extent of their moral degradation, but also it showed the terror and fear with which they were seized when orders came forth from Jezebel and Ahab.

When the two men bore witness against Naboth, the people of the city were present. The court hearing was of interest to all of the congregation. The sons of Naboth were put to death along with Naboth, else they would have held a claim to the vineyard. (2 Kings 9:26.)

## Ahab Takes Possession of Naboth's Vineyard

## (1 Kings 21:14-16)

Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vine-yard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

The bodies of Naboth and his sons were left on the ground to be devoured of dogs. (Verse 19.) In the meantime the elders and nobles sent word to Jezebel—observe: Jezebel, not Ahab, at Samaria that "Naboth is stoned, and is dead."

On receiving the news of Naboth's death, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise and take possession." So Ahab arose to go down to take possession of Naboth's vineyard. How depraved can a man's conscience become? Of a certainty, Ahab was a man of weak character, of a seared conscience, and of a feeble will.

As Ahab proceeded to take possession of Naboth's vineyard, the FEBRUARY 1, 1976 43

amazing Elijah, the Tishbite, appeared on the scene to announce that the house of Ahab would be made as the house of Jeroboam and as the house of Baasha—that is Ahab's house would become extinct.

## A Homily

## Elijah Under the Juniper Tree

#### I. Introduction

- A. Elijah is one of the most interesting characters of the Old Testament
  - During the days of Ahab, and when Jezebel had established her Baal and Ashtoreth worship, Elijah suddenly appeared in a startling manner on the scene of action.
  - He daringly appeared before King Ahab to proclaim the vengeance of Jehovah. There would be no rain in Israel for a period of three and onehalf years. (James 5:17, 18.)
  - His sudden appearance and announcement gives an insight into the greatness of his soul.
  - 4. He had the courage to stand up singly and face to face against the power of the whole evil kingdom of Israel.

5. He stood as one man against an apostate nation.

- a. His stand was against the throne of Israel which the wicked Jezebel controlled through her weak-willed, and puppet husband, Ahab.
- b. His stand was against the prophets of Baal. He was one prophet of Jehovah against 450 prophets of Baal.
- B. The record of the Kings designated this man as "Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the so-journers of Gilead." (1 Kings 17:1.)
  - 1. This is all that is known about the man's background.
  - Who his parents were, when, and under what circumstances he was called to the prophetic office, and what his prior preparations for the office were, have remained a mystery.
  - 3. *Śmith's Bible Dictionary* describes Gilead as "a country on the further side (or the east side) of the Jordan—a country of chase and pasture,

of tent-villages, and mountain-castles, inhabited by a people not settled and civilized like those who formed the communities of Ephraim and Judah."

 Elijah was a hairy man, and he wore a leathern girdle about his loins, and he also at times wore a mantle or cape of sheep-skin. (2 Kings 1:8.)

- 5. He was, no doubt, gaunt and of great physical stamina, else he could never have run before Ahab's chariot all the distance from Mount Carmel to Jezreel—a distance of not less than fourteen miles. (1 Kings 18:46.)
- C. Elijah's formula was: "As Jehovah, the God of Israel, loveth, before whom I stand." (1 Kings 17:1.)
  - 1. The meaning of "before whom I stand" is "whose I am and whom I serve."
  - 2. Elijah's formula gives insight, therefore, into his character and commitment to God.
  - 3. Elijah came to be known by the distinguishing title, "Man of God." (1 Kings 17:18, 24.)
  - 4. This title was also applied to Elisha, his successor.
- II. The Prophet Elijah's Long Reaching Influence.
- A. No prophet so excited the people of both Israel and Judah as did Elijah and no prophet's influence has been more dramatic and lasted longer than that of Elijah.
  - 1. Even today, when the Jews observe the passover, a small child is instructed to open the door so that Elijah can enter.
  - 2. The worshippers rise and face the door for his entrance.
- B. Elijah appeared along with Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration, and together they talked with Christ. (Matt. 17:1-5.)
- C. When John the Baptist appeared on the scene of action, he was thought to be Elijah. (Luke 9:7-9; John 1:21.)

- D. Later, when Christ asked: "Who do men say that the son of man is?", some said John the Baptist; some Elijah; and others Jeremiah. (Matt. 16:13-14.)
- E. Malachi had prophesied for Jehovah: "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come. (Mal. 4:5.)
  - The intent of the prophecy was not to say that Elijah in reality would appear again.

2. The prophecy had reference

to John the Baptist.

- 3. John the Baptist would come in the likeness and spirit of Elijah. Luke's record reads: "And he [John the Baptist] shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah." (Luke 1:17.)
- F. Elijah was a Type of John the Baptist.
  - 1. They both wore the same kind of clothes.
  - 2. They both were schooled in the desert.
  - They both were sons of solitude.
  - They both proclaimed messages of judgment.
  - 5. They both proclaimed messages against wicked people in high places.

a. Elijah against Ahab and

Jezebel.

 John the Baptist against Herod and Herodias.

- They both were under the wrath of two powerful women, Jezebel and Herodias, respectively.
- They both had a temporary eclipse of faith.
- 8. They both are immortal in influence.
- III. Elijah's Temporary Eclipse of Faith.
- A. Elijah had announced to Ahab that there would no rain for three and one-half years.
- B. At the end of the period of drought, he appeared and called for a contest of power, a showdown, between himself and the prophets of Baal. The test was to be made on Mount Carmel.
  - The ratio was unbelievable

     Elijah against 450 prophets
     of Baal.

- The contest was to turn on the power to call down fire from heaven. The question of who was in reality God whether Baal or Jehovah was to be determined by observing the one who would send fire down from heaven.
- Sacrifices were prepared.
- 4. The prophets of Baal worked themselves into a state of frenzy. They jumped back and forth across their sacrifices and slashed their bodies in their efforts to call down fire from heaven.
- 5. Elijah chided them: "Cry aloud," he said, "for he is a god: either he is musing, or he is gone aside, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awakened." (1 Kings 18:27.)

 Then Elijah prepared his sacrifice, prayed, and fire like lightning consumed his sacrifice

- 7. When the people who had gone limping between the two sides saw the fire, they cried: "Jehovah is God," (1 Kings 18:39.)
- 8. Elijah slew the 450 prophets, prayed for rain, and then ran all the way before Ahab's chariot from Mount Carmel to Jezreel, a distance of four-teen miles.
- 9. On arriving in Jezreel, he received a message from Jezebel which read: "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." (1 Kings 19:2.)
- 10. The courageous Elijah was seized with fear, with terror! He ran for his life all the way to Beersheba, then sat down under a juniper tree, and prayed earnestly for Jehovah to put him to death.
- 11. If he had only stayed in Jezreel a while longer, Jezebel would have accommodated him in his plea to be put to death
- C. What was wrong with Elijah? How may a person account for his temporary eclipse of faith?
  - 1. For one thing, Elijah was

tired. Often Christians allow themselves to become too tired to really worship and serve God.

For another thing, Elijah had lost his sense of divine fellowship.

For a third thing. Elijah had seen no visible results from his preaching.

> been He had keeping books for Jehovah.

> He came out with a total of one, himself, who had not bowed a knee to Baal.

> Jehovah's total was seven thousand.

> The great commission did not say, "Go preach and keep books on the sults."

For a fourth thing, Elijah had lost faith in others.

For a fifth thing, Elijah had lost faith in himself.

Only one thing is more detrimental to a Christian

than his losing faith in all others, and that is for him to lose faith in himself.

For a final thing, "Elijah was a born of like passions with us," according to James. (James 5:17-18.)

He was human and thus subject to all the fears and temptations of the flesh.

Let every Christian ponder this characteristic of every man.

What a remarkable person was the prophet Elijah.

#### IV. Conclusion

A. God had a remedy for Elijah

He first allowed Elijah to sleep—to rest.

He then caused an angel to feed Eliiah—to strengthen him.

He then showed Elijah his fault—his mistake.

 B. Would that the world had more Elijahs today!

#### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

How may we designate Omri's reign?

How was the reign of Omri more wicked than the five kings who preceded him? Describe Omri as a ruler. How did the m

material prosperity Omri's reign come about? How was Omri's alliance with the Phoenicians sealed?

Describe Omri's religious convictions.

How was the alliance between Israel and the Phoenicians prudent, from a human standpoint, for both nations?

Give the parallels in political events be-

tween Israel and Phoenicia.

What three advantages did the alliance provide for the two nations? Describe Jezebel's personality and character.

Describe Ahab's character.

Describe the relations between Israel and Judah during Ahab's reign.

What did Ahab call Elijah?

#### The Golden Text

Under what heading can all the sins of man be included? From what base does all sin arise?

How is covetousness idolatry?

The Text Explained

How was the palace at Jezreel used by Ahab?

For what purpose did Ahab want Naboth's vineyard? two offers of compensation Ahab make to Naboth for his vineyard? What two considerations made Ahab's fers out of order?

How was Naboth bound by the commandment of God not to sell his How did Ahab react to Naboth's refusal

to sell the vineyard? what irony did **Jezebel** question Ahab?

What five instructions did Jezebel send to the elders and nobles of Nezreel?

what extent did they comply with Jezebel's instructions?

What did Jezebel say to Ahab on the ar-rival of the news that Naboth was dead?

## A Homily

What is known of Elijah's courage?
What is known of Elijah's background? What was Elijah's formula for life?

Tell of the far-reaching influence of Elijah, even today

ow was Elijah a type of John the Bap-tist? Hów "show-down"

was the to tween Elijah and the prophets of Baal?

What were the results? nat prompted sheba? What Elijah's flight Beer-

What request did he make of God as he lay beneath the juniper tree?

What six factors may account for Elijah's temporary eclipse of faith?

What was God's remedy for Elijah?

## Lesson VI-February 8, 1976

## **FAMINE IN ISRAEL**

## Lesson Text

## 2 Kings 7:1-16

- 1 And Elisha said, Hear ye the word of Jehovah: thus saith Jehovah, To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.
- 2 Then the captain on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if Jehovah should make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

3 Now there were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die?

4 If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there; and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.

5 And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians; and when they were come to the outermost part of the camp of the Syrians, behold, there was no man

there.

6 For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us.

7 Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled

for their life.

8 And when these lepers came to the outermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and they came back, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it. 9 Then they said one to another, We do not well; this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, punishment will overtake us; now therefore come, let us go and tell the king's household.

10 So they came and called unto the porter of the city; and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but the horses tied, and the asses tied, and the tents as they

were.

11 And he called the porters; and they told it to the king's household within.

- 12 And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now show you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we are hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall take them alive, and get into the city.
- 13 And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it; behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are consumed); and let us send and see.

14 They took therefore two chariots with horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying. Go and see.

- 15 And they went after them unto the Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king.
- 16 And the people went out, and plundered the camp of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of Jehovah.

Golden Text.—"But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto yon." (Matt. 6:33.)

## Daily Bible Readings

February 2. M	Grievous Famine (Gen. 12:1-10)
February 3. T	Famine in the Days of David (2 Sam. 21:1-6)
February 4. W	Sore Famine in Samaria (1 Kings 18:1-6)
February 5. T	Some to Die by Famine (2 Chron. 32:1-11)
	Famine for the Word of God (Amos 8:11-14)
February 7. S	Death by Famine (Jer. 42:1-17)
February 8. S	

Time. - About 850-844 B.C.

Place.—Samaria, the capital city of Israel.

Persons.—The prophet Elisha, King Jehoram's captain, the four leprous men, and the Syrian hosts.

#### Introduction

Today's lesson moves forward in point of time and history to Jehoram. Ahab reigned twelve years; Ahaziah had reigned two years; and Jehoram, or Joram, would reign twelve years from 854-842. B.C.

At the time of today's lesson, the prophet Elijah had already translated into heaven, and the prophet Elisha had succeeded to his office and position of influence. Some seven or eight years had intervened from Elisha's appointment to take Elijah's place until Elijah transláted into heaven. Îehovah's instruction to Elijah that should "anoint Elisha thv room" was given just after Elijah's flight from Jezebel. Elijah continued in his ministry throughout Ahab's reign, throughout Ahaziah's reign, and on into the reign of Jehoram. (1 Kings 19:16; 21:17; 2 Kings 2:17; 2:1.) Thus Elisha enjoyed a long and vital training period under Elish bis producesor. riod under Elijah, his predecessor.

Changes had been wrought during this short period of history. As a direct result of the confrontations which Elijah had made with Ahab, the whole course of history had been changed. Elijah, from Mount had delivered Baal Carmel. blow, and he delivered crushing another crushing blow when he called fire down from heaven on two different occasions to devour two respective captains the their fifty men each who had been dispatched from King Ahaziah to

arrest him. (2 Kings 1:9-14.)
The worship of Baal had thus fallen into disfavor and disrepute as is evidenced by the account of Je-horam's reign. The record reads: horam's reign. The record reads: "So he [Ahaziah] died according to the word of Jehovah which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram began to reign in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son. . . Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, reigned twelve years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, but not like his [Ahab], and like his mother [Jeze-bel]; for he put away the pillar of Baal that his father had made.

Nevertheless he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom." Kings 1:17-18; 3:1-4.)

Jehoram had been shocked and deeply impressed by the fate of his father Ahab and his brother Ahaziah, as also had been the people. No wonder then that "he put away the pillar of Baal that his father had made."

#### The Golden Text

"But first seek цe his kingdom righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto uou." (Matt. 6:33.)

Some men spend their lives seekstriving for possessions to Others spend their lives with no other thought than to eke out a bare livelihood. These are all

of their days fearful that they cannot survive.

Some men are abundantly rich. moderate circum-Others live in stances, and still others are poverty stricken. There is, however, a lesson which each class can learn—every man in fact. That lesson is stated in the golden text, "Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousLESSON VI

ness; and all these things shall be added." Jesus had just admonished: "Be ye not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself." Material possessions should have a second, or even a third, place in a

# Christian's life. His first anxiety should be for the kingdom, the Lord's church, and righteousness. The Lord has promised that those who so seek the kingdom and righteousness shall be supplied with the necessities of life.

## The Text Explained

#### Elisha's Unusual Prediction (2 Kings 7:1, 2)

And Elisha said, Hear ye the word of Jehovah: thus saith Jehovah, To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. Then the captain on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if Jehovah should make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said. Behold thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

Samaria was under siege by Benhadad of Syria. Jehoram, king of Israel, refrained from meeting Benhadad's forces in the open field. He recognized that his army was no match for Ben-hadad, and he chose, therefore, to retire within the walls of his capital city. Ben-hadad blockaded the city, cut off the food supply lines, and waited for the people 6f the city to be starved into surrender.

The famine was intense. Food was scarce and extremely high in price. The price of an ass's head—an undesirable part of an unclean animal—was fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung was selling for five pieces of silver. Two women had actually eaten a small baby.

Jehoram, in the emergency, had sworn to put the prophet Elisha to death. Evidently he reasoned somehow that Elisha could have miraculously delivered Samaria from its siege and famine. On further thought, Jehoram went to Elisha with the words: "Behold this evil is of Jehovah; why should I wait for Jehovah any longer?" The thought is why should not I (King Jehoram) break with the Lord and put you (Elisha) to death?

At this point, Elisha declared, "Hear ye, the word of Jehovah." This solemn address was calculated to arrest the attention of the king. Elisha then moved to announce that

tomorrow about this time a measure of fine flour would be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, right here in the gate of Samaria. The announcement was incredible—impossible from a human point of view. The captain on whose hand King Jehoram leaned declared: "Behold, if Jehovah should make windows in heaven, might this thing be?" Elisha replied: "Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof." The captain not only questioned the honor and veracity of the prophet, but also he questioned the power of God.

# The Lepers' Wise Decision (2 Kings 7:3-5)

Now there were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and. we shall die there; and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians; and when they were come to the outermost part of the camp of he Syrians, behold, there was no man there.

Four leprous men were to be the means of the fulfillment of Elisha's prophecy. As lepers they were shut off from the people—beggars with no means of acquiring food. Hunger overwhelmed them.

Faced with certain death if they did not take some kind of action, the four leprous men asked: "Why sit here until we die?" They debated their alternatives. They reasoned that should they enter into the city of Samaria, death would be certain, for there was no food there. They further reasoned that if they remained where they were, death would also be certain. There was one other alternative. They could

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fall unto the host of the Syrians. To do so would probably mean death, they reasoned, but then there death, they reasoned, but then there was a chance that the Syrians would supply them with food instead of putting them to death. This course was actually the only hope for them. Thus those four leprous men rose up in the twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians. When they came to the outermost camp of the Syrians, there was not a man in sight. a man in sight.

## The Lord's Intervention (2 Kings 7:6, 7)

For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.

Now, the Lord had intervened in behalf of the Israelites. He made the Syrians to hear a noise of char-iots and horses, as if the noise of a great host. The Syrians reasoned that the king of Israel had hired the and Egyptians against them, and they fled for their lives. They left their tents, their horses, their asses, and their camp behind. The noise was produced by miraculous means. There is absolutely no other way to account for it.

## The Reaction of the Lepers (2 Kings 7:8-10)

And when these lepers came to the outermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and they came back, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it. Then they said one to another. We do not well; this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, punishment will overtake us; now therefore come, let us go and tell the king's household. So they came and called unto the porter of the city; and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but the

horses tied, and the asses tied, and the tents as they were.

The four leprous men moved, no doubt, cautiously, into a tent at the outermost part of the camp, and they found it empty. Starved as they were, their first act was to eat and drink. Then they took and hid the silver and gold which they found in the tent. Then they en-tered into another tent and took and hid the possessions that they found therein.

Then the thought occurred to them that they should share their good fortune with others. "We do well," they said, "and we hold our peace." They further concluded: "If we tarry till the morning light, punishment will overtake us." Their conclusion was a very reason-

able supposition.

Having thus concluded, the four leprous men returned to Samaria, called to the chief porter of the city, and related their findings. In turn, the porter gave the message to the kings' house.

## King Jehoram's Reaction (1 Kings 7:12)

And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now show you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we are hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field saying When selves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall take them alive, and get into the

King Jehoram was skeptical. He reasoned that the findings were a case of military strategy. "They know that we are hungry," said the king. He reasoned: They have hidden into the field and will bear down when we if we allow envelved. down upon us if we allow ourselves to be lured into their camp to eat. The king's apprehension was not without valid merit, especially from a purely human point of view.

## A Servant's Proposal (2 Kings 7:13-15)

And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel which are left in the city... and let us send and see. They took therefore two chariots with horses. therefore two chariots with horses: and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.

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And they went after them unto the Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers re-

turned, and told the king.

The servant made a very sensible proposal. His proposition was that they take five of the horses that remained-the majority had died of the famine-and send men out on a reconnoiter so as to ascertain the facts in the case. The risk would be no greater than for the horses and men to remain in the city, the servant reasoned, because there they would soon be consumed of the famine. The servant's thought was that should the men and horses fall into the hands of the enemy, they would be just as well off as those who remained in the city.

In turn, two chariots of horses were hitched, and the drivers were instructed, "Go and see." The charioteers found the camp empty, as per the report of the leprous committee. They came upon nu-

merous signs of a hurried and perturbed flight. Thus they followed as far as the Jordan upon the signs left by the fugitives in their precipitate flight. The way to the Jordan was full of garments and vessels which had been discarded by the Syrians. The charioteers returned and reported their findings to the king.

The Results (2 Kings 7:16)

And the people went out, and plundered the camp of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the

word of Jehovah.

The people—the whole population—with one accord left the city and flung themselves upon the food and the spoils. In keeping with Elisha's prophecy, a measure of fine flour was actually sold for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel. What wonders and demonstrations Elisha was able to call forth! Elisha was a man of God.

## A Homily

Elisha – The Man Who Poured Water on the Hands of Elijah

Text: 2 Kings 3: 4-12

#### I. Introduction

- A. Two of the most prominent prophets of Old Testament history were Elijah and Elisha.
- B. Those two men were identical in their zeal for Jehovah, but in many other respects, they were the very opposite.
- C. Elijah was a man of the wilderness, a man of solitude.
  - He was refreshed by nature itself—the earth and its seasons; the free air of the desert, the rise of the sun in the east and its setting in the west; the star-decked canopy of the heavens with its shining moon.
  - The solitudes of the brook Cherith and of Mount Carmel were in keeping with his very nature.
  - The wilderness of Sinai was his retreat in his crucial hours of disappointment and despondency.
  - Elijah was a recluse from the constant intercourse of men.
    - a. The bright lights of a city

held no fascination for him.

- The artificial life of a town or city was distasteful to him.
- D. Elisha, on the other hand, was a man of society—he enjoyed city life and a continued concourse with people.
  - 1. He had a house of his own within the walls of Samaria. (2 Kings 5:9.)
  - 2. After the translation of Elijah, Elisha revisited the schools of the prophets at both Jericho and Bethel. (2 Kings 2:15-18, 23.)
  - 3. He visited those schools for two purposes:
    - a. One purpose was to strengthen the young men's commitments and zeal.
    - b. The second purpose was to formally and officially take over the administration of the schools.
  - From the city of Samaria, Elisha directed the schools of the prophets over a wide area —as a kind of apostolate—for about fifty years.

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- 5. Like Samuel, Elisha preached on a circuit.
  - a. He passed by Shunem, twenty-five miles north of Samaria, so often that a rich and prominent woman proposed to her husband that they build a room on to their house and set therein a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp for the specific use of "the holy man of God." (2 Kings 4:8-11.)
  - As the record will show, Elisha was often at Carmel, at Dothan, at Gilgal, and even in the wilderness of Edom.
- He left a record of public life interspersed with great public acts.
- II. A Contrast of the Personalities of Elijah and Elisha
- A. When making a contrast of the personalities of the two men, Elijah and Elisha, there are some pertinent matters to be remembered.
  - Jehovah instructed Elijah to anoint Elisha to be prophet in his room.
  - Elijah found Elisha at Abelmeholah.
  - Elisha was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen—that is twelve plowmen were under his direction.
  - 4. In Elijah's characteristic way, as a token of Elisha's call to the office which Elijah occupied, he cast his mantle or cape upon Elisha and then passed on.
  - Elisha left his oxen and ran after him, and requested: "Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee."
  - 6. Elijah knowing quite well, through his own bitter experiences, that no one who must be urged was prepared to succeed him replied: "Go back again; for what have I done for thee?"
  - Elisha was left to make his own free and self-determined decision to accept the call from Jehovah.
  - Elisha showed promptness of decision and resoluteness of purpose.

He went after Elijah and ministered unto him.

- He took the position of a servant.
- 11. He came to be known as "Elisha the son of Shaphat, who poured water on the hands of Elijah." (2 King 3:11.)
- B. A contrast of the personalities of the two men will reflect the following:
  - Elijah was a prophet of terror; whereas, Elisha, generally speaking, was of a calm nature, but circumstances had changed.
  - Elijah was known for his pecular dress; whereas, Elisha's ordinary dress was as the rank and file of society.
  - Elijah made his miracles subordinate to his great public acts; whereas, Elisha was known for his many miracles.
  - 4. Elijah avoided any concourse or relations with the great; whereas, Elisha had frequent relations with kings and stood on a footing with them.
  - Elijah was a recluse from the desert; whereas, Elisha was a citizen among citizens.
  - Elijah's spirit may be symbolized by the earthquake, the tempest, and the fire; whereas. Elisha's spirit may be symbolized by "the still small voices."
- III. Lessons to be Learned Through the Lives of Elijah and Elisha
- A. There are a number of important lessons to be learned from the times of Elijah and Elisha.
  - 1. One great lesson to be learned from the study of Elijah and Elisha is that only the humble ever really become great.
    - a. Elisha was Elijah's ser-
    - He was known as Elisha, the son of Shaphat, "who poured water on the hands of Elijah."
    - c. The best way to learn to rule is to first learn to serve.
    - d. Jesus said: "Whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all. For the Son of man also

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came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:44, 45.)

- Another great lesson to be learned from the study of Elijah and Elisha is the imperative need for preparation.
  - a. Elisha was Elijah's understudy for at least seven years.
  - b. He was not too proud to serve, nor was he too proud to learn.
  - c. The apostles were understudies of Christ for three and one-half years, but Elisha was an understudy of Elijah for seven or eight years.
    - (1) Today, a person can earn a bachelor's degree in a time period of three and one-half years; whereas, today a person can earn a doctorate degree in some seven years.
    - (2) Jesus, of course, left his apostles to be further guided and instructed by the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.
  - d. Elders and preachers, particularly, need to learn the lesson of the need for preparation.
    - (1) Such preparation should be continuous.
    - (2) Preparation demands study at the feet of great teachers, whether t h r o u g h seminars, lectures, or f o r m a l classes.
    - (3) Preparation demands the collection of a basic library of commentaries, histories, and special Bible studies.
- 3. A third great lesson to be learned from the study of Elijah and Elisha is the imperative need for schools for the preparation of young men to take over in areas of leadership when the older men have passed off the scene of action.

 a. Elijah and Elisha both were very much involved in their administration of, and their teaching in, the schools of the prophets.

b. The schools of the prophets have many strong implications for churches to-

day.

c. The likelihood is, however, that many leaders and elders of the church today have little or no knowledge of the schools of the prophets.

d. Few elders today, relatively speaking, have a genuine interest in or feel an obligation for the support and maintenance of the schools for training young men to preach.

e. Older preachers everywhere have an obligation for the spiritual encouragement, teaching, and training of young men.

B. A further point in consideration of Elijah and Elisha is that as Elijah was a type of John the Baptist, Elisha would remind a Christian of Jesus, the Christ.

#### IV. Conclusion

- A. Character studies of men of both the Old and New Testaments are extremely important.
  - Elijah and Elisha were men of a most romantic nature.
  - They rank alongside Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and Samuel.
  - The church today needs more of these lessons and fewer ones on psychology and philosophy.
- B. Finally, "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."
  - 1. This fact may be noted in the appearance of Elijah.
  - It may also be noted in the choice of Elisha as his successor.
  - It may also be noted in the case of the four lepers and the simple way and manner in which Elisha's unusual prediction came to be fulfilled.

#### Ouestions for Discussion

of

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

whose

Describe Jehoram's character.

During

## Introduction reign did

the

incidents

today's lesson take place?
Who was the prophet who had succeeded the great prophet Elijah?
How much time intervened between his appointment until the time of Elijah's

appointment until the time of Elijah's being translated into heaven? What major religious changes had taken place in Israel during this time?

To what events could these changes be directly traced?

#### The Golden Text

What lesson can all classes of people learn from this statement?
What place should material possessions hold in the life of a Christian?

#### The Text Explained

What was the condition of Samaria and its people at this time?
What was Elisha's prediction which was made to King Jehoram?
Who questioned the possibility of its fulfillment? How?

Whom did God use as the means of fulfillment of the prophecy?

What was these men's reasoning?
What were their findings at the camp of the Syrians?

What miracle had caused this condition?
What was the first action of the four men? The second?

What thoughts then occurred to these men which caused them to go back to Samaria to tell the king?

What was the king's first reaction?

Where did Jehoram think the Syrains had gone?

What was his servant's proposal?

What signs did the men find which convinced them that the Syrians were completely fled from the country?

What were the people's reactions to the confirmation of the end of the siege?

To what extent was the prophecy of Elisha fulfilled?

#### Λ Homily

Give some contrasts in the personalities of Elijah and Elisha. What three lessons are to be learned from the lives of Elijah and Elisha?

Discuss how "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."

## Lesson VII-February 15, 1976

## JEHU'S REFORMATION

## Lesson Text

2 Kings 9:1-10

1 And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this vial of oil in thy hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead.

2 And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber.

3 Then take the vial of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith Jehovah, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not.

4 So the young man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead.

5 Ånd when he came, behold, the captains of the host were sitting; and he said, I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said. Unto which of us all? And he said, To thee, O captain.

6 And he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of Jehovah, even over Israel.

7 And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of Jehovah, at the hand of lezebel.

8 For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; and I will cut off from Ahab every man-child, and him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel.

9 And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah.

10 And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. And he opened the door, and fled.

LESSON VII 54

## Daily Bible Readings

February9. M	Elisha's Message to Jehu (2 Kings 9:1-3)
February 10. T	
February11. W	Judgment upon the House of Ahab (2 Kings 9:7-10)
February 12. T	Jehu Accepted by His Fellows (2 Kings 9:11-16)
February 13. F	Jehu Slavs Joram and Ahaziah (2 Kings 9:17-27)
February 14. S	Jehu and Jezebel (2 Kings 9:30-32)
February 15. S	

TIME. -843 B.C

PLACE.-Ramoth-gilead, a military post and defense in the territory of Dan, and maintained primarily as a defense against the Syrians. Persons.—Elisha, a son of the prophets, Jehu, and Jezebel.

#### Introduction

In a prior lesson on "Ahab a Covetous King," the study turned on the matter of how Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard. Jezebel, the queen, then wrote letters to the elders and nobles of Jezreel demanding that they put Naboth to death, and that with all legal regularities. She wrote the letters in Ahab's name and affixed his seal thereto in order to authenticate her demands. The elders and nobles complied with the instructions and sent word to Jezebel-observe: Jezebel, not Ahab-that "Naboth is stoned, and is dead."

On receiving the news of Naboth's death, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise and take possession." Ahab, thereupon, went to Jezreel and was proceeding to take possession of Naboth's vineyard when Elijah the Tishbite appeared, as if out of no-where, and asked: "Thus saith Jehovah, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?" Then Elijah, in his châracteristic face to face con-"Thus saith frontation, declared: Jehovah, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. . . will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of

son of Ahijah." 21:19-22.)

Now, riding in the chariot behind Ahab on the occasion of his fearful encounter with Elijah were two young bodyguards—Jehu and Bid-Those two guards heard the kar. Tishbite's pronouncement of doom against Ahab and his house, and the impression left was so great that even some fifteen to twenty years later the scene and portentous curse on Ahab and his house lingered in the mind of Jehu, particularly.

Nebat. and like the house of Baasha

(1

Kings

While Jehu often reflected, and apparently brooded, over the scene and the prophet's words, he fol-lowed a steady course of outward loyalty. He stood in the high favor of Ahab, and even after the death of Ahab, he remained in favor of King Ahaziah and King Jehoram, respectively. He had moved up in political and military rank until he was exceeded in command only by the roval house itself.

In prior time when Elijah had traveled as far as Horeb in his precipitate flight from Jezebel, Jehôvah instructed him to go and anoint Jehu as king over Israel. The execution of the commission was delayed for some fifteen to twenty years. Why the anointment was delayed is not clear, but it must have been delayed in keeping with the purposes of Jehovah. A point of emphasis is that Elijah knew when he uttered the portentous curse on Ahab and his house that Jehu, then present as Ahab's bodyguard, was destined to be king over Israel. Elijah may have given Jehu such a look as caused the scene and pronouncement to linger the more in Jehu's mind, and further, the later genuine repentance of Ahab may be the explanation of the rather long delay in the anointment of Jehu as king in the place of one of Ahab's house. (1 Kings 19:15, 16: 21:17-24, 27-29.)

At the beginning of the reign of Jehoram the Baal and Ashtoreth fallen, worship had generally speaking, into disfavor even in the court of Samaria. The decline of the Baal influence was the direct result of Elijah's confrontations with Ahab. his calling fire down from heaven at Mount Carmel to consume the sacrifice, and his callFEBRUARY 15. 1976 55

ing fire down from heaven to consume the two captains and their fifty men each who had been dispatched by King Ahaziah to take Elijah into custody. The result of Elijah's heavy blows against Baal is reflected in the course of Jehoram at the beginning of his reign. The record reads: "Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria. . . . And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, but not like his father [Ahab] and like his mother | IJezebel]; for he put away the pillar of Baal that his father had made. Nevertheless he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin; lie departed not therefrom." (2 Kings 1:17-18; 3:1-4.)

Jehoram reigned, however, for a period of twelve years, and toward the close of his reign the Baal worship was again being brought back into court favor through the continued influence of his mother, Jezebel. More than this, Jerusalem had become a center of Baal worship through the alliance that had been effected between Ahab and Jehoshaphat, whereby the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah were cemented together. The alliance had been sealed by the marriage of Jehoram. the crown son of Jehoshaphat, with the princess Athaliah, the daughter of Jezebel and Ahab. Through Athaliah, the Baal worship was being established in Jerusalem, the capital city of Judah.

Jehoram was co-regent with his father Jehoshaphat for some eight years, but when his father was dead and he was the sole ruler, he slew his six brothers with the sword and also many of the princes. As a result of his marriage to Athaliah, a daughter of Jezebel, Jehoram "walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab; for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife; and he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah." Though Elijah's burden throughout his long ministry had been Israel, one of his last acts prior to his translation was to write Jehoram a protesting and condemning letter. The account of Elijah's letter is as follows: "And there came a writing to him [Jehoram] from Elijah the prophet saying. Thus saith Jehovah,

the God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah, but hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot, like as the house of Ahab did, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, who were better than thyself: behold Jehovah will smite with a great plague thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy substance; and thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness, day by day." (2 Kings 8:16; 1:17-18; 2 Chron. 21:4-7, 12-15.)

The point of all this is that Baal had come to prevail in Judah as well as in Israel. The power of the throne and court in both Israel and Judah had been raised in support of the idolatrous worship. There remained no hope for the true worship of Jehovah by means of the teaching of the God-fearing prophets. The time had come when only the sword would bring to the ground the idolatrous temples and altars, as well as the advocates. The time had come to execute the commission, first given to Elijah, to anoint Jehu as king of Israel. The day of Jehovah—the day of judgment—had come.

No other person in all Israel was better qualified for the extermination of Ahab's house by the sword than was Jehu. He was more daring, more reckless, and more impetuous—that is marked by force and violence and impulsive vehemence—and more capable of effective and dark conspiracies than any other man in Israel. He was known throughout the army for his "driving furiously," for his energy, for his want of emotion and compassion, for his accustomed manner of giving command, and for his terror of action if and when a command was not obeyed.

Though Jehu was void of any real personal religion, he was capable of effecting a holy zeal, and so much so that when his reformation was well underway he lighted on the good man Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, and inquired: "Is thy heart right, as my heart is with your heart? . . . Come with me," he said,

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"and see my zeal for Jehovah." (2 Kings 10:15-17.) Jehu was the most suitable and polished instrument at Jehovah's hand for the cutting down and the utter and complete destruction of the Baal worship, and also for the avenging of the blood of the martyrs of the Jezebel-Ahab reign. Jehu had long been ready for treason, but he was a man who could wait until the time was ripe.

Jehu was the chief commander at Ramoth-gilead, a commanding fortress occupying an enviable mili-Gad. During the reign of Omri this commanding fortress was seized by Ben-hadad I, king of Syria. With the assistance of the great and prosperous Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, Ahab laid plans to attack and regain the control of the fortress. He his life in the undertaking. The outpost thus remained in the control of the Syrians during the two-year reign of Ahaziah. When Joram, Ahaziah's brother, came to the throne, he aligned himself with the king of Judah in another effort to dislodge the Syrians and to recover control of the fortress. The name of Judah's king was also Ahaziah, and he was a nephew of Joram. Though Jehoram was se-verely wounded, his army under the command of Jehu was successful in recapturing the fortress. In the meantime, King Jehoram re-turned to Jezreel to recuperate and regain his strength, and Jehu was left in full command of the fortress.

Jehu, then about forty years of

age, was communing with his fellow-officers when an enrollee from one of the schools of the prophets, dressed in the coarse garb of a prophet with a mantle or cape draped upon his shoulders—having been dispatched by the great Elisha in what was his last public act—rushed upon the men upaganguaged rushed upon the men unannounced and said, "I have an errand unto thee, O captain." Taking Jehu to an inner chamber, the young prophet poured oil on the captain's head and announced: "Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel. I have anointed thee king over the people of Jehovah, even over Israel. And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master. . . For the whole house of Ahab shall perish. . . And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Israeloum the corn of house of Jeroboam the son Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah." At that moment. so to speak, a bloody revolution against the house of Ahab had begun. The blood of the prophets who had been martyred by Jezebel were to be avenged. The wise man has well said: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and prolong his days, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, that fear before him: but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God." (Eccles. 8:11-13.)

#### The Golden Text

"Let the fear of Jehovah be upon you." (2 Chron. 19:7.)

These were the words of a king to the judges that he had set over his nation. The king was Jehoshaphat. one of the four royal reformers of the nation of Judah. The royal reformers were Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezakiah, and Josiah. Though a great and righteous king in many ways, Jehoshaphat had erred grievously in joining affinity with Ahab, the wicked king of Israel.

Jehoshaphat had even said to Ahab: "I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war." The two nations, Israel and Judah, thus joined forces against Syria in an effort to recover Ramoth-gilead for Israel. Ahab was killed during the battle, and when Jehoshaphat returned to his house, the prophet Jehu met him and inquired: "Shouldest thou help the wicked, and love them that hate Jehovah? for this thing wrath is upon thee from before Jehovah."

Jehoshaphat made no excuse. He humbly accepted the rebuke and his penitence was reflected in the fact that he visited his kingdom from Beersheba to Mount Ephraim in a conscientious endeavor to bring about reforms among his people and to keep them free from idola-

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try. He appointed judges throughout the cities and charged them in the words of the golden text: "Let the fear of Jehovah be upon you." This is a principle which must characterize men in all ages, else man cannot be acceptable to Jehovah

## The Text Explained

# Elisha's Last Public Act (2 Kings 9:1-3)

And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this vial of oil in thy hand, and go Ramoth-gilead. And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber. Then take the vial of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith Jehovah, I have anointed thee king Israel. Then open thedoor, and, flee, and tarry not.

This was Elisha's last recorded public act. Elijah had been commissioned to anoint Jehu as king of Israel, but the anointing had been delayed, no doubt in keeping with God's plan, for almost two decades, and the commission thereupon passed on to Elisha, Elijah's successor. The anointing was carried out by "one of the sons of the proph-

ets.

schools of the prophets played a very prominent role in the spiritual affairs of God's people. Samuel had organized schools of the prophets after Israel had fallen to the Philistines. At the time of the fall, the tabernacle, or sanctuary, at Shiloh was destroyed. It had stood at Shiloh for more than three centuries. Israel was thus at that time at a low ebb spiritually, politically, and economically. Through means of the schools of the prophets, Samuel trained young men to assist him. There were schools at Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpah, and Ramah.

The schools of the prophets were equally prominent in Elijah's time, and he was the chief organizer, administrator. and teacher in those schools. Elisha was an understudy of Elijah for a period of more than seven years. Significant is the fact that in the case of the three prophets—that is Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha—the last glimpse that the Bible gives of each one is in his connection with a school or schools

of the prophets. In those last glimpses, Samuel was standing as head of a company of the prophets; Elijah was visiting the schools of the prophets at Gilgal and Jericho just prior to his translation into heaven; and Elisha was at one of the schools of the prophets when he dispatched the young prophet to anoint Jehu as king over Israel. (1 Sam. 19:20; 2 Kings 2:1-12; 9:1, 2.)

Ramoth-gilead, a fortress in the territory of Gad, had been in the hands of the Syrians since the time of Omri until the more recent date when the Israelites had recovered the fort. Jehu was in command of the fortress at Ramoth-gilead.

## Jehu Anointed King (2 Kings 9:4-6)

young So the man, even young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead. And when thecame, behold, captains of were sitting; and he host said. I have an errand to thee, O captain. Iehu said. Unto which of us all? And he said, To thee, O captain. And he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I anointed thee king over the people of Jehovah, even over Israel.

Elisha had instructed the young prophet to make Jehu "arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber." His instruction to the young prophet anticipated that Jehu would be sitting with his fellow officers, and so he was. The prophet's statement, "I have an errand to thee, O captain," was directed to Jehu, but he did not call Jehu by name. This accounts for Jehu's having inquired: "Unto which of us all?"

When the prophet and Jehu had retired to the inner-chamber, the prophet poured oil on Jehu's head—the customary manner of anointing—and then announced: "Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of Jehovah, even over Israel"

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## Jehu Ordered to Utterly Destroy the House of Ahab

(2 Kings 9:7-10)

And thou shalt smite the house of And thou shall smile the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of Jehovah, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house of of óf Ahab shall perish; and I will cut off Ahab' every man-child, and him that is shut up and him that is left at large in İsrael. And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah. And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. And he opened the door, and fled.

The prophet's charge was strin-The orders stemmed from Jehovah, the king of heaven and earth. Jehu was charged with the bloody duty to smite the house of the whole house, including every man-child-those shut up and those left at large in Israel. The house of Ahab was to be made like

the house of Jeroboam and like the house of Baasha—that is the house of Ahab was to be made extinct just as the houses of Jeroboam and Baasha had been made extinct.

The complete destruction of the house of Ahab was in keeping with the justice of God. This was God's means of avenging the blood of his servants, the prophets, which had been slain by the evil queen, Jeze-bel. The blood of Naboth and his sons were also to be avenged. In fact the dogs would eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel as and where the dogs had eaten Naboth and his sons.

Iehu executed Jehovah's his master's house with against great zeal-with enthusiasm as a matter of fact! He did not cringe or delay for one moment. He was absolutely insensible to his taking human life. He did so with no more hesitancy or emotion that the average Christian would experience in killing a hog or a hen. Without question. Jehu was qualified character and emotion to carry out the justice of God.

## A Homily

Profitable vs. Unprofitable Sins Text: Hosea 1:2-5

## I. Introduction

Often the prophet and his children were for signs to God's people.

 This was true of the sons of Isaiah. (Isa. 7:3: 8:1-4.)

- This was especially true of
  - His wife stood for adulterous Israel.
  - His children stood for the spiritual declines in Israel. (Hos. 1.)
- Hosea prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II.
  - 1. Hosea belonged to the period of the dynasty of Jehu.
  - The dynasty of Jehu continued through four generations.
    - Jehoahaz—for seventeen
    - Jehoash—for sixteen years.
    - Jeroboam II—for forty-one vears.
    - Zechariah—for six months.
- When Hosea's first son was born, Jehovah said to him, "Call his

- name Jezreel; for yet a and I will avenge blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause the house of Israel to cease." 1:4.)
- The meaning of this statement, simply put, is that Jehovah designated Jehu as being an executioner.
  - Jehovah ordered Jehu to utterly destroy the house Ahab.
  - Jehu 2. executed God's order with deliberate haste.
  - Jehovah, in turn, commended Jehu.
  - Jehovah said to Jehu: cause thou hast done well in that which is right executing in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, thy sons of the fourth generation shall sit on of Israel." (2 throne Kings 10:30.)
- As men in quest of moral and social honor, we ask, "How may we account for Jehovah's having

- designated Jehu as being a coldblooded executioner?"
- This certainly calls for an inlook into the case of Jehu.
- II. The Case for Jehu
- The case for Jehu is quite unique.
- The prophet Elisha dispatched a son of the prophets to Ramothgilead to anoint Jehu as king over Israel.
  - When anointing Jehu as king, the prophet said: "Thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master . . . for the whole house of Ahab shall perish." (2 Kings 9:7, 8.)

Having anointed Iehu

king, the prophet fled.

- One of Jehu's fellow officers asked: "Is all well? wherefore came this mad fellow to thee?
- Jehu replied: "Ye know the man and what his talk was."
- In the coarse language of men of that type, they said: "It is false, tell us now."
- When Jehu related the words of the prophet, the fellow-officers "hasted, and took every man his garment, and put it under him on the top of the stairs, and blew the trumpet, saying, Jehu is king."
  - A remarkable observation is how that those officers could so readily turn their loyalty from Jehoram

Jehu.

True, they may have been very displeased with the influence of Jezebel Baal worship, they were hardly that religious.

A question may be raised relative to the character of men who could so readily completely change

their longtime loyalties.

- Anyway, Jehu said: "If this be your mind, then let none escape and go forth out of the city, to go to tell it in Jezreel."
- "So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Jehoram lay there."
- Ahaziah, the king of Judah, was come down for a visit with the wounded king.

- Thus Jehu conspired against Jehoram, and the reformation in Israel was on.
- C. Jehu entered upon his mission with great zeal.
  - Driving furiously, he immediately traveled the sixty to distance Jezreel where his master was.
  - The king drove in his chariot to meet Jehu, and thinking that the captain had some peace proposal from the Syrasked: "Is it Jehu?"
  - Jehu replied: "What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?"
  - Turning in his chariot to flee, Jehoram called to Ahaziah who was along in his chariot and cried: "This is treachery, O Ahaziah."
  - Jehu then "drew his bow with full strength, and smote Joram between his arms; and the arrow went out his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot."
  - Jehu said to Bidkar, now his bodyguard, "Cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, Jehovah laid this burden upon him: Surely, I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith Jehovah; and I will requite thee in this plat, saith Jehovah."
  - Ahaziah, the king of Judah, fled, but Jehu followed and slew him, for, after all, he was of the house of Ahab.
  - Jezebel heard immediately of the conspiracy of Jehu.
    - She painted her eyes and attired her head.
    - When Jehu entered gate, she looked out the window and cried, "Is it Zimri, thou peace, thy master's murderer?"
    - The meaning of her question may very well have been "Is it peace now between thee and me?"
    - Jezebel's intention was to captivate Jehu and to conciliate him.

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- 9. Jehu was unattracted.
- He called upon the eunuchs to throw Jezebel down.
- Without hesitation, the eunuchs threw Jezebel down.
  - a. She fell on the road by the palace.
  - Some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall and on the horses.
  - c. Jehu trod her underfoot.
- 12. Jehu was a rough soldier, void of courtesy or chivalry, and he shrank not from a deed of blood as is indicated by the fact that his first thought, in taking over the palace, was for food and drink.
  - a. Not until he had eaten did he give thought for the bloody corpse of his late queen and mistress lying on the cold ground below!
  - b. When the thought of her came to his mind, he instructed: "Go see now this cursed woman, and bury her for she is a king's daughter."
  - c. The men went to bury Jezebel, "but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands."
  - d. On learning of this, Jehu said: "This is the word of Jehovah, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall the dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel, and the body of Jezebel shall be as the dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel, so that they shalt not say, This is Jezebel."
- 13. Next in order, Jehu wrote letters to the rulers of Jezreel that since seventy sons of Ahab were there with them that they should set one of the sons on the throne and fight for their master's house.
  - a. The rulers in turn slew the seventy men.
  - Then they put their heads in baskets, and sent them unto him at Jezreel.
  - Jehu instructed that the heads of the king's sons be laid in two heaps at the

entrance of the gate until morning.

- The next step that Jehu took in his reformation was to move to destroy every worshipper of Baal out of Israel.
  - a. He joined himself with Jehonadab the son of Rechab
  - b. And he caused Jehonadab to come up to him in the chariot.
  - When he came to Samaria, he smote all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria.
- 15. Jehu then gathered all the people, and said unto them, "Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu will serve him much."
  - a. "Call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshippers, and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great sacrifice to do to Baal," he said.
  - "But Jehu did it in subtlety. to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal."
  - c. A solemn assembly for Baal was proclaimed out of Israel.
  - d. Jehu and Jehonadab went into the house of Baal as if to worship.
  - e. As soon as Jehu had made an end of his burnt offering to Baal, he gave a sign to the fourscore men without whom he had appointed for the occasion, and those eighty men slew all the Baal worshippers with the sword.
- 16. Now, Jehovah commended Jehu for the deliberate and swift manner in which he had destroyed Baal out of Israel
- 17. And Jehovah said unto Jehu, "Because thou has done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, thy sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne in Israel."
- III. Why Jehu a Murderer
- A. The pertinent question is, there-

fore, why would Jehovah classify Jehu as a murderer?

- Why would the justice of God demand that the blood of Iezreel be avenged upon the house of Jehu?
- Why would Jehovah order a man to do a thing, commend him for doing it, bless him for doing it, and then declare the man to be a murderer, worthy of death?
- B. The text itself gives the answer to this question.
  - The writer of the Kings' recthe states case. were two reasons.
  - One reading is as follows: "Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit the golden calves that were in Bethel and that were in Dan." Kings 10:29.)
  - Another reading is: Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of Jehovah, the God of Israel, with all his heart: he departed not from the sins Jeroboam, wherewith made Israel to sin." Kings 10:29-31.)
- C. In short, Jehu, himself, was an idolater.
  - He was opposed to the Baal idolatry.
    - He regarded it as being injurious or unprofitable to the nation of Israel.
    - He, therefore, with zeal stamped it out.
  - He was not, however, posed to the Jeroboam idolatry.
    - He regarded the calf worship as being profitable to the nation.
    - He did not, therefore, take

measures to stamp out the Jeroboam idolatry.

- D. Jehu, therefore, was opposed to unprofitable idolatry or sins, but he had no opposition whatsoever to profitable idolatry and sins.
- Further, Jehu was not a religious
  - He took no heed to walk in the law of Jehovah.
  - His heart was not attuned to God and religious matters.
- Lessons to be Learned from **Jehu**
- There are some pertinent lessons to be learned from the study of the life and character of Jehu.
  - One lesson to be learned is God often uses fitted in character and time to perform his pleasure, but regardless of the merit of the performance, only the righteous in heart get spiritual credit for their performance.
  - Another lesson to be learned is that some sins are worse in consequence than Baal idolatry was worse in consequences than was Jeroboam idolatry.
  - A third lesson is that men must beware, lest while opposing unprofitable sins, they excuse or even justify the profitable sins.
    - The sins of a brother of prestige and/or will tend to be overlooked justified; and even whereas.
    - The brother of low social will be severely criticized and condemned.
    - Sins of one's immediate family and kin will often be excused and justified; whereas, such sins would be condemned in others.
- Let every man beware lest he be like Jehu.

#### **Questions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

curse did Elijah pronounce the house of Ahab? On what occasion? Name the two men who were with at this time. In what capacity did they serve?

Whom did Jehovah instruct to anoint Jehu as king of Israel? How long was the execution of these in-structions delayed? Why? anoint

Who succeeded Ahab as king? Who reigned in Ahaziah's place?

What were the religious conditions in Israel at the beginning of the reign of Jehoram, or Joram for short? The decline of the Baal and Ashtoreth

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worship in Israel was a direct result of whose actions?

Describe the circumstances which led to Jerusalem's also becoming a center for Baal worship.

the house of Jehoram, king of Judah? What punishment did Jehovah

What personal qualities made tremely eligible as the external Iehu as the exterminator the house of Ahab?

What position did Jehu hold under King Jehoram?

#### The Golden Text

Whose words were these?

To whom were they spoken?

For what act was Jehoshaphat severely rebuked by Jehovah?

What was Jehoshaphat's reaction to Jehovah's rebuke?

#### Elisha's Last Public Act

What was Elisha's last public act?

Whom did he send to fulfill this act?

What purposes did the schools of prophets serve?

prophets What three were prominently connected with the schools of the proph-

Name the fortress over which Jehu was in command at the time Elisha sent the prophet to anoint him as king.

#### Jehu Anointed King

Describe the circumstances surrounding the anointing of Jehu.

#### Jehu Ordered to Utterly Destroy the House of Ahab

Give the specific instructions relayed to Jehu from Jehovah by the young proph-

What made through Elijah curse, to Ahab. was also to be fulfilled at this time?

With what attitude and disposition Jehu execute Jehovah's his master's house? orders Iehu

#### A Homily

ot prophets ive some e their families' examples of and Give being signs God's people.

How long did the dynasty of Jehu continue to reign over Israel? What significance did God place upon the

naming of Hosea's son? In what way did God designate Jehu?

Jehu's fellow was the reaction of officers to his being anointed king?

Describe Jehu's execution of Jehoram.

What did Jezebel do when the conspiracy of Jehu? she heard What did she probably hope to accomplish? What was Jehu's reaction to Jezebel's

tions?

Describe the death of Jezebel.
Why did God classify Jehu a after commending him for а murderer explicitly obeying the instructions given him?

Jehu's

What characteristics in the life Jehu that he regarded some profitable and some as unprofitable? What three lessons can from the example of we learn today

character?

## Lesson VIII—February 22, 1976 WICKED KINGS OF ISRAEL

## Lesson Text

2 Kings 13:1-3; 14:23-26; 15:27, 28

1 In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years.

2 And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, continually.

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and reigned forty and one years.

24 And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith made Israel to sin.

He restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath unto the sea of the Arabah, according to the word of Jehovah, the God of Israel, which he spake by his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-hepher.

26 For Jehovah saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter; for there was none shut up nor left at large, neither was there any helper

for Israel.

27 In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel Samaria, and twenty years.

28 And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made

Israel to sin.

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Text.—"And they forsook all the commandments of Iehovah their God." (2 Kings 17:16.)

Devotional Reading. —2 Kings 15:17-22.

## Daily Bible Readings

February 16. M	
February 17. T	Israel's Condemnation (2 Kings 17:13-18)
February 18. W	Israel's Sin (Amos 2:4-12)
February 19. T	Impending Judgment (Amos 3:1-15)
February 20. F	Israel's Destruction Coming (Isa. 8:5-10)
February 21. S	Vengeance on a Wicked King (Hos. 1:1-4)
February 22. S	Forsaking the Commandments (2 Kings 17:1-18)
February 19. T February 20. F	Impending Judgment (Amos 3:1-15) Israel's Destruction Coming (Isa. 8:5-10) Vengeance on a Wicked King (Hos. 1:1-4) Forsaking the Commandments (2 Kings 17:1-18)

Time. – For Jehoahaz, 2 Kings 13:1-3, 820-804 B.C.; for Jeroboam, Kings 14:23-26, 790-749 B.C.; for Pekah, 2 Kings 15:27, 28, 741-730 B.C.

Places.-For 2 Kings 13:1-3, Samaria in Israel and Damascus in Syria; for 2 Kings 14:23-26, Samaria in Israel; for 2 Kings 15:27, 28, Samaria in Israel.

Persons.—For 2 Kings 13:1-3, Jehoahaz, king of Israel, and Hazael and Ben-hadad, kings of Syria; for 2 Kings 14:23-26, Jeroboam, king of Israel; for 2 Kings 15:27, 28, Pekah, king of Israel.

#### Introduction

Today's lesson involves three kings of Israel; namely, Jehoahaz, Jeroboam, and Pekah. The first two kings were of the dynasty of Jehu, and the third king was for-merly a captain under Pekahiah, and he conspired against his master, and smoke him in Samaria, and reigned in his stead.

Jehovah had said to Jehu, "Because thou hast done well in exe-cuting that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, thy sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel." In keeping with the promise, the dynasty of Jehu continued through four generations as follows:

1. Jehu — 28 years — 843 B.C. 2. Jehoahaz — 17 years — 815 B.C. 3. Jehoash — 16 years — 798 B.C. 4. Jeroboariek — 741 B.C.

5. Zechariah – 6 months – 741 B.C.

Today's lesson also introduces Jonah, another great prophet of Israel. The prior lesson pointed up last recorded public act of He dispatched a young prophet to Ramoth-gilead to anoint Jehu as king over Israel. The time was the twelfth year of the reign of Jehoram or 843 B.C. Elisha lived, however, until the reign of Joash, or a total of more than forty-five years afterward. To illustrate, twenty-eight reigned for and Jehoahaz reigned seventeen years, a combined total of forty-five years. Jehoash succeeded

to the throne upon the death of Jehoahaz, and Elisha died sometime during his sixteen-year reign. Elisha had a long ministry of about sixty

The account in Second Kings relates how that Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died, and Jehoash, or Joash for short, went down and wept over him, and went down and wept over him, and said, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof." While Jehoash was there, Elisha predicted victory over Syria. Elisha died, and in time Jehoash died, and his son Jeroboam came to the throne. (2 Kings 13:13-20.) Jeroboam began to reign in Samaria, and he reigned forty and one

The record of Second Kings re-lates how that Jeroboam "restored the border of Israel from the en-trance of Hamath unto the sea of the Arabah, according to the word of Jehovah, the God of Israel, which he spake by his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-hepher." (2 Kings 14:25.) This is the first introduction to the prophet Jonah. In short, a young king was on the throne, and a young prophet was at the king's side assisting him in his fight against Syria.

Israel, as a result of disobedience, had for a long time been harassed and afflicted by the Syrians; but the Syrians were no better spiritually, in fact not as good, as the Israelites. The time had come for the

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balancing of matters. Justice demanded such, and Jehovah is absolute in justice. Thus the record reads: "For Jehovah saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter; for there was none shut up nor left at large, neither was there any helper for Israel. And Jehovah said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash." (2 Kings 14:26, 27.) Now, Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-hepher, was Jeroboam's spiritual advisor who spoke to Jeroboam for Jehovah.

The nation of Israel suddenly became the predominate or ascendant nation among the small kingdoms of that period, and king, prophet,

greatly for and people rejoiced strong military position. their Having subdued its enemies about, Israel had only one threat, one black cloud on the horizon, and that black cloud was Assyria whose capital city was Nineveh. In this very time, Jehovah called upon Jonah to go to Nineveh, some five hundred miles away, and preach repentance. Imagine, such a call to preach! Jonah knew Jehovah. He knew that if he should preach to the Ninevites, and if they should repent Iehovah would save them. Jonah wanted, more than anything else, the Ninevites to be destroyed. No wonder then that Jonah fled from the presence of Jehovah! He did not want the Ninevites to be saved.

#### The Golden Text

"And they forsook all the commandments of Jehovah their God." (2 Kings 17:16.)

The setting for the golden text lies in the fall of Israel to the Assyrians. Israel was, thereby, carried into captivity never to return as a nation. Only ten percent of the people were left in their homeland. Jehovah had "testified unto Israel, and unto Judah, by every prophet, and every seer, saying. Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law

which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets." (2 Kings 17:13.) Israel, however, would not hear, but instead the people "hardened their neck, like to the neck of their fathers, who believed not in Jehovah their God." The golden text is a summary of Israel's apostasy. They, the people, forsook all the commandments. Let Christians today beware! To the book and to the testimony is the only way to be saved.

## The Text Explained

Jehoahaz Follows in the Sins of Jeroboam (2 Kings 13:1-3)

In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom. And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, continually.

Jehu, the reformer, was very much opposed to the Baal idolatry, but he was not opposed to the Jeroboam idolatry. He was opposed to unprofitable idolatry, but he defended and advocated profitable idolatry. Christians today are often opposed only to unprofitable sins and are thus found in the position of excusing or defending profitable sins—especially the sins of close relatives and friends.

Jehoahaz, like his father Jehu, followed in the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin. In short, Jehoahaz was an idolater. He did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah. Jehovah, therefore, was angry with Jehoahaz. Further, his anger was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of Hazael king of Syria. God thus used Syria, a wicked nation, as an instrument or rod for the punishment of Israel. Generally speaking, this was the chief means that Jeho-

vah used for the punishment of national sins. A person might very well ask, "Does God use this same means today to punish one nation and then another?"

## Jeroboam Follows in the Sins of Jeroboam the Son of Nebat (2 Kings 14:23-26)

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and reigned forty and one years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin. He restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath unto the sea of the Arabah, according to the word of Jehovah, the God of Israel, which he spake by his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-hepher. For Jehovah saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter; for there urns none shut up nor left at large, neither was there any helper for Israel.

Jeroboam represented the third generation of Jehu. As indicated in the lesson text material, Jehoahaz, with a reign of seventeen years, continued in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin. Jehoahaz was succeeded by his son Jehoash, or Joash for short. He reigned for sixteen years, and he, too, "departed not from all of the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin; but he walked therein." (2 Kings 13:10-13.)

Upon the death of Jehoash, or Joash, his son Jeroboam the second, began to reign, and he reigned forty-one years, which was by far the longest reign of any other king of Israel. He was without question the strongest of all the nineteen kings of Israel. When he came to the throne, Israel was still under the grievous affliction of Syria, though Jehovah had given Israel three victories over Syria during the reign of Jehoash.

While Israel was displeasing to Jehovah, justice demanded that Syria be subjected to the suffering that it had inflicted upon Israel. After all, Syria was no more righteous and God-fearing than Israel.

In fact Syria was not God-fearing in any respect.

Jehovah, therefore, saved Israel by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash. The turn-around of military affairs was great for Israel, for Jeroboam "restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath unto the sea of the Arabah, according to the word of Jehovah, the God of Israel which spake by his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was at Gath-hepher." Israel, thereby, became the ascendant or strongest nation among the small kingdoms of that period, but Jeroboam II departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin.

Here the reader is introduced to the prophet Jonah, who was destined to become known to all believers of all times. The Homily at the close of this lesson will give considerable insight into the character and works of Jonah.

#### Pekah Follows in the Sins of Jeroboam (2 Kings 15:27, 28)

In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin.

The reading above moves forward in the history of Israel beyond the dynasty of Jehu and to the reign of Pekah. For the sake of perspectives, the kings of Israel in order were as follows:

The Jeroboam Dynasty Jeroboam, a twenty-two year reign. Nadab, a two year reign The Baasha Dynasty Baasha, a twenty-two reign—a conspiracy Elah, a two year reign Zimri, a seven day reign-a conspiracy The Omri Dynasty Omri, a twelve year reign-a civil war Ahab, a twelve year reign Ahaziah, a twelve year reign Jehoram, a twelve year reign

The Jehu Dynasty Jehu, a twenty-eight year reign —a conspiracy Jehoahaz, a seventeen year

reign Jehoash, a sixteen year reign Jeroboam II, a forty-one year

reign

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Zechariah, a six months reign Shallum, a one month reign—a conspiracy

The Menahem Dynasty
Menahem, a ten year reign—a
conspiracy

Pekahiah, a two year reign Pekah, a twenty year reign—a conspiracy

Hoshea, a nine year reign—a conspiracy

Pekah, a captain, came to the throne through his having slain his master, King Pekahiah. He is known as "Pekah the son of Remaliah," and he joined with Rezin the king of Syria in forming a confed-

eracy. The two bitter enemies, Israel and Syria, found common cause in the military rise strength of Assyria. The two to take control fought of tions Judah, and thereby, to bring Judah Under into the confederacy. prophet circumstances, the was moved to prophesy of the virgin birth to Ahaz, the wicked king ŏf Judah. (2 Kings 15:37: 7:1-14.)

Anyway, the point to be emphasized is that Pekah also "departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin." What a far-reaching thing Jeroboam's sin proved to be! What a contrast there is between Jeroboam and Rechab! (Jer. 35.) Pekah was evil, and in his day certain tribes of Israel were carried into captivity by the Assyrians. There is a great lesson in all of this for Christians today.

## A Homily

Jonah – The Gourdvine Preacher Text: Jonah 4:6-11.

- I. Jonah was a gourdvine preacher.
- A. He had a great regard for the gourdvine for which

He had not labored.

- 2. Nor had he made it grow.
- The gourdvine had come up in a night, and it had perished in a night.
- B. God asked Jonah: "Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?"
- C. Jonah replied emphatically: "I do well to be angry, even unto death."
- D. Jonah had regard for the gourdvine, but he was railing against God because he had regard for the Ninevites, among whom were 120,000 innocent children.
- E. In short, Jonah was a covenantadvantage, race-privilege preacher.
  - Like the shade-tree mechanic, the carton box philosopher; Jonah was a gourdvine preacher.
  - 2. He limited God's grace to the covenant people.
- II. Jonah had access to the court and crown of Israel during the reign of the mightiest monarch that Israel ever had.

- A. Jeroboam was the savior of Israel.
- B. He restored the border of Israel from Hamath to the sea of the Arabah.
- C. Israel had long been subservient to Syria.
  - 1. The affliction of Israel was very bitter.
  - 2. Jehovah saved Israel by the hand of Jeroboam. (2 Kings 14:26-27.)
- D. Jeroboam had the most glorious reign in the entire history of Israel.
  - 1. He reigned forty-one years.
  - 2. He warred against Syria.
  - 3. He recovered Hamath from Judah.
  - He established the territory of Israel from Hamath to the Arabah.
  - 5. Ammon and Moab were recovered. (Amos 1:13; 2:1-
- E. Jonah in his cooperation with King Jeroboam had reached an eminent position.
- F. Jonah's patriotism, zeal, and industry for the nation of Israel knew no normal bounds.
- G. Under those prevailing circumstances, God called upon Jonah

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to go to Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian nation.

- Jonah fled instead to Tarshish, from the presence of Jehovah.
- Jonah thought to abdicate his position as a prophet.
- Tarshish probably was a colony in Spain which had been founded by the Phoenicians.
- The old-timers used to say: "We do not know the location of Tarshish, except by boundaries."
- Tarshish was bounded—they said:
  - On the north by, "get somebody else."
  - b. On the south by, "I am too busy."
  - c. On the east by, "I have done my part."
  - d. On the west by, "they have had their chance."
- Tarshish was a city away from God.
- 7. Nineveh was a city of God.
- H. Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh because he understood God's mission.
  - Jonah's prayer was more a matter of raving, rather than praying.
  - He said, "Was this not my saying, when I was yet in my country?"
  - 3. "I know," Jonah said, "that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in loving kindness, and repentest thee of evil." (Jonah 3:1-2.)
- I. In short Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh and preach for fear the people would repent, and God would save them.
- J. More than anything else, Jonah wanted the city of Nineveh to be destroyed.
- III. The Book of Jonah, for means of homiletical treatment, may be divided into four main divisions; namely:
- A. In chapter 1—Jonah runs away from God.
  - Jonah understood God's mercy. He knew that God would refrain from destroying Nineveh if the people should repent.
  - 2. He went down to Joppa and

- boarded a ship for Tarshish.
- A great storm arose on the sea, and the heathen sailors cast off the loading and rowed against the storm.
- 4. The heroism and magnanimity of those heathen sailors must have touched the heart of Jonah.
- 5. The downright honesty and high sense of justice on the part of Jonah must have been surprising to the heathen sailors.
- One thing is certain, for a man to attempt to escape from duty is sinful and unmanly.
- B. In chapter 2—Jonah runs back to God.
  - We flee from God, we hide from him, when all things go well, but we run to him when calamity strikes.
  - 2. In his running back to God, Jonah promised: "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that which I have vowed. Salvation is of Jehovah." (Jonah 2:9.)
- C. In chapter 3—Jonah runs with God.
  - 1. Jonah arose at his second call and went to Nineveh.
  - He went to that foreign city and preached what God bade him to preach.
  - Jonah began to enter the city a day's journey, and said, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed." (Jonah 3:4.)
  - 4. Jonah's message swept over the city and shook the consciences of the people as they had never been shaken before.
  - 5. In the words of Errett, every voice of mirth was hushed.
    - Every jeer, every note of ridicule or of defiance was awed and silenced.
    - awed and shenced.
       The hum and roar of the city died away.
    - c. The shouts of revelry were stopped.
    - d. The city's life pulse ceased to beat, except in feverish flutters.
    - e. The penetrating wail of the prophets smote the

- heart of the king on the throne.
- f. The king and the members of his gay, proud, luxurious court bowed down in dust and ashes.
- g. Soon the whole city was robed in sackcloth and a mighty cry for mercy went up from that guilty prostrate population.
- Let us observe what overwhelming results were produced from a cause that outwardly seemed to be feeble and inconsequential.
- For one thing, Jonah was an unwilling foreign missionary.
  - a. He entered Nineveh and went a day's journey pronouncing his message of doom.
  - b. His piercing cry was void of any pathos or sympathy for the sinful people of that great city.
  - Jonah's approach was appropriately direct, but his attitude was heartless.
- For another thing, Jonah's preaching was remarkable by the nature of it.
  - a. It was sustained by no evidence.
  - b. It was confirmed by no miracle.
  - c. It was upheld by no argument.
  - d. It was enforced by no acknowledged authority.
  - e. It came from the lips of an unwilling missionary.
- For still another thing, Jonah's preaching was remarkable for the visible results that it produced.
  - a. All the people of Nineveh repented.
  - From the king to the beggar, the people cried to Jehovah for mercy.
  - c. All the people had been converted.
  - Jonah had unwillingly called the people of that great city back to God.
- D. In chapter 4—Jonah runs ahead of God.
  - Jonah was untouched emotionally by the conversions of those heathens.

- In fact, he felt a strong resentment toward those of another race who dared to prostrate themselves at the feet of the Hebrews' God.
- 3. So strong was Jonah's resentment that he forgot the vow which he made to God when he said: "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that which I have vowed. Salvation is of Jehovah."
- Jonah sat out the forty-day period, thinking only of the destruction of the city.
- Like Abraham and Sarah, Uzziah, Nadab and Abihu, and Moses; Jonah was running ahead of God.
- 6. He sat under a booth.
- Toward the end of the forty-day period, God caused a gourd vine to come up over him.
- The gourdvine had come up in a night, and it had perished in a night.
- 9. Jonah was fuming.
- Jehovah asked: "Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?"
- When Jonah answered, "Yes," 11. "And Jehovah then asked: should not I have regard for that great Nineveh, city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" nah 4:11.)
- IV. There are some timely observations relative to Jonah. They include the following:
- A. One observation is that Jonah was an unwilling missionary.
  - He did not have a spirit for world-wide evangelism.
  - His concept of a church was that it should consist only of his own nation.
  - He was of the attitude, "Let the rest of the world be hanged."
  - 4. Such is often the concept or attitude of Christians today.
- B. Jonah was bigoted, selfish and spiritually near-sighted.

- This is one of the great weaknesses of man.
- Perhaps no sin retards more the growth of the church.
- third observation is Jonah placed too much value on oŵn comfort and material advantage.
  - The same weakness obtains today.
  - Like Jonah, people are looking for security.
  - We are only pilgrims and travelers here.
- A fourth observation is that God is so abundant in loving kindthat his every announcement of doom is an implied offer

- of mercy if the person or persons will only repent.
- A fifth observation is that Jonah was a gourdvine preacher if we see him only on the low road, but he was a very great prophet if we see him on the high road.
  - The book of Jonah was written years later.
  - It was written by Jonah in the form of a confession.
  - Jonah did not explain, or excuse, or minimize his sins.
  - He left himself in a very bad light.
  - Only a great man could come to the end of life with such repentance and humility.

## **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

Name the five kings who comprised the Jehu dynasty. Iehu

hat was God's promise cerning the throne of Israel? Name the prophet of Israel introduced in

today's lesson.

Jehovah?

How long was Elisha's ministry? What was the prediction made by Elisha upon his deathbed?

Under which king did Israel become ascendant nation among the small king-

What position did Jonah hold during the reign of Jeroboam II?

Which nation comprised the only threat to Israel at this time? Name its capital. What was the mission given to Jonah by

#### The Golden Text

the conditions in which Describe Israel found itself time at the these words were spoken.

had Jehovah warned Israel the nation's coming disaster?

had been their reaction his warnings?

Jehoahaz Follows in the Sins of **Jeroboam** 

ow are Christians to their condemnation of sin? like Jehu today How did God use Syria?

#### Jeroboam Follows in the Sins of Jeroboam the Son of Nebat

What thing did the three one sons Jehu have in common?

Discuss God in reversing the affliction brought Israel upon Syria.

Through whom did Jehovah save Israel? Who assisted?

Pekah Follows in the Sins of Jeroboam How did Pekah come to the throne? With which nation did Pekah form a confederacy? For what purpose? Describe Pekah's character.

#### A Homily

did God teach Jonah What lesson with the gourdvine?

outstanding accomplishments

Jeroboam II during his reign.
Why was Jonah an unwilling missionary?

the four divisions of the book Give of Jonah.

the remarkable nature of Jonah's preaching in Nineveh.

What five observations can be made relative to Jonah?

## Lesson IX—February 29, 1976

## ISRAEL'S CAPTIVITY

#### Lesson Text

#### 2 Kings 17:1-6: 18:9-12

1 In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel, a?id *reigned* nine years.

2 And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, yet not as the kings of Israel that were before him.

- Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea his servant, became and him tribute.
- 4 And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt,

and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in

5 Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three

yēars.

6 In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away unto Assyria, and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of

Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it.

10 And at the end of three years they took it: in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria

was taken.

11 And the king of Assyria carried Israel away unto Assýria, and put them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes,

12 Because they obeyed not the voice of Jehovah their God, but transgressed his covenant, even all And it came to pass in the fourththat Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded, and would not hear it,

nor do it.

Golden Text.—"The face of the Lord is upon them that do evil." (1 Pet. 3:12.)

Devotional Reading.—Isa. 19:23-25.

## Daily Bible Readings

February 23.	M Exile Foretold (Amos 4:6-13)
February 24.	T Assyrian Exile of Israel (2 Kings 17:19-26)
February 25.	W Warnings Ignored (Amos 5:1-9)
February 26.	T Israel's Reproach (Prov. 14:21-35)
February 27.	F Prayer for Righteousness (Psalm 119:33-40)
	S Isaiah Pleads for Repentance (Isa. 1:10-20)
February 29.	SReasons for the Captivity (2 Kings 18:1-12)

Time.-730-721 B.C.

Places.—Samaria in Israel; Halah, and the cities of the Medes. Persons.-Hoshea, king of Israel; Shalmaneser, king of Assyria.

#### Introduction

The subject, "Israel's Captivity," requires especially a study of Hoshea, the last king of Israel. In the seventh year of King Hoshea, Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, came up against Samaria and besieged it, and at the end of three years the city was taken. The last vestige of national independence was stroyed, and Israel was carried into Assyrian captivity. (2 Kings 17:20-23.)

#### Hoshea Not Like the Kings Before Him

Concerning Hoshea, the inspired account reads: "And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, yet not as the kings of Israel were before him." (2 Kings 17:2.) The statement is quite interesting and thought provoking. Spiritually speaking, Hoshea was the best one of the nineteen kings of Israel, whose combined reigns covered a period of some 250 years.

"In what way," one may ask, "did Hoshea commit less evil than did any single one of the kings of Israel before him?"

Equally interesting is the fact that Omri, the sixth king of Israel, "dealt wickedly above all [the five previous kings of Israel] . . . that were before him." Further, Ahab the son of Omri "did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah above all that were before him." He was, therefore, more wicked than the six kings before him, which included his wicked father, Omri. Conversely, Hoshea, the last king of Israel, did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, "yet not as the kings of Israel that were before him." "What and how are the explanations of these matters? (2 Kings 17:2; 1 Kings 16:25, 30.)

As for the explanations. Omri's "wickedness above all the kings before him" was grounded in the fact

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that he joined his nation in an alliance with Phoenicia and sealed the alliance with the marriage of his son Ahab, the crown prince of Israel, to Jezebel, the princess and daughter of King Ethbaal of Phoenicia. Ahab's wickedness above that of his father was grounded in the fact that he assisted his wife Jezebel in the establishment of the Baal worship in Israel, including his having, himself, built an altar and also a large temple to Baal. To the converse of the wickedness of Omriand Ahab, Hoshea's having committed less evil than all the eighteen kings before him was grounded in the fact that he permitted his people to join the people of Judah in the observance of the passover at the temple in Jerusalem and also in the destruction of the altars of Baal. This explanation is based on certain matters which transpired during the reformation in Judah as led by King Hezekiah.

Hezekiah began his reign in Judah in the third year of the reign of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel. In the first month of the first year of his reign, Hezekiah opened the doors of the house of Jehovah and repaired them. The doors had been closed during the reign of his father, the wicked and idolatrous Ahaz. The lamps in the holy place had been put out, no incense had been burned on the altar of incense inside the holy place, and no sacrifice of burnt-offerings had for a long time been made on the brazen altar within the court. Hezekiah called upon the Levites to sanctify themselves and then "carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place."

When the temple had been cleansed, sacrifices and thank-offerings were resumed by "as many as were of a willing heart." Then "Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto Jehovah, the God of Israel." A decree was established that a proclamation be made throughout all Israel, "from Beersheba even to Dan," that the people "should come to keep the passover unto Jehovah, the God of Israel at Jerusalem. ... So the post went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel

and Judah. Some of the Israelites laughed the invitation and exhortation to scorn, and mocked them, but "nevertheless certain men of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem." Thus a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun came and observed the feast of the passover, and so "there was great joy in Jerusalem." Now when the passover observance was finished, "all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake in pieces the pillars, and hewed down the Asherim, and brake down the high places and altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities." (2 Kings 18:1: 2 Chron. 30:1-26: 31:1.)

The chief thrust of the matters under consideration is the fact that Hoshea was the king in Israel when so many of the people of Israel went up to Jerusalem for the observance of the feast of the passover. There is no indication in the account from the Scriptures that Hoshea gave any opposition whatsoever to the people's going to Jerusalem to worship, and there is no evidence that he gave opposition to the people's breaking down the idolatrous altars in the territory of Israel. Instead, the inspired account reads: "He [Hoshea] did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, yet not as the kings of Israel that were before him." (2 Kings 17:2.) The difference in Hoshea and the other eighteen kings of Israel must lie, therefore, in the fact that he either officially permitted, or else gave no opposition to his people's going to Jerusalem for to worship. Further, he gave no opposition to his people's participation in the breaking down the idols in the territory of Israel.

## Three Carryings Away to Assyria

Many students of the Bible are familiar with the history of Judah's having been carried into Babylonian captivity some one hundred fifty years after the Israelites were carried into Assyrian captivity, and they are also familiar with the fact that there were three different

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carryings away of Judah to Babylon. Few students of the Bible, however, are familiar with the fact that there were also three distinct "carryings

away" to Assyria.

Actually, from the reign of Menahem to Hoshea, the last king of Israel, the kings of Israel were vassal kings to the king of Assyria, and they paid heavy tribute to Assyria. Pul, or Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, came against the land of Israel in about the eighth year of Menahem's reign, and Menahem bought him off by paying a thousand talents of silver, which he exacted from the men of wealth. While there was no carrying away to Assyria at this time, the action weakened the nation of Israel, but it settled the apparent rivalry for the throne. The kingdom was confirmed in Menahem's hand by his humbling himself to Pul and thus by Pul's accepting him as one of his subject princes. The implication was that Pul would support Menahem against possible rivals. (2 Kings 15:19.)

Alter a ten-year reign, Menahem died, and his son Pekahiah ascended to the throne. Within a period of two years, the new king was assassinated by Pekah, the officer in command of Pekahiah's body guard. Pekah seized the throne, and the "carryings away" began at the time

of his reign.

The first carrying away of Israelities to Assyria teas daring the early reign of Pekah. The record reads: "In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maacah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, and all the land of Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria." (2 Kings 15:29.) These were cities in the extreme north of Palestine, and are not to be confused with the carrying away that took place later in the reign of Pekah, when Ahaz king of Judah called upon the king of Assyria to deliver him from Pekah and Rezin.

The second carrying away of Israelites to Assyria was at the close of the reign of Pekah. The conquests of Tiglath-pileser motivated two old-time enemies, Israel and Syria, to make common cause. Pekah king of Israel and Rezin king of Syria formed a confederacy as a

means of defense against Assyria, and they made war against Ahaz king of Judah. The intent of Pekah and Rezin, in their war against Judah, was to establish on the throne in Judah a certain Ben-Tabeel who would in turn join Judah to the confederacy, and thereby give the confederacy additional strength and a more effective resistance against Assyria. King Ahaz was determined, even against the protest of Isaiah, to hire the king of Assyria to come to his relief against Israel and Syria. The record reads: "So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, 1 am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel who rise up against me. . . . And the king of Assyria went up against Damascus and took it, and carried the people of it capture to Kir, and slew Rezin." (2 Kings 15:37; Isa. 7:1-6;

2 Kings 16:7-9.)

The date was 733 or 732 B.C., and Syria, a very ancient nation, was brought to an end. While the record in Kings does not give the details or outcome of Tiglath-pileser's invasion of Israel, the Assyrian account reflects the following: "The house of Huumria (Omri, of Israel) ... all his people, and their goods, I sent away to Assyria. They over-through their bines Pageba (Paleb) threw their king Paqaha (Pekah) and I made Ausi (Hoshea) king over them. I received from them ten talents of gold, a thousand talents of silver as tribute and I carried them away to Assyria." This then was the second "carrying away" to Assyria. Further, Tiglath-pileser had a part in the con-spiracy which put Pekah to death and established Hoshea on throne of Israel. This carrying away is likely set forth in a com-ment in the Chronicles record as "And they trespassed follows: against the God of their fathers, and played the harlot after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God destroyed before them. And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to

the river of Gozan, unto this day." (1 Chron. 5:25. 26.)

The third and final carrying away of Israelites to Assyria—the subject of this particular lesson—was during the reign of Hoshea, the last king of Israel. Hoshea apparently tried to keep faith with the king of Assyria, but the tribute was heavy, and the people of Israel smarted under the financial burden. Under the press of those circumstances. Hoshea tried to show good faith to the great king while secretly entering into an alliance with So of Egypt. The account in Kings reads: "And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year. ... In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away to Assyria." (2 Kings 17:4-6.) This was the third and final "carrying away" of the Israelites to Assyria. The year was about 721 B.C., and all the Israelites, except a few of the poor, were carried to Assyria and scattered throughout the countries of that nation.

### The Prophet Hosea

The prophet Hosea occupied a very prominent place in this period of Israel's history. Hosea's ministry extended from the reign of Jeroboam II to the reign of Hoshea, the last king of Israel. He began as a young prophet during the reign of Jeroboam II, and he continued, according to his own head note, into the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah. Since Hezekiah began his reign in the third year of the reign of Hoshea, there can be no doubt that Hosea prophesied during the reign of Hoshea. (2 Kings 18:1.)

When representing the period of his ministry, Hosea wrote: "The word of Jehovah that came unto Hosea the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel." (Hos. 1:1.) At the first thought, the fact that a prophet in Israel should represent his ministry by the kings of Judah would seem to be strikingly strange, but anarchy was so rife in Israel during that period of history that Hosea had no means of properly represent-

ing his ministry, except by the reigns of the stable kings of Judah. With respect to the kings of Israel, there was one assassination after another. Further, there were interregnums, or periods of time when anarchy so prevailed that there was no recognized king on the throne of Israel.

To illustrate how that anarchy did prevail in Israel, the list of the kings of Israel from Jeroboam to Hoshea, herewith submitted, together with the cause of each one's having been removed from the throne, reflects the character and instability of the nation of Israel at

that period of history.

Jeroboam II reigned forty-one years and died a natural death. Hosea, the prophet, began his ministry during the closing years of Jeroboam's reign. Some scholars conclude that there was an interregnum—a state of anarchy—of some twenty-two years between the time of Jeroboam's death and the time when his son Zechariah was seated on the throne, Those scholars reach their conclusion on the basis of a comparison of 2 Kings 14:23, with 2 Kings 15:1, 2, 8. There were interregnums, without question, but likely the time between the death of Jeroboam II and the ascension of his son Zechariah to the throne was not one of them.

Zechariah, son of Jeroboam II, reigned for six months and was assassinated by Shallum.

Shallum reigned for one month and was assassinated by Menahem.

Menahem reigned for ten years and died a natural death.

Pekahiah, son of Menahem, reigned for two years and was assassinated by Pekah.

Pekah reigned for twenty years and was assassinated by Hoshea. There seems to have been an eight or nine-year interregnum between the death of Pekah and the time that Hoshea was seated firmly on the throne. (Compare 2 Kings 15:27 and 2 Kings 17:1.)

Hoshea reigned for nine years. In his ninth year—the point of the present lesson—Samaria, the capital city, fell, and the nation

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of Israel was carried into Assyrian captivity.

Now, this listing of the kings of Israel from Jeroboam II to Hoshea reflects the instability and anarchy which prevailed in Israel during Hosea's ministry as a prophet. The prophet Hosea had no reasonable way of representing his ministry

except by the kings of Judah.

Hosea prophesied on the eve of the captivity of Israel. He began as a young man, and he continued in his ministry for more than sixty years. His lot was cast in mournful times. Jehovah spake with him "at the first," and instructed him to take unto him a "wife of whoredom and children of whoredom for the land doth commit great whoredom against Jehovah." In short, Hosea was to be a living object lesson for the people of Israel. He would be married to adulterous Gomer, just as Jehovah was married to adulter-

ous Israel; and his grief, suffering, and forgiveness of his wayward wayward wife, would reflect and represent Jehovah's grief and longsuffering with wayward Israel. Further, Hosea's children were for signs in the continued spiritual decline in Israel.

Israel fell to the Assyrians in the year of Hezekiah king of which was also the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel. Samaria, the capital of Israel, was under siege for three years before its fall. While Hosea prophesied in the days of Hezekiah, there is no indication in his writings that Shalmaneser had actually laid siege to the city of Samaria. The reasonable conclusion is that Hosea died in about the third year of Hezekiah, and thus before Shalmaneser had laid siege to Samaria. This would have been in about the sixth or seventh year of Hoshea.

### The Golden Text

face of the Lord isupon them that do evil." (1 Pet. 3:12.)

The all-seeing eyes of the Lord are upon the good and the bad. His eyes are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers. Through prayers, the righteous, are able to do good, and to eschew evil.

God's people must not only turn from evil, but they must do good. While the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, his face is upon the evil. He knows the evil; he takes note of them, and his ultimate punishment is upon them.

# The Text Explained

Hoshea Becomes King (2 Kings 17:1-2)

In the twelfth year of Ahaz, king of Judah began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel, and reigned nine years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, yet not as kings of Israel that were be the before

When Hoshea came to the throne, the golden calves at Bethel and Dan had been carried away by the As-syrians, and the calf worship had all but ceased to exist. Hoshea seems to have made some effort to good king. He apparently sought to re-establish the worship of Jehovah, though in the perverted form of the calf worship. In an effort to revive the old theocracy, he removed the frontier guards and permitted his people to go to Jerusalem to worship. Even though Hoshea sought to re-establish the worship of Jehovah, the course of the kingdom had gone too far into sin and idolatry to turn back.

# Shalmaneser Finds Conspiracy in Hoshea

(2 Kings 17:3-4)

him came up Shalmane-Against ser king of Assyria; and Hoshea his servänt, and became him tribute. And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him иp, and bound him in prison.

Tiglath-pileser died in 728 or 727 B.C., and he was succeeded by Shalmaneser IV. In the meantime a league had been formed against Assyria by the intrigues Egyptians at Samaria and Tyre. Taking courage from the pledged military support from Egypt, Hoshea refused to pay the annual tribute to the great king at Nineveh. Thus to crush Hoshea's revolt, Shalmaneser appeared in Palestine with his army. He seized Hoshea and bound him in prison.

## Samaria Is Taken (2 Kings 17:5-6)

Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away unto Assyria, and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

Samaria, the capital city of Israel, was under siege for three years before it fell to the Assyrians. This fact speaks to the credit of Omri who selected Samaria as the most desirable and defensible place for the capital city. The city occupied an oblong hill of unusually good defenses. It was most desirable as a place for observation and a fortress. Scholars have observed that the natural defenses of Samaria were even superior to the natural defenses of Jerusalem.

In the ninth year of Hoshea, and after a three-year siege, Samaria fell. The Israelites were carried away to Assyria. The power and strength of Assyria at that time is indicated by the fact that the king of Assyria settled some of the captives in "the cities of the Medes." (Amos 3:11, 12; 5:1, 2.)

At The End of Three Years They

Took It (2 Kings 18:9-10)

And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. And at the end of three years they took it in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken.

For centuries there was no information concerning a Sargon, king of Assyria, except for the reference that Isaiah made of him. (Isa. 20:1.

that Isaiah made of him. (Isa. 20:1, 2.) Liberals scoffed at Isaiah's identification of Sargon. They said that the king was undoubtedly Shalmaneser. Then a little more than a century ago the spade turned up Sargon's records. The record of Second Kings, however, contemplated the fact of Sargon by the statement: "and they," not Shalmaneser IV, "took it." (2 Kings 18:10.) Shalmaneser had a short reign. He died at the time when Israel was falling, and he was succeeded by his brother Sargon who took the credit for the complete overthrow of Israel. Shalmaneser and Sargon were both the sons of Tiglath-pileser. Samaria fell in the sixth year of Hezekiah.

# Israel Transgressed God's Covenant (2 Kings 18:11-12)

And the king of Assyria carried Israel away unto Assyria, and put them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, because they obeyed not the voice of Jehovah their God, but transgressed his covenant, even all that Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded, and would not hear it, nor do it.

The people of Israel were carried to Assyria and scattered throughout the cities, including the cities of the Medes. The end of Israel was sad indeed. Israel's history would have been glorious if only its people had obeyed the voice of Jehovah, but Israel obeyed not the voice of Jehovah. The writer of Second Kings emphasized how that Israel "transgressed the covenant," and he added with emphasis, "even all that Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded, and would not hear it, nor do it." Thus the sad and unfortunate sins of God's chosen people brought the great nation to an inglorious end.

# A Homily

# Factors That Brought About the Fall of Israel

#### I. Introduction

- A. What specific factors brought about the fall of the nation of Israel?
  - 1. You may answer sin, or you may answer idolatry, but

- such an answer is really not adequate.
- 2. If we are to take warning and these matters have been recorded for our admonition and learning—we need to look at the specific factors that brought about the fall of

the nation of God's chosen people.

 Further, we need to reflect upon those specific factors or sins lest we transgress in principle the very sins that the Israelites committed.

- B. In order to learn the specific factors or sins which brought about Israel's downfall, we must look to the books of Amos and Hosea, especially to the book of Hosea.
  - Hosea prophesied on the eve of the apostasy of Israel.
    - a. His ministry was cast in mournful times.
    - His ministry was long—a period of more than sixty years.
  - Hosea was, no doubt, above ninety years of age when he died.
  - He prophesied during the reigns of the last seven kings of Israel.
    - a. He was called to the prophetic office of Israel in the latter part of the reign of Jeroboam II.
      - (1) Jeroboam II reigned for forty-one years.
      - (2) When Hosea began to prophesy, Jeroboam's kingdom, the "bow" or long arm of the law, was still strong.
      - (3) Hosea must have prophesied during Jeroboam's reign for some ten years.
    - b. He also prophesied during the reigns of Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea.
      - (1) Hosea stated in his head note that he prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.
      - (2) Now, Hezekiah began to reign in the third year of Hoshea, the last king of Israel.
      - (3) But the prophet Hosea's book concludes with no indication that Shalmaneser IV had laid siege to Samaria.
      - (4) The city was under siege for three years,

and it fell in the sixth vear of Hezekiah.

- (5) Hosea's ministry must have closed, therefore, about the third year of Hezekiah's reign, which would have been the sixth or seventh year of Hoshea's reign.
- 4. Hosea, his wife, and his children stood as object lessons to the people of Israel.
  - Hosea as a husband of an adulterous wife, represented the position of Jehovah who was married to adulterous Israel.
  - Gomer, Hosea's adulterous wife, represented adulterous Israel.
  - The birth of each child reflected a further spiritual decline in the nation of Israel.
- II. Some Factors That Brought About the Fall of Israel
- A. Some factors that brought about the fall of Israel, as pointed up by Hosea, include the following:
  - Israel was destroyed for a lack of knowledge. They counted the law a strange thing. (Read Hosea 4:6 and 8:12.)
    - a. Israel's ignorance was deliberate. The people had been taught, but they refused to hear. They counted the law of Moses a strange thing—a strange document.
    - In the church today, relatively few Christians take the study of the Bible seriously.
    - c. Perhaps the average Christian does well to hastily read his Sunday school lesson, if some study book is chosen.
    - d. If the study is directly from the Bible, a book and chapter study, the average Christian probably does not even read the chapter before going to class.
    - e. Brethren generally know very little of the Old Testament.
    - f. These conditions and oth-

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> ers have given rise to a social gospel.

- Sermons, or rather sermonettes, often offer very little true Bible information.
- The rank and file of brethren are clamoring for sermons that are essentially a mixture of philos-ophy, psychology, and sociology.

Some brethren express themselves as being "so tired of faith, repentance,

and baptism sermons.

- While the church needs a balanced diet-a diet strong meat, spiritually speaking-when we cease to preach the fundamentals of the gospel, we will cease to be the church of
- Israel was destroyed because of pride. (Read Hosea 5:2.)
  - Pride caused the fall of Satan. (1 Tim. 3:6.)
    - The pride of Israel kept the people from a humble reception of the instructions of the prophets.
    - Pride will keep Christians today from a humble study of the word of God.
- Israel was destroyed because 3. the people's goodness or righteousness was as a morning cloud. (Read Hosea 6:4.)
  - The morning cloud has a semblance or promise of but it soon rain. away.
  - So with Israel. At a distance Israel, with their sacrifices and holy days, had a show of righteous-
  - But there was no righteousness among people.
  - We may well ask: "What about the church today? Is there true righteousness, or only a show of righteousness?
- Israel was destroyed because he mixed himself among the peoples—the Gentiles. (Read Hosea 7:8.)
  - There is a great clamor today from certain brethren for the church to mix

- itself among the denominations.
- The contention is that the church can have a fellowship with all religionists as long as they believe on
- These are perilous days, but brethren generally are not aware of the fact.
- 5. Israel was destroyed because people embraced gods. worshipped idolatrous (Read Hosea 9:9-10: 13:1-2.)
  - The apostle Paul warned Christians against "covetousness, which is idolatry." (Col. 3:5.)
  - In another place Paul wrote of certain "enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is perdition, whose god is the belly." (Phil. 3:19.)
- Israel was destroyed because 6. the people trusted i?i the multitude of their mighty men. (Hos. 11:13.)
  - Israel's multitude mighty men led them astray, in fact to the brink and end of a great destruction.
  - b. Let brethren beware!
  - Our trust should be in the word of God.
  - We may poise confidence humble dedicated preachers and teachers who study and know the word, but even then, e may not follow with our eyes closed.
  - We are under obligation to study the word for ourselves.
  - We must beware of the high and mighty men who know, by their own admission, so much than men like Lipscomb, Harding, Sewell, and others.
  - No justifiable objection g. can be filed against men who have earned doctorate degrees so long as they are loyal to the word, but there is no justification for brethren to regard them as the epitome of truth

merely on the basis of their degrees,

h. We must trust in God not in mighty men.

B. The fall of Israel was tragic.

- The country was depopulated and scattered throughout the cities of the Medes.
- There is no real evidence that they retained their identity.
- In keeping with the prophecy of Hosea, they ceased to be known as the people of God. (Hos. 1:8-9.)

#### III. Conclusion

- The same sins that brought on the fall of Israel later prevailed in the church and led it into apostasy.
- The "restoration movement" derwent an apostasy in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and the same sins that brought on the fall of Israel prevailed in that apostasy.
- Brethren can well afford to ask: "Are those same sins gathering to a head in the church today?"

## Questions for Discussion

Give the subject for today's lesson. Repeat the golden text. Give time, places, and persons.

The Golden Text

God's eyes are upon whom? God's face is against whom?

#### Introduction

Who was the last king of the nation of Israel?

How does the Bible describe him?

the kings before him"? "above all

In what way did Hoshea commit less evil than the eighteen kings before him? Describe the spiritual reformation taking place in Judah at this time.

Who was the king of Judah at this time?
To whom was the king's invitation keep the passover extended? Who cepted?
What were the resulting acts which

which took place in Israel after the passover?

What was Hoshea's reaction to tions? these ac-

Israel's relations Describe Assyria

reign of Menahem from the final carrying away.

hen was the first carrying away When into

Assyria? When ' was the second carrying away Israel into Assyria?

Discuss the events which transpired prior to the second carrying away. Then was the third carrying away of Is-

Who was king of Assyria at the time of these carryings away?

Describe the third carrying away. How

was it different from the other two? At what time can we place Hosea's ministry?

Why did Hosea represent his ministry by the kings of Judah when he was sent to prophesy to Israel?

Name the kings of Israel from Jeroboam Hoshea and give II the length each reign.

How long was the prophet Hosea's ministry? How

ow was Hosea's marriage to be an object lesson to Israel? Give the analogy. Exactly when did Israel fall to Assyria?

# Lesson X—March 7, 1976

# ISRAEL'S PUNISHMENT JUST

# Lesson Text Amos 4:1-13

1 Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, that oppress the poor, that crush the needy, that say unto their lords, Bring, and let us drink.

The Lord Jehovah hath sworn by his holiness, that, lo, the days shall come upon you, that they shall take you away with hooks, and your residue with fish-hooks.

And ye shall go out at the breaches, every one straight before and ye shall cast yourselves into Harmon, saith Jehovah.

Come to Bethel, and transgress; to Gilgal, and multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes every three

- And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, of that which is leavened and proclaim freewill-offerings and publish them: for this pleaseth you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah.
- 6 And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah.

And I also have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest; and I caused it to rain upon one city, and

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caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.

8 So two or three cities wandered unto one city to drink water, and were not satisfied: yet have ye not

returned unto me, saith Jehovah.

9 I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: the multitude of your gardens and your vineyards and your fig-trees and your olivetrees hath the palmer-worm de-voured: yet have ye not returned unto me, šaith Jehovah.

10 I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have carried away your horses; and I have made the stench of your camp to come up even into your nostrils: yet have ye not returneď unto me, saith Jehovah.

have overthrown cities among you, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a brand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Iehováh.

Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; arid because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy

God, O Israel.

For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind and declareth unto man what is his thought; that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth—Jehovah, the God of hosts, is his name.

Golden Text.—"Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live." (Amos 5:14.)

Devotional Reading. — Amos 5:1-3.

# Daily Bible Readings

March 1. M	Law of Sowing and Reaping (Gal. 6:1-10)
March 2. T	Law of Sowing and Reaping (Gal. 6:1-10) Israel's Sowing and Reaping (Hos. 10:9-15)
March 3. W	Putting Away the Evil Day (Amos 6:1-6)
March 4. T	God's Attitude Toward Sinner's (Mal. 3:1-6)
	Punishment of Wicked (Matt. 25:41-46)
March 6. S	Righteous Blessed (Matt. 5:1-12)
March 7. S	Ignorance That Destroys (Hos. 4:6-10)

Time.—About 752 B.C Place.—Bethel in Israel.

Persons. – Amos and the Israelites of Bethel and environs.

#### Introduction

The study for today's lesson is taken from the book of Amos the prophet. In order to properly un-derstand and fully appreciate a study from the book of Amos, the student must have a knowledge of the time and circumstances that at-

tended Amos' ministry.

Amos prophesied in "the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel." The time was about 754 B.C. The last fourteen years of the reign of Jeroboam were concurrent with the first fourteen years of the reign of Uzziah. In the first part of his forty-one reign, Jeroboam had, with year reign, Jeroboam had, with the counsel of the prophet Jonah, solidly defeated the nation of Syria. Jehovah saved Israel "by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash." At the time of Amos, the nation of Israel had come to be the ascendant kingdom among the small kingdoms

to the north of Palestine. In turn, the kingdom of Judah, under its king Uzziah, had become the ascendant kingdom among the small kingdoms to the south of Palestine. Uzziah's "name spread far abroad; for he was marvelously helped, till strong." (Amos was Chron. 26:15.)

Thus the two ascendant kingdoms stood, so to speak, side by side, and relative peace prevailed them. An era of prosperity, comparable to the prosperity of the past two decades, prevailed in both kingdoms, and the common fruits of prosperity—pride, luxury, selfishness, and oppression of the poor—prevailed in both kingdoms, and especially in Israel.

During that era of prosperity, Jehovah called Amos to the prophetic office and sent him from Tekoa in Judah, to Bethel in Israel to "proph-

esy unto his people." Amos had

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no formal preparation for the office of a prophet. He had not attended a school of the prophets, and his father before him was not a prophet. Amos' preparation for such a ministry was confined to his personal study of the law of Moses and to his study of the messages of the prophets, such as Joel and from whom he quoted. Amos, however, was very familiar with the law of Moses and the history of Israel as is attested by references and quotes in his book.

Amos was a poor countryman, a herdsman and a dresser of sycomore trees. When Amaziah, high priest of Bethel, sought to expel him from the land, Amos depriest of Bethel, sought to clared: "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdsman, and a dresser of sycomore-trees: and Jehovah took me from following the flock, and Jehovah said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." (Amos 7:14, 15.) Amos was truly a coun-try preacher who was sent to try preacher who was sent to preach, by way of analogy, to a rich, influential, but corrupt city church. Even King Jeroboam worshipped at the sanctuary in Bethel. If God had sent a man of Isaiah's position to Bethel to preach, he would have been currented from would have been suspected from the start, but not so with the rustic country preacher, Amos.

Two fitting designations for Amos "Amos the Country Preacher," and "Amos, the Unadorned Orator." Amos was truly a skillful orator. He presented his message in a logical manner and with all the attend-

of parallelisms. niceties ant His language was colorful, vivid, characterized by many rhetorical devices. Preachers of today will do well to study his art of sermonizing. (Amos 7:14, 15.)

Amos, with true conviction and commitment to God, shook Israel with his oratorical messages. In an attempt to expel Amos from the land, the high priest Amaziah charged Amos with having developed a conspiracy in the land. The record of Amaziah's efforts reads as follows: "Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land. Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thou away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: but prophesy not again any more at Bethel; for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a royal house." (Amos 7:10-13.) Amos had not said that Jeroboam would "die by the by sword." He had said that Jehovah would rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword, and Zechariah the son of Jeroboam, who succeeded to the throne, was assassinated by the sword. He was, of course, of the house of Jeroboam. A knowledge of these matters will, no doubt, assist a person in understanding and appreciating the book of Amos.

#### The Golden Text

of

"Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live." (Amos 5:14.)

Amos had just declared the doom of Israel. "The Virgin of Israel is fallen," he said, and, "The city that went forth a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which went forth a hundred shall have ten left." Then he began to say: "Seek ye me, and ye shall live; . . . Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live."

What is the meaning

What is the harmony of Jehovah's pronouncement of doom on the one hand and his offer of life on the other? The answer lies first in the fact that with every pronouncement of doom by Jehovah there is an implied promise of mercy and forgiveness if the people repent. The Ninevites, by the way of example, repented and God spared the city. The answer lies second in the fact that God knows some things absolutely, and some things he knows contingently. The things that God knows with absolute certainty things that are, or must be, in point of order, time, place, and form; whereas, the things that God knows contingently are the things poised by him and left to the free will of man to tilt the scales of righteous-

Jehovah sent Isaiah to Hezekiah to say, "Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live": but

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Hezekiah repented, and God added fifteen years to his life. (Isa. 38:1-6.) The point is that Jehovah, in his great wisdom and plan for man, avoids any absolute knowledge that would be incompatible with the free agency and responsibility of man.

# The Text Explained

## Amos Denounces the Women of Bashan (Amos 4:1-3)

Hear this word, ye kine of Ba-shan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, that oppress the poor, that crush the needy, that say unto their lords, Bring, and let us drink. The Lord Jehovah hath sworn by his holiness, that lo, the days shall come upon you, that they shall take you away with hooks, and your residue with fish-hooks. And ye shall go out at the breaches, every one straight before her; and ye shall cast yourselves into Harmon, saith Jehovah.

The text of Amos in these verses reflects the prosperity that pre-vailed among the well-to-do Israel-ites at that point of history, and it also reflects how that the poor were very poor-ground down by their oppressors to a hard and bare exist-

Amos addressed the women of Israel who were given to luxury as kine, or cows of Bashan. The term "kine"—unlike the term "bull" which denoted fierceness—denoted luxury, wantoness, effeminacy, and unnatural affections. Those women sought only that their desires and self-indulgences be gratified. That which they demanded from their lords—their husbands—was obtainable only by their husbands' oppression of the poor. Amos pictures those women as having spent the day in idleness and as saying to their lords or husbands when they returned at the end of the day, "Bring and let us drink."

Amos declared that Jehovah had "sworn by his holiness"—which is to say that he had sworn by himself -that the days would come when they would be caught with hooks as a helpless fish. Assyria would come and those women would flee, neither looking to the left or the right, as a herd of hogs or cows, when pressured, will follow one after another through a gate in a fence. Just in such a way those wanton women would go forth at the breeches, and they would fling their idolatrous gods away as they ran. Further, as the men would be made eunuchs in the palaces of their conquerors, so those wanton women would be placed in harems and used to gratify the sensual desires of the men placed over them.

# Amos Denounces the Idolatry of the Israelites

(Amos 4:4, 5)

Come to Bethel, and transgress; to Gilgal and multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes every three days; and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving of that which is leav-ened, and proclaim freewill-offer-ings and publish them: for this pleaseth you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah.

With deliberate irony, Amos seizes upon the Israelites. He invites them to "come to Bethel and transgress; to Gilgal and multiply transgression." In short Amos invites them to show their zeal for their idoletrous worships. their idolatrous worship. Bethel was the city where Jeroboam I erected one of his two golden calves, and at that altar he first inaugurated his new order of worship. Gilgal was the site of the first camp of the Israelites on the west of the Jordan. It was a holy city, a place where Samuel administered justice and where burnt-offerings and peace offerings were accustomed to be offered before Jehovah. Unfortunately, both Bethel and Gilgal had come to be associated together as being places of idolatrous worship.

As will be observed by the reading of the above text, the Israelites were careful to maintain certain regularities of the Levitical wor-ship. They made daily offerings, paid tithes for the poor, and were punctual withal, in keeping with the worship in Jerusalem. Their activity and punctuality, however, only multiplied their transgressions. Ironically, they seem not to have made any sin offerings and transgress offerings. They counted themselves so righteous and so ac82 Lesson X

ceptable to Jehovah that they felt no compunction that would require them to make sin offerings and

transgress offerings.

Those Israelites were enthusiastic and excited about their worship and their thanksgiving and free offerings. They even went beyond that which the law required, but they did that which they liked to do—they did that which pleased them. They were boastful of their service to Jehovah, all of which was only self-will. In strong irony, Amos admonished that they make their thanksgiving offerings "and publish them: for it pleaseth you."

Christians and religionists everywhere can afford to contemplate the case of the worship of those Israelites. There is an important lesson to be learned from them. Every worship today attended by zeal and great enthusiasm is not necessarily acceptable; for "God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John

4:24.)

## Amos Cites Instances of God's Judgment (Amos 4:6-11)

And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah. And I also have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest; and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered unto one city to drink water, and were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: the multitude of your gardens and your vineyards and your fig-trees and your olive-trees hath the palmer-worm devoured: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah. I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have carried away your horses; and I have made the stench of your camp to come up even into your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah. I have overthrown cities among you, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a brand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah.

Jehovah loved Israel, and he sought by means of punishments, as well as by the preaching of the prophets, to correct Israel. There were five different instances of Jehovah's judgments, and there were also as many refrains with the words: "Yet ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah." The visitations of judgments consisted of the

following:

1. The first visitation upon Israel was by means of famine. God gave the Israelites cleanness of teeth and want of food. In short, he withheld the powers and functions of nature. The Israelites thought their calves—the source of nature, itself—had given them their corn and wine. The result of the visitation: "Yet ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah."

2. The second visitation upon Israel was by means of drought. God withheld the February and March rains which in that country are so necessary for the production of crops, and he caused it to rain upon one city and not upon another. This was a demonstration of the fact that God has not limited himself by his own general laws of nature. The general laws of nature are not discriminative. Normally, nature rains upon the just and the unjust, but God revealed his power by causing rain to fall upon one city and not on another. The result of the visitation: "Yet ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah."

3. The third visitation upon Israel was by means of blasting and mildew. The blastings were as a result of the hot, scorching East wind. The mildew was a blight—a plant disease. The gardens, vineyards, fig-trees, and olive-trees suffered, and in turn, the palmer-worm devoured the remaining growth. The result of the visitation: "Yet ye have not returned unto me, saith

Jehovah."

4. The fourth visitation upon Israel was by means of pestilence after the manner of Egypt, and by the scourge of men as well. Egypt was known for its diseases, especially its plagues. Egypt wanted for sufficient water. It depended primarily on the Nile River for its

water supply, and the land was not conducive to good health; whereas, the whole Palestinian area was, by its nature, healthy. The pestilences of Egypt as well as the scourges of men were visited upon Israel. The result of the visitations: "Yet ye have not returned unto me, saith Iehovah."

5. The fifth visitation upon Israel was by means of earthquakes. Earthquakes, generally speaking, were not common to the area of Palestine, except on the border; but God brought earthquakes upon Israel, and they were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning. Amos wrote of how that he was called to the prophetic office "two years before the earthquake." (Amos 1:1.) The result of the visitation: "Yet ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah."

#### Amos Calls upon Israel to Prepare to Meet God (Amos 4:12-13)

Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet

Amos was a great preacher—a great orator—a great sermonizer. The first six chapters constitute, so to speak, a full-length sermon, which sermon falls into a logical order of introduction, body, and conclusion. Amos was very adept at parallelisms and rhetorical devices. He knew how to make his main points march, and he knew how to properly subordinate his sub-points. He led into each of his marching points with the same introductory wording. The following is the basic outline of Amos' sermon, and it reflects the parallelisms and rhetorical devices as well as a straightforward message from Jehovah.

# Jehovah Shall Roar from Zion

Text: "And Jehovah will roam from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem: and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel." (Joel 3:16.)

#### I. Introduction

A. "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Damascus, yea

thy God, O Israel. For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought; that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth—Jehovah, the God of hosts, is his name.

All of the previous visitations of Jehovah had been of no avail, and God, therefore, was ready to bring greater judgments upon the Israelites. In contemplation of the heavier judgments, Amos admonished: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."

Amos moved to declare that Israel's adopted god, nature itself, was created by the very God whom they should prepare to meet. The God that they would meet, formed mountains, created the wind, the declared unto men morning thoughts. He made the darkness, and he treadeth upon the high places of the earth. What an all-powerful God! How fearful to stand before him without having proper made the and righteous preparation!

### A Homily

- for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." (Amos 1:3.)
- B. "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Judah, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." (1:6.)
- C. "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Tyre, yea for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." (1:9.)
- D. "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Edom, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." (1:11.)
- E. "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of the children of Ammon, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." (1:13.)
- F. "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Moab, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." (2:1.)
- G. "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Judah, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." (2:4.)
- H. "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Israel, yea, for

four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." (2:6.)

- Because they have sold the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes.
- Because they pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor.
- Because they turn aside the way of the meek.
- 4. Because a man and his father go unto the same maiden.
- Because they lay themselves down beside every altar upon clothes taken in pledge.
- Because they drink in the house of their God wine of such as has been fined. (Amos 2:6-8.)

#### II. Hear the Word of Jehovah

- A. Hear this word that Jehovah hath spoken against you, O children of Israel.
  - 1. You only of the families of the earth have I known.
  - I will visit upon you all your iniquities.
  - 3. Shall two walk together, except they have agreed?
  - 4. Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey?
  - Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth where no gin is set?
  - 6. Shall a trumpet be blown in the city and the people not be afraid?
  - 7. Shall evil befall a city, and Jehovah hath not done it?
  - 8. The lion hath roared: who will not fear?
  - 9. The Lord Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy?
  - 10. There is an adversary, even round about the land.
  - 11. Jehovah will visit the altars of Bethel.
  - He will smite the winter house with the summer house.
  - 13. The houses of ivory shall perish.
  - 14. The great houses shall have an end.
- B. Hear the word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria.
  - You cows—women—that op press the poor,
    - a. And crush the needy

- b. And say to their Lords, Bring and let us drink.
- 2. They shall take you away with hooks.
- 3. Come to Bethel and transgress.
- 4. Ĭ have brought upon you
  - a. Famine—yet ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah.
  - Drought—Yet ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah.
  - Blasting and mildew—Yet ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah.
  - d. Pestilence from Egypt— Yet ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah.
  - Earthquakes—Yet ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah.
- Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.
- C. Hear ye this word which I take up for a lamentation over you, O house of Israel. The Virgin of Israel is fallen.
  - 1. Seek Jehovah and ye shall live.
    - a. Ye turn justice to wormwood, and cast down righteousness to the earth.
    - b. Seek him that maketh the Pleiades and Orion.
    - c. Ye hate him that reprove th in the gate, and they hate him that speaketh uprightly.
    - d. Ye shall not dwell in your houses of hewn stone.
    - Ye afflict the just, take a bribe, and turn away the needy.
  - Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live.
  - Woe to you that desire the day of Jehovah.
    - a. It is darkness, and not light.
    - I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
    - c. Take away from me the noise of thy songs.
    - d. Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.
  - 4. Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and to them that are

secure into the mountain of Samaria.

- Ye that put far away the evil day.
- Ye that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch yourselves upon your couches.
- Ye that eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall.
- Ye that invent instruments of music, like David.
- Ye that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief oils,

but are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

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## III. Conclusion

- A. Shall horses run upon the rocks?
- B. Will one plow there with oxen?
  - Ye that rejoice in a thing of nought.
  - Ye that say, Have ye not taken to us horns by our own strength?
- I will raise up against you, O house of Israel.
- That nation shall afflict you from the entrance of Hamath unto the brook of the Arabah.

### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

When did Amos prophesy? Describe the political status of Israel the time of Amos. Describe the political status Judah the time of Amos. Describe the relations between Israel and Judah at this time.

What were the economic conditions in

both kingdoms?
What fruits of these conditions prevailed in both kingdoms, especially in Israel?
What preparation had Amos made for the prophetic office?
What was Amos' occupation at the time he was called by Jehovah to prophesy?
By way of analogy, to whom was Amos sent to preach?
Give two fitting degiceration.

Give two fitting designations for Amos.

Describe Amos' style of preaching.

Of what crime did Amaziah, in his tempt to expel Amos from the land, cuse Amos? ac-

his message to Jeroboam, did Amaziah describe Amos' words?

# The Golden Text

Relate the two principles which harmonize Jehovah's pronouncement of doom on the one hand with his offer of life on the other the other.

Give examples of these principles.

Amos Denounces the Women of Bashan

This text reflects what prevailing condition at that point of history?

what colorful term did Amos describe the women of Israel? What did this term denote? How does Amos picture these women? Describe the end of these women as Amos predicted it was to be.

#### Amos Denounces the Idolatry of the Israelites

Repeat Amos' ironic invitation to Israel. What was he implying that they should do?

Why were the cities of Bethel and Gilgal significant in this invitation? what areas of worship were the Israelites very punctual?

What parts of the worship did the Israelites omit?

Why did they not do all that the law required in worship?

## Amos Cites Instances of God's Judgments

Name the five different means of visitation by Jehovah upon Israel. What was the same result of all five visitations?

#### Amos Calls upon Israel to Prepare

After the previous visitations had been no avail, what was God ready to be what was God ready to bring upon Israel?

Describe the God, in Amos' words, they were to prepare to meet.

#### A Homily

Describe Amos' adeptness in sermonizing. Name the six transgressions of Israel which God would not turn away for punishment.

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# Lesson XI – March 14, 1976

# PROPHECIES CONCERNING ISRAEL

# **Lesson Text** Amos 6:1-11

1 Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and to them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel come!

Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines: are they better than these kingdoms? or is their border greater than your border?

3 —Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence

to come near;

4 That lie upon beds of ivory, and themselves upon couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;

5 That sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that invent for themselves instruments of music,

David;

6 That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief oils; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

7 Therefore shall they now go cap-

tive with the first that go captive; and the revelry of them that stretched themselves shall pass

away.

8 The Lord Jehovah hath sworn
Labovah the God by himself, saith Jehovah, the God of hosts: I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces; therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein.

9 And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house,

that they shall die.

10 And when a man's uncle shall take him up, even he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is in the innermost parts of the house, Is there yet any with thee? and he shall say, No; then shall he say, Hold thy peace; for we may not make mention of the name of Jehovah.

11 For, behold, Jehovah mandeth, and the great house shall be smitten with breaches, and the little house with clefts.

Golden Text.—"Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish justice in the gate." (Amos 5:15.) Devotional Reading.—Isa. 55:6-13.

Daily Bible Readings

March	8.	M Israel's Transgressions (Amos 2:6-16)
March	9.	T Jehovah's Words Against Israel (Amos 3:1-7)
March	10.	W Israel to Be Punished (Amos 3:8-15)
March	11.	T
March	12.	F Rebellion in Israel (2 Kings 7:13-18)
March	13.	S Amos Pleads for Justice (Amos 5:1-15)
March	14.	SGod's Disappointment in Israel (Hos. 6:4-6)

Time.—About 752 B.C. Place.—Bethel in Israel.

Persons.—Amos and the Israelites of Bethel.

#### Introduction

The lesson for today, "Prophecies Concerning Israel," follows in logical order last Sunday's lesson enti-"Israel's tled: Punishment Just." Israel felt When Amos secure. warned the people of the coming of the day of Jehovah, they expressed themselves as desiring the day of In substance they said: "Let the day of Jehovah come. We are ready for it." Those Israelites reasoned that they stood high in Jehovah's list. They had evidence of Jehovah's approbation, they thought.

Those Israelites reasoned that Jehovah was exceedingly well pleased with them, else they would not be the ascendant kingdom among those kingdoms which lay immediately north of the territory of Palestine. reasoned further prosperity was a certain sign of

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God's approval of them. They were like the Laodiceans of the New Testament-rich, increased with goods, and had need of nothing.

The sins of Israel consisted of luxury, indolence, insolence, egotism, profanity, violence, and ef-

feminacy. They were careless, selfand wanton, and Jehovah's wrath was upon them. He sent his prophets Amos and Hosea to warn them of their evil ways, but those Israelites would not listen. They were set for captivity.

# The Golden Text

"Hate the evil, love the good, and establish justice in the gate."

(Amos 5:15.)

The golden text is characteristic Amos' contrasting language-"Hate the evil, love the good, and establish justice in the gate." This was the reverse of his admonition in verse 14: "Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live."

Hating and loving are of a deeper intensity and feeling than mere seeking. So long as a man does not hate evil, he will not cease to seek after it. The man who does good because it is good will be blessed in ways. Every Christian should examine himself in the light admonition. He should

ask himself, "Do I hate evil? Do I love good?"

An acid test of a man's love of that which is good is his attitude with respect to justice. Does he plead the cause of the widow and orphan? Does he shake his hand from taking a bribe? Does he give honor to whom honor is due? Is he grateful for those who have assisted him along the way? Does he stop to remember those who have helped and succored him when they experience misfortunes, adversities, and declining years and health-his parents, his teachers, his elders? Such questions make for an acid

# The Text Explained

## Amos Pronounces Woe on Judah and Israel

(Amos 6:1, 2)

Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and to them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria, the nota-ble men of the chief of the nations to whom the house of Israel come! Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines: are they better than are they better than these kingdoms? or is their border

greater than your border?

Amos' pronouncement of woe upon Judah and Israel reflected the prosperity that prevailed in both kingdoms. Israel was ascendant in military power to the nations north of Palestine, and Judah was ascendant in military power to the nations south of Palestine. Uzziah king of Israel and Jeroboam king of Judah reigned concurrently for a minimum of fourteen years. The usual and common fruits of prosperitypride, luxury, selfishness, and oppression of the poor—prevailed in both kingdoms, and especially in Israel. Judah was at ease in Zion, and Israel was secure in the mountain of Samaria. The two nations were faring so well from all financial and worldly considerations that they did not need God, they thought. They were the Laodicean church of the Old Testament.

Like the church at Laodicea, both Judah and Israel were rich, increased with goods, and had need of nothing. Like the church at Laodicea, the two kingdoms were a little hot and a little cold, and not much of either. They were a little for the Lord and much more for the devil, and they amounted to nothing spiritually. They had a form of godliness but denied the power thereof. (Rev. 3:14-22; 2 Tim. 3:5.)

Judah was secure in religious privilege; Israel was secure in strategic strength. Judah was characterized by indolence; Israel was characterized by insolence. Judah was characterized by a preoccupation with things non-spiritual; Israel was characterized by a presumption

of things anti-scriptural.

"Woe to . . . the notable men of the chief of the nations," Amos declared. Israel—including both of the northern and southern kingdoms—was that chief nation, and the notable men were the principal or chief men of that chief nation. Israel was beloved of God, chosen

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of God, and appointed of God to bear the true light of God to all the other nations of the earth. Through Amos, Jehovah declared: You only have I known of all the families of the earth." Thus the chosen people of God sought unto their notable men for guidance and decisions involving principles of

righteousness and justice. Jehovah, through Amos, invited those notable men to "pass ye unto Calneh, and see, and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; and then go down to Gath of the Philistines." While the proposed journey was to be made by mental reflection rather than the actual going to those nations, the mental journey was to the East, the North, and the West. The three cities had been neighboring kingdoms, and they were thus contemplated by the prophet as if still standing and flourishing, but those much at had suffered the hands of their enemies. They had in time been destroyed, and they never recovered to the point of their prior strength and prosperity. God had done far more for Israel than he had done for any other nation, and he called upon those notable men to remember just how he had favored Israel. Jehovah asked: "Are they better than these kingdoms? or is their border greater than your border?" He meant by his questions that those kingdoms were not greater than Israel, and their borders were not greater than Israel's border, and thus how ungrateful the Israelites had shown themselves to be!

Calneh was one of the five oldest and greatest cities of Babylon. Some scholars have concluded that Calneh was the city where the tower was built to reach unto heaven. Hamath was a great city of upper Syria, and Gath was one of the five chief cities of the Philistines.

# Amos Describes the People's Wanton Lives

## (Amos 6:3-6)

Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that

invent for themselves instruments of music, like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief oils; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

In a vivid description of the wanton lives of the notable men and other well-to-do people of Israel, Amos addressed them and pronounced woe upon them as follows:

"Woe to ... ye that put far away the evil day." The thought is that those people refused to face or contemplate the fact of their forthcoming punishment, but they were no different in spirit and attitude from the multitude of men today who refuse to face the certainty of death and the judgment to follow. The evil day is the day of the Lord—a day of punishment.

"Woe to ... ye that cause the seat of violence to come near." Those people not only acquiesced or condoned violence, but also they participated in violence. They were guilty of violence—hard and exceedingly cruel violence. A nation cannot long stand where violence runs rife. Let all the people of America take warning!

"Woe to . . . ye that lie upon beds of ivory." This "woe" reflects the prosperity of the people, and it also reflects their wanton idleness. The prosperous Israelites had beds or couches inlaid with ivory, and such status symbol furniture was costly.

"Woe to ... ye that stretch yourselves upon your couches." The thought is that they stretched out the entire length of their bodies in an indolent, aimless way upon their luxurious couches. Such purposeless idleness is wanton. It reflects an utter disregard for the needs, problems, and suffering characteristic of the common lot of humanity.

"Woe to ... ye that eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall." The prosperity of the people is also reflected in this "woe." The well-todo's were a well-fed lot. They ate lambs from the flock at will, and they ate the very best beef—that is beef from stall-fed calves.

"Woe to ... ye that sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that invent for themselves instruments of music like David." David wrote songs and devised instruments to accompany them when they were

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being sung as a means of doing honor to God, and in much the same way those Israelites who were given to sensual excesses wrote new songs to be accompanied by their new devised instruments as a means of entertainment as they reveled at their feasts.

"Woe to ... ye that drink wine in bowls." This woe also reflects the prosperity of the well-to-do's of Israel. Like the American society today, they were heavy social drinkers. They drank wine, intoxicating wine that showed its color in the cup. They drank "the wine of such as had been fined" in their homes, and at their social gatherings, and particularly in their revelous feasts. Further, the prosperity of that period of time is reflected by the fact that the people drank their wine in bowls. Those bowls were similar to the bowls used in the temple worship. They were costly status symbols, and they denoted the excesses and impiety of the people.

"Woe to ... ye that anoint yourselves with the chief oils, but are
not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." As a means of bodily health,
the hot East climate demanded an
anointing of the body, and olive oil
requited the demand. For Aaron
and his sons who attended upon the
services of Jehovah, a rich, ordorous, or perfumed, substance was
provided as being emblematic of
the refreshing fragrance of holiness,
but the law forbade, on pain of
death, that it be poured upon any
save those who attended upon the
services of Jehovah. (Ex. 30:22, 25,

In the case of the well-to-do Israelites, their luxury provided for them perfumes—chief ointments—that rivaled the ointments used by the priests. In short, they were a perfumed people—they smelled good when they went abroad, "but they were not grieved for the affliction of Joseph."

The doom and ruin of the ten tribes had been announced, but the selfish, indolent, and insolent Israelites had no time or sympathy for any thought of a coming calamity. They were too dense to understand that the calamity would reach them.

### Amos Announces a Captivity for Israel (Amos 6:7, 8)

Therefore shall they now go captive with the first that go captive; and the revelry of them that stretched themselves shall pass away. The Lord Jehovah hath sworn by himself, saith Jehovah, the God of hosts: I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces; therefore will I deliver up the

city with all that is therein.

In light of the foregoing, Amos announced a captivity for Israel, and he declared that the affluent, wanton ones would go forth with the first to go into captivity. Then the revelry of those wanton people would cease, he emphasized. He said: "The Lord Jehovah hath sworn by himself ... I abhor the excellency and pride of Jacob." The pride or excellency of Jacob included his palaces built by the exactions from the poor—palaces that were maintained for sensual pleasures and gratifications. Thus great palaces would be destroyed, the city would be delivered into the hands of the Assyrians, and the people would be carried into captivity. In short, the captivity was certain, for no higher oath could be given, and no greater determination could be announced! Only the people themselves could, by true and humble repentance, avert their disaster. Those Israelites had none to blame except themselves.

## The Extent and Severity of the Captivity (Amos 6:9, 10)

And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die. And when a man's uncle shall take him up, even he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is in the innermost parts of the house, Is there yet any with thee? and he shall say, No; then shall he say, Hold thy peace: for we may not make mention of the name of Jehovah.

Amos had previously announced that the captivity would be so severe and complete that only a few would be left in the land. He said: "For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: The city that went forth a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which went forth a hundred shall

have ten left, to the house of Israel." (Amos 5:3.)

At the point of the present text, Amos announces that if a family of ten escapes death by the war, they would yet die of famine and pestilence. He then depicts a horrible scene of misery as would befall those that escape death by war. The scene is a house wherein ten members of a family that had escaped death by war had in turn diad from forming and mostiles. died from famine and pestilence, except one, and he was very ill. An uncle, as the nearest surviving kinsman, enters the house to take out the decaying bodies of the dead burning—which certainly not the Israelites' accustomed way of burying their dead. This uncle finds the remaining ill member of the family of ten in the innermost parts of the house, and he inquires of the sick man: "Is there yet any with thee?" The uncle meant by the question, "Is there anyone else who is alive and needs attention, or does there remain in the house yet other dead members who need to be burned?" The sick man answers, "No." The inference is that the sick man was then about to speak of Jehovah, and the uncle said: "Hold thy peace; for we may not make mention of the name of Jehovah." The thought is, "Hush, do not mention the name of Jehovah,

lest his attention be directed further to Israel's rebellion and also to the fact that a man of the family of ten was yet alive, and might, thereby, die immediately."

### Jehovah Commands—His Agent of Wrath Will Execute (Amos 6:11)

For behold, Jehovah commandeth, and the great house shall be smitten with breaches, and the little house with clefts.

The statement, "Jehovah mandeth," necessarily implies comthat he would employ an agent to execute his order of punishment. Jehovah's agents of wrath were the men and/or nations that were especially fitted by bent and character to inflict the kind of punishment which justice and righteousness demanded. In that particular case the Assyrians were to serve as Jehovah's instrument and attend upon his purposes, though such was not their intent because they thought that they had taken strength by own arm and power. great house-the mansion of the rich would be smitten by breaches, that is by gaps in the wall made by heavy battering rams. The little house would be smitten by clefts—that is by striking and splitting. The point is that the houses, whether great or small, would be destroyed.

# A Homily

### Questions That The Prophet Amos Asked

#### I. Introduction

- A. The prophet Amos was one of the world's greatest orators.
  - His sermon was logically organized and in good form with introduction, body, and conclusion.
  - 2. He knew how to make his main points march, and he knew how to properly subordinate his supporting points.
  - He was very adept at parallelisms and rhetorical devices.
- One means of Amos' rhetorical devices was his asking rapid-fire questions.
  - 1. The questions that he asked were rhetorical in nature.
  - 2. Those questions, in a very

- telling way, carried their own answers.
- C. Those questions raised by Amos constitute the basis of this lesson.
- II. Questions That Amos Asked
- A. Amos asked: "Shall two walk together, except they have agreed?"
  - The answer to the question is emphatically, "No."
     The "two" in that specific
  - The "two" in that specific case was God's judgment on the one hand and the prophet's word on the other.
  - Such agreement was no chance factor.
  - Amos had made his pronouncement against Israel, all because God had spoken to him.
  - 5. Amos, therefore, was of one mind with God.

- While the specifics of the question had to do with the agreement between Jehovah and the prophet, the question represents a general principle.
  - a. Husband and wife will not walk together in purpose and influence unless they have agreed on the basic and righteous principles of home life.
  - b. Elders cannot properly shepherd and lead the flock unless they are agreed among themselves.
  - When a church, or friends, or business associates, disagree, there is no real viable walking together.
- 7. When Christians walk with worldly minded brethren or with the people of the world, the reasonable assumption must be that they are in agreement.
- B. Amos also asked: "Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? Will a young lion cry out of his den if he hath taken nothing?"
  - 1. This, too, is a rhetorical question, and the answer is, "No."
  - 2. The lion roars when he is set to spring upon his prey.
  - 3. The thought carried by this rhetorical question is that God made Amos to roar against Israel, all because he was ready to execute judgment.
  - 4. While Amos roared and some of the people did fear, the notable men and the well-to-do rich turned a deaf ear.
  - Gospel preachers should see themselves in the position of Amos the prophet.
    - The preacher today occupies the position of the prophet of that day.
    - Preachers, therefore, are under heaven's imposed obligation to roar, as it were, the judgments of Jehovah.
    - Such roars should not be made against the faithful -those who believe and are striving to measure up to God's standard of holiness.

- d. The roars should be against the ungodly and unsaved, both within the church and also without.
- God was ready to spring with vengeance upon Israel, and for this reason he caused Amos to roar.
- Wayward, sin sick, violencesick America is on the broad road to destruction. Men need to stand up and roar.
- The same conditions often prevail in churches, and again, the preacher should be heard to roar.
- C. Amos further asked: "Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth where no gin is set for him?"
  - 1. The answer to this question is also, "No."
  - 2. A bird cannot be caught where there is no trap.
  - The thought of the question is that a trap had been set; Israel would be caught, and the sentence would be just.
    - a. The Israelites had set their own trap—planned their own downfall—by their rebellious and idolatrous sins.
    - b. They would be caught, therefore, in their own trap which they had set.
  - 4. Men today set traps for themselves by their disobedient sins.
- D. Amos still further asked: "Shall a snare spring up from the ground and have taken nothing at all?"
  - 1. Here again the answer was, or is, "No."
  - 2. The snare is the "trap-stick."
  - It would not spring or rise, except as the balance had been tripped.
  - 4. The trap was filled with the sins of Israel, and the trapstick stood to be over-balanced at any moment, and then God's retributive judgment would begin.
  - Many Christians today are dangerously ' close to their tripping the trap-stick.
    - a. Worldliness in a church will trip the trap-stick.
    - Strife and envy in a church will trip the trapstick.

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c. Adultery, divorce, and re-marriage in a church will trip the trap-stick.

d. Extraneous or erroneous doctrines in a church will

trip the trap-stick.

e. Dullness, indifference, and wanton laziness will trip the trap-stick.

- E. Amos also asked: "Shall the trumpet be blown in a city, and the people not be afraid?"
  - 1. The answer to this question is, "No."
  - 2. When in that day the watchmen on the walls of a city blew the trumpets, the inhabitants were suddenly raised to a high pitch of terror and alarm.
  - The trumpets were not sounded unless there was a reason for alarm.
  - Amos had sounded the trumpet, but those Israelites were unafraid.
  - Sound men—good men—have blown the trumpet against the rise of liberalism within the church, but few have been made afraid.
  - Sound brethren have sounded an alarm against sermons which are constituted essentially of philosophy, psychology, and sociology; but many in the brotherhood see no occasion for alarm.
- F. Amos further asked: "Shall evil befall a city, and Jehovah hath not done it?"
  - 1. The answer again is emphatically, "No."
  - 2. The word "evil" here means affliction or punishment. Shall punishment befall a city, and God has not done it?
  - 3. Jehovah would accomplish his punishment or purpose

- against Israel by sending the Assyrians as his rod of correction.
- Christians should remember that the evil of punishment which is brought on by God's providence is remedial in nature.
  - a. A man may, if he will, profit by such punishment by repentance and prayer.
  - Final impenitence, however, will become strictly judicial.

#### III. Conclusion

- A. Amos, by way of conclusion, observed that "the Lord Jehovah would do nothing, except he reveal his secrets unto his servants the prophets."
  - I. Here Amos set forth a uni-

versal principle.

- He was the Lord's prophet, and the Lord had given him a message.
- B. Amos, speaking of himself, declared that he, the lion, had roared, and he asked: "Who will not fear?"
- C. Amos then asserted, "The Lord Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy?"
  - Amos was the prophet to whom the Lord revealed his message.
  - 2. Amos, therefore, had no alternative, except to prophesy.
  - 3. He, as the lion, had roared.
  - 4. He could not do otherwise.
- D. Christ has spoken today.
  - His evangelists, like Amos, should feel compelled to speak.
  - 2. As lions, the Lord's servants today must roar.
  - 3. They must speak forthrightly the message of Christ to a sin sick world.

#### **Questions for Discussion**

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

## Introduction

Why did the Israelites ignore Amos' warning of the coming of the day of Jehovah?

What were the sins of the Israelites?

#### The Golden Text

What is the acid test of a man's love for good?

Amos Pronounces Woe on Judah and Israel

What prevailing condition did Amos' pronouncement of woe upon Judah and Israel reflect?

Name some common fruits of this prevailing condition.

What New Testament church is compared to Judah and Israel at this time? Contrast Israel's sin with Judah's sins.

Amos Describes the People's Wanton Lives

Name the eight woes which Amos pro-

nounced upon Israel which vividly describe the wanton lives of the people of

"woe" What the pronounced those lying on beds of ivory reflect?

That thought is projected in, stretch yourselves upon your couches. "Ye that What

Why did Amos condemn them for drinking wine in bowls?

Where were the chief oils, and why did people for condemn the using them?

Amos Announces a Captivity for Israel

What oath made captivity for Israel a certain thing?

the people have averted the How could disaster?

The Extent and Severity of the Captivity

How severe would the captivity be?

What graphic illustration does Hosea use to portray the extent of the devastation

Jehovah Commands-His Agent of Wrath Will Execute

Repeat the statement which shows that

Jehovah would use an agent to execute his order of punishment. Who was to be Jehovah's instrument of

punishment?

A Homily

Why is Amos one of the world's greatest orators?

What rhetorical device did Amos employ?

Explain the significance of Amos' tion: "Shall two walk together they be agreed?" except

What did the roar of a lion have to do with Amos' preaching?

conditions in Israel over-balanced the trap or snare which Amos used in his questions?

hat conditions in the church today will cause the same effect? What conditions

Explain the significance of the question which Amos asked: "Shall the trumpet be blown in a city, and the people not be afraid?"

the universal principle was forth in Amos' message? How should preachers of today be more

like Amos?

# Lesson XII—March 21, 1976

# ISRAEL S END FORETOLD

# Lesson Text Amos 8:1-7, 11, 12

1 Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me: and, behold, a basket of summer fruit.

2 And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said Jehovah unto me, The end is come upon my people Israel; I will not again pass by them any more.

3 And the songs of the temple shall be wailings in that day, saith the Lord Jehovah: the dead bodies shall be many; in every place shall they cast them forth with silence.

4 Hear this, O ye that would swallow up the needy, and cause the poor of the land to fail,

will the new Saying, When moon be gone, that we may sell grain? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and dealing falsely with balances of de-

6 That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes, and sell the refuse of the wheat?

7 Jehovah hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely never forget any of their works.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord Jehovah, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah.

12 And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of Jehovah, and shall not find it.

Golden Text.—"He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. 29:1.)

Devotional Reading. — Amos 8:8-10.

# Daily Bible Readings

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March	15. M	Results of Forsaking God (1 Chron. 28:9)
March	16. T	
March	17. W	Some Severed from Christ (Gal. 5:1-4)
March	18. T	Fruitless Branch Cut Off (John 15:1-6)
March	19. F	
March	20. S	Reason for the Captivity (2 Kings 17:1-18)
March	21. S	Reason for the Captivity (2 Kings 17:1-18) 

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Time.—About 752 B.C.
Place.—Bethel in Israel.
Persons.—Amos and the Israelites of Bethel.

#### Introduction

The lesson for today is properly entitled: "Israel's End Foretold." The prophet Amos foretold, vividly and in no uncertain terms, the end of the nation of Israel. His very pronouncement of doom, however, was an implied offer and promise of forgiveness if the people would only repent, but the prophet Hosea later well described Israel. He "Ephraim ioined is and further, "Ephraim, he mixeth himself among the peoples; Ephraim is a cake not turned," and still further, "Ephraim is like a silly dove." (Hos. 4:17; 7:8, 11.)

Amos not only foretold the end of Israel, but also he foretold the rise of Israel in the distant future Israel in the distant Amos prophesied: "In that day [the gospel age] will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is [Jechoniah or Coniah was the last king to sit on David's throne until Christ ascended and was crowned King of kings and Lord of lords], and I will close up the breaches thereof: and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom [the nearest blood kin to Israel and the most hostile in spirit], and all the na-tions that are called by my name, saith Jehovah that doeth this. And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their own land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah God." (Amos 9:11-15.)

The many premillennialists and/or predictors and prognosticators of future world events have made much of the prophecy of Amos. They contend that the captivity of Israel has never been brought back, that this prophecy must be fulfilled, and that the descendants of those Israelites must, therefore, be gathered back to their homeland—in short, that the Israelites will return to an earthly Canaan where they will

build their waste cities and inhabit them.

The fact is that this prophecy by Amos began to be fulfilled on Pentecost following the death of Christ—the day on which the Messianic kingdom was established. Then the fallen tabernacle of David-a spiritual kingdom or church-was raised up, and it was completely finished, or enlarged by the bringing in of all other peoples. Obviously, the that the nations, the Gentiles, had been brought in was the occasion of the Jerusalem conference. A point to be remembered is that the Israelites, as such, were no more. They had long ceased to be known as the people of God. They had been, through marriage with foreigners, amalgamateď with them that were known as they Samaritans not Israelites. (Hos. 1:9; Isa. and 7:8; Ezra 4:1-5.)

Within that very context, James arose during the conference on circumcision, held in Jerusalem, and said: "Brethren, hearken unto me: Symeon hath rehearsed how first God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written.

After these things I will return, And I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; And I will build again the ruins thereof.

And I will set it up: That the residue of men may seek

after the Lord. And all the Gentiles, upon whom

my name is called. Saith the Lord, who maketh these things known from of old."

(Acts 15:14-18.)

The establishment of the church and the bringing in of the Gentiles was the full and exact fulfillment of Amos' prophecy. The variation of the wording from the book of Amos and that quoted by James is ac-counted for in the fact that James quoted from the Septuagint-a translation from the Hebrew into the Greek. The statement, "I bring back the captivity of my people Israel" (verse 14), is a metaphorical expression which says in

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effect that the miseries of the captivity shall have passed and Messianic blessings, in turn, shall abound. Only if the Messianic kingdom, the church, were established could salvation be extended to Edom—the nearest in kin and the most hostile in spirit of all the enemy nations—and, for that matter, to all the other nations. The

blessings of that spiritual kingdom would last forever. "They shall no more be plucked up." (Verse 16.) In short, the people would be Jehovah's people; they would be of the spiritual seed that was and is planted in the hearts of men, who thereby constitute the church, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. (Matt. 16:18, 19.)

## The Golden Text

"He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. 29:1.)

This golden text is a fitting description of the rebellious nation of Israel. The Israelites had been often reproved by the prophets, but just as often as they were reproved, they the more hardened their necks. The figure of speech is that of an unwilling draught animal, and it is a fitting representation of the people of Israel.

Incorrigible sinners have but one end, and that end will be a sudden and fearful one. This was the case

with Israel. They were carried into Assyrian captivity never to return as a nation. The nation of Judah returned from Babylon, but Israel, as a nation, did not return from Assyria. From the captivity of Israel on, there has never been a physical return of those people as a nation, and there never will be. Only as individuals of the few people left in the land joined with the nation of Judah and the true worship in Jerusalem was there any physical return; and further, only as individuals of all nations join in the Messianic kingdom—the church—can there be any, so to speak, "return from captivity."

# The Text Explained

# A Basket of Summer Fruit (Amos 8:1-3)

Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me: and behold, a basket of summer fruit. And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said Jehovah unto me, The end is come upon my people Israel; I will not again pass by them any more. And the songs of the temple shall be wailings in that day, saith the Lord Jehovah: the dead bodies shall be many; in every place shall they cast them forth with silence.

Amos previously had been shown three visions—the vision of the locusts, the vision of the drought, and the vision of the plumb-line. Then came the vision of the basket of ripe fruit. Jehovah asked: "Amos, what seest thou?" Amos replied: "A bas-

ket of ripe fruit."

The ripe fruit was the last fruit of summer—the end of the fruit season. Further, ripe fruit will immediately decay, and the basket of ripe fruit reflected the fact that Israel was ripe for judgment—that Israel would come to an abrupt end. Jehovah would "not again pass by

them any more." The mirth and songs of the revelers would come to an abrupt end. In the place of the songs, there would be wailings, and many corpses would be strewn upon the grounds in every place. There would be no time for customary burials. The immediate relatives would cast away their dead with silence—their grief being too great for words.

# Amos' Address and Charges (Amos 8:4-6)

Hear this, O ye that would swallow up the needy, and cause the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell grain? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and dealing falsely with balances of deceit; that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes, and sell the refuse of the wheat?

"Hear this," Amos cried. His burden was to show the Israelites just how ripe for judgment they were. They were a people who swallowed up the needy and caused 96 Lesson XII

the poor of the land to fail. They took advantage of the poor, the orphans, and the widows. In every Jehovah has dispensation, regisutter tered his disapprobation against those who take advantage of the poor, the orphans, and the widows. The same principle obtains with Jehovah today, and Christians should beware! Amos to file certain specific charges against those Israelites, follows:

For one thing, the people impatiently asked: "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell grain?" The "New Moon," was a holy day—a day when all commerce was suspended—but the observance of it tried the patience of those Israelites. They wanted the day to they pass-and that swiftly-so could be about their commerce, the selling of grain. The basis for the observance of the new moons lay with Moses. He wrote: "And in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a burnt-offering unto Jeho-(Num. 28:11-15.) The new moon introduced the first day of each month, and thus the first day of the month came to be known as the new moon.

For another thing, the people im-tiently asked: "When will the patiently asked: "When will the sabbath be gone, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great?" In the law of Moses, the fourth com-mandment reads: "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy," but Israelites were weary with the sabbath day. It was for them a distasteful thing, and they asked: "When will the sabbath be gone?" They sighed for its ticking the minutes and hours away so that they could be about their selling of wheat, and as they went about their selling of wheat, they made the ephah (used for measuring corn) and the shekel (the weight by which money was weighed) great, or heavy.

The spiritual state of those Israelites—as evidenced by their attitude toward the first day of the month and toward the sabbath day—was deplorable, but those same attitudes are reflected by many members of the church of the Lord today. Countless members have said in word, or substance, or attitude, concerning the worship hour:

"Hurry up and get this over." They want to see all of the afternoon football game, or they want to go early to the lake. If the period for worship extends beyond an hour in length, they are very unhappy. They register their complaints to the elders, and of all the pressures that elders experience, the matter of the length of the preacher's ser-mon is usually one of the most constant pressures. The constant de-mand, relative to the worship, for a "hurry up and get this over with" attitude has given rise to sermonette sermons. There is really no time provided for the minister to properly develop a Bible subject. "Leave the Bible subjects till Sun-day night," some say, but only the very faithful are present on Sunday night.. When a Bible subject is developed, many, even of the faithful, will fall away to sleep, and many of those who stay awake and look the preacher in the face do not really listen. This is too deep for meover my head—they say.

Elders of the church should face the fact that many members of the church know almost nothing about the Bible. Something must be done, for the conditions that exist are deplorable! Every church must have—or should have—a strong pulpit and a well-planned teaching program; and the elders should insist that those very members who are of the attitude of "hurry up and get this over with" should be enrolled in class studies.

The Sunday morning Bible study—generally speaking—is better than no study at all, but unfortunately, it does not commence to be what it should be. The period for study is short—too short as a matter of fact. Many families arrive late, and the classes are disturbed by their late arrival.

Churches have far too much money invested in building — ofttimes built for the pride as well as the comfort of the members — for the use that is made of them. No criticism should be laid against buildings as such, for only at the point of the planning and use made of the buildings will just criticisms lie. Will brethren take warning?

Amos proceeded to charge that those Israelites made the ephah small and the shekel great, and otherwise dealt falsely with balances March 21, 1976 97

of deceit so that they could buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes. The oppressions of the rich were so deliberate and so great that the poor were often forced to sell themselves. The rich Israelites reduced their own poor brethren into slavery for a debt no greater than the mere price of a pair of sandals. In so doing they showed their utter disregard and contempt for the image of God, himself. A pair of sandals seems to have become the price of a man. Imagine! For the price of a mere pair of sandals, a poor man was reduced to the position of a slave. Such contemptible crimes will undermine any nation in any clime in any period of time.

Amos further charged that those Israelites were selling the poor "their refuse of wheat." The "refuse of wheat" was a mixture of bran and unfilled out grains. It was the food of animals, and, as a matter of fact, poor food for animals. What disregard the rich had for

their fellowman!

# Jehovah's Oath (Amos 8:7)

Jehovah hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never

forget any of their works.

In light of Amos' foregoing charges against Israel, there is no wonder that Amos should announce: "Jehovah hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob [this was Jehovah, himself], saying. Surely I will never forget any of their works." There would be a day of reckoning for those selfish, wanton, and inhumane Israelites. They had sown to inhumane sins, and there was a harvest of punishment in store for them. Jehovah would not forget. He gave his oath to that end—he swore by himself. He would have ceased to be a just and righteous God had he failed to punish those defrauders of the poor, the orphans, and the widows. Men today should take warning! In the words of Paul: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7.)

# An Unusual Famine (Amos 8:11)

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord Jehovah, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah.

A time of mourning was set for Israel. The land would tremble; the sun would go down at noon, and darkness would prevail on a clear day. The feasts would be turned into mourning, the songs into lamentations, sackcloths would be upon all loins, and baldness would be the dress of all heads—and the war, and famine, and pestilence would bring forth mourning as a mother for her only son. Such would be the end of a bitter day. Israel would go into

captivity.

An unusual famine was in store for Israel. It would not be a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water; but rather it would be a famine of hearing the word of Jehovah. The prophet Hosea states the case as follows: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days [actually many years] without a king, and without a prince [in short, without any form of civil government], and without sacrifice, without pillar [the center of idolatrous worship], without ephod [the holy garment which the high priest wore and which included the Urim and Thumin by which enquiry could be made of God], or teraphim." (Hos. 3:4.)

The woman at Jacob's well whom Christ confronted represented those who had been many years without a king or prince, or without an established order of worship, or without a prophet of Jehovah.

# The Results of the Famine (Amos 8:12)

And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of Jehovah, and shall not find it.

As a result of the famine of the word, those remaining Israelites would seek from one place to another for revelations from Jehovah—revelations that would quiet their unsatisfied desires for word from Jehovah which had been denied them because of their sins. They would wander from sea to sea—that is from the Sea of Galilee to the Mediterranean Sea and to the Dead Sea. They would wander from the north to the east. The indication is

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that they would not wander to the south—to Jerusalem—where the

true worship of Jehovah could be found.

# A Homily

# Amos The Country Preacher

- I. Introduction
- A. If we take the low road, Amos of the Old Testament was truly a country preacher.
  - We learn of his rural background through the means of an incidental reference.
  - Amaziah, the high priest of Bethel, sought to expel Amos from the land.
  - 3. He sent a report to King Jeroboam II of Israel which read as follows: "Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led captive out of his hand." (Amos. 7:10, 11.)

a. Now, Amos had not said that Jeroboam would die

by the sword.

b. Jeroboam, as a matter of fact, died a natural death.

- Amos did say that Jehovah would rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.
- d. And Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam, was assassinated by the sword just six months after he ascended the throne.
- Anyway, when King Jeroboam failed or refused to expel Amos from the land, the high priest Amaziah took upon himself the matter of expelling Amos.
- 5. He said to Amos: "O thou seer, go flee thou away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread [or preach for money], and prophesy there: but prophesy not again any more at Bethel; for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a royal house."
- 6. "Then answered Amos, ... I was no prophet [Amos did not attend a school of the prophets], neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdsman [a hired hand] and a dresser of sycomore-

trees: and Jehovah took me from following the flock, and Jehovah said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel."

 In just this incidental way, we learn of the rural, rustic background of the prophet Amos.

He was from Tekoa, a city

of Judah.

- And Jehovah called him from his rural background to go preach to the rich, pompous city church at Bethel in Israel.
- B. If we take the high road, Amos was an orator. He was an unadorned orator who rivaled all of the orators of the earth.
  - He shook Israel with his message to such an extent that the high priest charged him with having developed a conspiracy in the land.
  - Under those circumstances, the high priest called upon King Jeroboam to expel him from the land.
- II. At that period of time an era of prosperity prevailed in both ludah and Israel.
- A. While the record relative to Jeroboam is brief—a result of his being of the kings of Israel—the record concerning Uzziah—Jeroboam's contemporary—is quite full and detailed, especially is this the case of the Chronicles' record
- B. We may be sure that King Jeroboam was duplicating in Israel the accomplishments of Uzziah in Judah.
- C. A brief on Uzziah's accomplishments reveals the following:
  - Uzziah began his reign at age sixteen and reigned fiftytwo years.
    - 2. He did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah.
  - 3. God made him to prosper.
  - 4. He went forth and warred against the Philistines.
  - 5. He brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod.

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He built cities in the country of Ashdod, and among the Philistines.

- 7. God helped him against the Philistines and the Arabians.
- 8. The Ammonites gave tribute to Uzziah, and his name spread abroad even to the entrance to Egypt.
- Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem and in the wilderness.
- He hewed out many cisterns.
- 11. He had much cattle in the lowland and in the plain.
- 12. He had husbandmen and vine dressers in the mountains and in the fruitful fields.
- 13. He loved husbandry.
- Further, Uzziah had a welltrained standing army.
- His army w<sup>r</sup>as outfitted with shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, and bow's and stones for slinging.
- In Jerusalem, Uzziah invented engines to be on the towers and upon the battlements.
- 17. His name spread far abroad.
- D. Now, the point of this is that the kingdom of Judah was the ascendant nation among the small nations to the south.
- E. And just so, the kingdom of Israel was the ascendant nation among the small kingdoms to the north.
- F. We may be sure that King Jeroboam was duplicating in Israel all of the accomplishments of Uzziah in Judah.
- G. And prosperity prevailed in both kingdoms.
- III. Amos was a skillful orator.
- A. For one thing, he was a committed man-a spokesman for Jehovah.
- B. For another thing, he had a way of developing rapport with his audiences.
  - 1. He began with a point of agreement, for example:
  - 2. He began with the statement:
    "Thus saith Jehovah, for
    three transgressions of Damascus [Syria], yea for four,
    I will not turn away the punishment thereof."

3. And the people, no doubt, said: "Amen."

- 4. Amos moved to Philistia, then to Tyre, then to Phoenicia, then to Edom, then to Ammon, then to Moab, and each time he struck a cord of agreement with the people. They, no doubt, gave uttered amens.
- Then Amos said: "Thus saith Jehovah: for three transgressions of Judah, yea for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof."
  - a. Likely those Israelites did not respond so enthusiastically, not that they were concerned for the punishment to come upon Judah, but because they became apprehensive of what would come next.
  - b. With those Israelites, Judah was striking close to home.
- Amos moved against Israel.
   He said: "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Israel, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof."
- Then Amos proceeded to itemize Jehovah's complaints against Israel.
  - The rich had sold the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes.
  - They panted after the dust of the earth on the heads of the poor.
  - c. They turned aside the way of the meek.
  - d. A man and his father went in unto the same maiden.
  - They laid themselves down beside every altar upon clothes taken in pledge.
  - f. They drank in the house of their God wine of such as had been fined.
- IV. Amos spoke to the point of the affluence of Israel.
- A. He spoke of those who sat in Samaria in the corner of a couch and on the silken cushions of a bed—a reflection of the affluence of Israel. (Amos 3:12.)
- B. He warned that Jehovah would smite the winter-house with the summer-house—another indica-

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tion of the affluence of Israel. (Amos 3:15.)

- C. He addressed certain women of Israel as cows, and he charged that they oppressed the poor, crushed the needy, and said to their husbands: "Bring, and let us drink"-still another indication of the affluence of Israel. (Amos 4:1.)
- D. He addressed both Judah and Israel with the words: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and to them that are secure in the mountains of Samaria"—a fourth indication of the affluence of Israel. (Amos 6:1-6.) said:
  - "Woe to ... ye that put far the evil day."
  - "Woe to ... ye that cause the seat of violence to come near."
  - "Woe to ... ye that lie upon beds of ivory.
  - "Woe to ... ye that stretch yourselves upon your couches."
  - "Woe to ... ye that eat the lambs out of the flock, and calves out of the midst of the
  - "Woe to ... ye that sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that invent for themselves instruments of music like David."

- "Woe to ... ye that drink wine in bowls."
- "Woe to ... ye that anoint yourselves with the chief oils, but are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.
- Those people were the Laodiceans of the Old Testament.
- V. Conclusion
- A. Jehovah chose Amos, a country preacher, and sent him to preach to a city.
  - Amos was fitted by nature and dedication to do the preaching that Israel needed to hear. He spoke for Jehovah the words that Jehovah put in his mouth.
  - 2. If a man of Isaiah's position, culture, and education had been sent to Bethel, he would have been suspected from the start.
  - This was not so with Amos the rural, rustic preacher.
- Amos brought "to the pulpit" at Bethel a vigorous proclamation of the word of Jehovah.
  - He was a preacher.
  - Paul said that it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (1 Cor. 1:21.)
- C. We need more Amoses in the pulpits of the church today.

#### Questions for Discussion

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

#### Introduction

With what did Amos compare Ephraim? In what sense was Israel rise again?

When was the prophecy of Israel's turn" from captivity fulfilled? "re-How could salvation he extended to Edom?

How long would the blessings of the new kingdom last?

### The Golden Text

How is the golden text a fitting description of the nation of Israel? What was to be Israel's end?

#### A Basket of Summer Fruit

What did the basket of ripe fruit reflect in connection with Israel? prevailed

Contrast the conditions which p in Israel at that time with the tions which were to be as condi-Israel reached her end.

Amos' Address and Charges What was Amos' burden?

Why did the people ask: "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell grain?" Why w Thy was the sabbath distasteful to Israelites? the

today,

Why are we, as church memoers we unable to point fingers of accusation the Israelites? How should we take warning from

rael's end? To what extent did the rich people in Is-rael oppress the poor? What was "refuse of wheat"?

#### Jehovah's Oath

Repeat Jehovah's oath to the Israelites? Why was there a harvest of punishment due the Israelites?

## An Unusual Famine

What was the nature of come upon Israel? the Who, in the New Testament, represented those of that famine?

#### A Homily

What accusation did Amaziah bring against Amos? Was it true? Describe Amos' background and preparation for his work as a prophet.

Describe Amos' mode of preaching.
Describe the conditions prevalent in
Judah during Uzziah's reign.
How can we assume that the same conditions were duplicated in Israel?
What two characteristics made Amos a
skillful orator?
In what particular way was Amos skillful

in developing rapport with his audiences? Give a specific example in to-day's lesson.

Itemize the complaints against Israel registered through Amos by Jehovah.

Repeat the "woes" found in Amos. Why do we need more Amoses today?

# Lesson XIII - March 28, 1976

# JEHOVAH'S GRIEF OVER WAYWARD ISRAEL

# Lesson Text

Hos. 11:1-8, 12

1 When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Frynt

of Egypt.

2 The more *the prophets* called them, the more they went from them: they sacrificed unto the Balim, and burned incense to graven images.

3 Yet I taught Ephraim to walk; I took them on my arms; but they

knew not that I healed them.

4 I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them as they that lift up the yoke on their jaws; and I laid food before

them.
5 They shall not return into the land of Egypt; but the Assyrian shall be their king, because they refused

be their king, because they refused to return *to me.*6 And the sword shall fall upon

their cities, and shall consume their bars, and devour *them*, because of their own counsels.

7 And my people are bent on backsliding from me: though they call them to *him that is* on high, none at all will exalt *him*.

8 How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I cast thee off, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboiim? my heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together.

12 Ephraim compasseth me about with falsehood, and the house of Israel with deceit; but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the Holy One.

Golden Text.—"Ephraim feedeth on wind...." (Hos. 12:1.) Devotional Reading.—Hos. 12:1-6.

# **Daily Bible Readings**

March 22.	M. Jehovah's Controversy with Israel (Hos. 4:1-13)
March 23. T	God's Goodness (Hos. 6:1-8)
March 24.	W. Israel's Ingratitude (Hos. 8:1-13)
March 25. T	Israel's Infidelity Grievous (Hos. 9:1-17)
March 26. F	A People of Divided Hearts (Hos. 10:1-11)
March 27. S	Unrequited Love (Hos. 13:1-16)
March 28. S	

Time.—Some years later than 732 B.C.

Place.-Samaria in Israel.

Persons.-Hosea the prophet, Jehovah, and rebellious Israel.

#### Introduction

The text for today's lesson is from the book, Hosea. While Amos and Hosea may very well have been contemporary for a time, Hosea's ministry continued far beyond the time of Amos. In fact, Hosea's ministry continued from the latter part of the reign of Jeroboam II to the reign of Hoshea, the last king in Israel—respectively, Jeroboam II,

Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea.

Hosea's ministry, therefore, was long—more than sixty years, in fact—and it was cast in mournful times. Hosea prophesied on the eve of Israel's captivity to the Assyrians. Some one hundred fifty years later, the prophet Jeremiah prophesied on the eve of Judah's captivity to the

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Babylonians. Hosea and Jeremiah, like Amos of earlier years, were prophets of doom. They were known for, and suffered for, their negative preaching. Conjecturally, a good curse in psychology on how to win friends and influence people, especially if taught by some liberal, might have changed the tone and substance of their message, but such a change would not have changed the fact of the forthcoming doom.

Hosea not only set forth prophecies of Israel's impending doom, but also he set forth Messianic prophecies as well. One Messianic prophecy, especially, has its setting in New Testament references. To illustrate, Luke wrote concerning Then opened he their "Then opened Christ: their mind, that they might understand the scriptures; and he said unto them. Thus it is written, that Christ should suffer, and rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remissions of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." (Luke 24:44-47.) The point of this reference for the mat-ter at hand is the statement of how that it is written in the Scriptures -that is in the law, the prophets, and the psalms-that "Christ would rise from the dead the third day." The apostle Paul made the same affirmation. He wrote: "I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures [observe, according to, or written in the scriptures]; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scrip-tures"—which meant that according to the Old Testament Christ would be raised on the third day. The Old Testament Scriptures, according Christ and Paul, recorded that Christ would rise on the third day.

Now all the matters referred to as being written in the Scriptures can be found written in the Old Testament, except for the reference to the "third day." Search as one may, there is not one single statement relative to the "third day," as such, except for a Messianic statement from Hosea. The statement from Hosea is not necessarily recognizable, at first reading, as being that reference concerning which Christ spoke and Paul wrote; but an in-depth consideration of the

passage will show that it is that Old Testament reference which states that Christ would "rise on the third day."

The passage from Hosea reads: "Come and let us return unto Jehovah; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live before him." (Hos. 6:1, 2.) While a number of scholars, including certain ones who are known for their conservatism, do not grant that the passage has reference to the resurrection of Christ on the third day, other conservative Old Testament scholars do so affirm—such as Pusey, Benson, Scott, Clark and Henry.

Jehovah had said concerning wayward Israel: "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me earnestly." In contemplation of the fact that in their affliction the people would seek Jehovah earnestly, the Israelites are represented as saying to one another, "Come let us return unto Jehovah; for he hath torn us [that is he hath, like the physician, cut or torn in order to heal]; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up [that is he will heal us]. After two days [that is, after a short two day period in the grave] he will revive us: on the third day [Christ was raised up on the third day] he will raise us up [faithful, obedient men are raised with Christ in baptism], and we shall live before him."

Paul corroborates the words of Hosea. To the Romans he wrote: "We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." To the Colossians Paul also wrote: "If we were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God." In another place Paul wrote: "God, being rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses.

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made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus." Hosea's statement, "On the third day he will raise us up," agrees with Paul's statement of how that men are "raised up with him [Christ]." (Rom. 6:4, 5; Col. 3:1; Eph. 2:4-6.)

Hosea set forth a further Messianic prophecy when he wrote: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him. and called my son out of Egypt." The statement was factual and historical, and Matthew set forth the ultimate fulfillment of the statement by Hosea, as follows: "Now when they were departed, behold an angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I tell thee: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. And he arose and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt; and was there until the

death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt did I call my son." (Hos. 11:1; Matt. 2:13-15.)

Many prophetic declarations had both a primary reference and an ultimate reference—a double sense meaning or two-fold application. In short, numerous prophetic declarations were not limited by the historical fact and/or the immediate circumstances with which they were connected. The declarations had real meaning for the people to whom they were first spoken, and the meaning was at once the foundation of a later, fuller, and more spiritual meaning. This was the case with Hosea's prophecy concerning Jehovah's son having been called out of Egypt. Hosea recounted for Israel how that they as Jehovah's son had been called out of Egypt, and that historical fact stood for a later and fuller and more spiritual meaning of how that Jehovah would call his spiritual son, Jesus the Christ, out of Egypt.

#### The Golden Text

"Ephraim feedeth on wind. . ." (Hos. 12:1.)

Ephraim, the representative of the nation of Israel, feedeth on wind, or grazeth on the east wind—a metaphor of speech which was intended to express how ridiculously foolish Israel had been. Ephraim was as a starving man pursuing and swallowing up the

parching, wasting east wind in his frantic effort to satisfy his hunger and need for food. Ephraim had sought help from idols and idolators, and they were just as empty, dangerous, and destructive as the east wind. He sought unto Assyria and Egypt. He followed empty and unstable counsels. He sowed the wind, and he reaped the whirlwind.

# The Text Explained

# A Prophecy of the Messiah (Hos. 11:1)

When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of

Egypt.

This verse has both a typical and an antitypical reference. It is a prophetic statement which includes both a primary fulfillment and an ultimate fulfillment. Jehovah called Israel his son, his firstborn son, which is the primary reference of the above verse, and he also called Christ his son, his true son, which is the ultimate reference of the verse. To illustrate, when the Israelites were in Egypt, Jehovah instructed Moses to go and say to Pharaoh: "Thus saith Jehovah, Israel [the descendants of Jacob or

Israel in Egypt] is my son, my firstborn! and I have said unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me; and thou hast refused to let him go: behold, I will slay thy son, thy firstborn." In turn Matthew wrote: "And he [Joseph] arose and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt; and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt did I call my son." (Ex. 4:22, 23; Matt. 2:14, 15.)

The historical statement of the prophet, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt," did not immediately or primarily refer to Christ, but the

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ultimate intent and reference was to Christ. Jacob, or Israel, and his family went to Egypt and grew into a nation while there and were thus beyond the reach of the Canaanite ways, and just so, in later centuries the child Jesus was carried to Egypt and was thus beyond the reach and hostility of King Herod. Israel, therefore, was a type of Christ who was to be born of the seed of David, and for this reason God called Israel, "my son."

# The Wayward Course of Israel (Hos. 11:2-4)

The more the prophets called them, the more they went from them: they sacrificed unto the Baalim, and burned incense to graven images. Yet I taught Ephraim to walk; I took them on my arms; but they knew not that I healed them.

I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them as they that lift up the yoke on their jaws; and I laid food be-

fore them.

Israel was the nation of nations. Israel was the nation of massactions of the said: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth"; but "the more the prophets called them," or taught them, "the more they went taught them, "the more they went from them." Jehovah did nothing, except he first revealed his secrets determinations—unto prophets; and those prophets apand announced and pronounced the word of Jehovah. There was an impressive roster of them, Elijah, Elisha, Micaiah, namely: Ionah. Obed. Amos, Hosea.

The Israelites went from Jehovah and sacrificed unto the Baalim, and burned incense to graven images. The wicked queen Jezebel introduced the worship of Baal and the Asteroth into Israel, and her husband Ahab, king of Israel, built for Baal, in the capital city Samaria, an altar and a large temple. In time, Jehovah caused Jehu to be anointed king over Israel with specific orders for him to put to death all members of the house of Ahab, and thereby to eradicate the worship of Baal from Israel. Jehu, in turn, wiped out the worship of Baal from Israel, but ere long that idolatrous worship had again taken roots.

Yet Jehovah had been most mindful of Ephraim—or Israel, for

whom the name Ephraim stood. Jehovah, in other words, had with paternal care coddled the Israelites while they were in Egypt. He had miraculously "carried them in his arms" through the Red Sea, and for forty years in the wilderness, and across the River Jordan, and safely into the promised land. He had, as a good physician," healed them."

During all of their days, Jehovah had drawn Israel with cords of love -with paternal direction and guidance—and not with ropes which the beasts of burden were harnessed and made to work. Then too, Jehovah "lifted up the yoke on their jaws." This figure represents the gentle master who is careful to push back the yoke so that his oxen can eat in comfort. The thought is that Jehovah had made the yoke of the law of Moses as light and comfortable possible. Jehovah as "had laid food before them." fed them miraculously while they were in the wilderness, and he had given them in Canaan walled cities, and houses, and terraced and cultivated orchards and fields. vineyards.

# Israel's Ultimate End (Hos. 11:5, 6)

They shall not return into the land of Egypt; but the Assyrian shall be their king, because they refused to return to me. And the sword shall fall upon their cities, and shall consume their bars, and devour them, because of their own counsels.

In contemplation of the implaca-ble ingratitude of the Israelites for the multiplied mercies of Jehovah above that of all other nations, Hosea announced: "They shall not return unto Egypt; but the Assyr-ian shall be their king." The likelihood is that there were individuals who-in order to avoid the anarchy that had prevailed in Israel as well as the invasions of the Assyrianshad slipped away to Egypt and others were planning to do the same. Further, Israel was encouraged by the intrigues that their king and princes were making with Egypt. The occasion of Shalmaneser's coming up from Assyria against Hoshea -in the fourth year of Hoshea's reign-was the fact that "the king found Assyria conspiracy Hoshea: for he had sent messengers

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to So, king of Egypt, and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria." (2 Kings 17:4.) Hosea's announcement was that the people, as a whole, would not return to Egypt; rather, the people would go to Assyria. Hosea also stated the reason for the forthcoming and final captivity, and that reason was the fact that "they had refused to return" unto Jehovah.

Hosea further announced that the sword would fall upon their cities, and consume their bars—the capital cities' bolts, and gates, and fortifications. This calamity would befall Samaria all on account of the counsel of their worldly-wise leaders who knew not Jehovah and ran contrary to his instructions.

# The Bent of Israel (Hos. 11:7)

And my people are bent on backsliding from me: though they call them to him that is on high, none at all will exalt him.

Israel was bent on backsliding—on apostasy. The prophets called upon the Israelites to do honor and obedience to Jehovah, but there "were none at all that would exalt him" (Jehovah) that is on high. What a pity! What a lesson for nations today! What a lesson for the church!

# Israel Contrasted with Judah (Hos. 11:12)

Ephraim compasseth me about

with falsehood, and the house of Israel with deceit; but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the Holy One.

Israel pretented faith and worship to Jehovah. They sacrificed to him, prayed to him, and dedicated themselves unto him, but they were hypocritical. They professed with the tongue that which was righteousness, but they performed from the heart that which was evil. They lied with their mouths, flatered with their tongues, and sinned with their hearts. They were perfumed from without, but they were foul from within. They "compassed Jehovah about with their falsehood." Throughout the house or nation of Israel, deceit and falsehood prevailed.

With the nation of Judah, matters different. "Judah vet ruleth with God; and is faithful with the One." (Verse 12.) Hosea must necessarily have spoken these words during the reign of the royal reformer, King Hezekiah. Ahaz, Hezekiah's father, was an idolater, and during his reign the temple was closed, sacrifices were no longer offered, and the true worship had fallen into disrepute. When Hezekiah ascended to the throne, opened up the house of Jehovah, entered upon a great reformation. Through the course of the good Hezekiah, Judah yet ruled

with God.

# A Homily

## Hosea, The Preacher Whose Wife Was A Swinger

#### I. Introduction

- A. When Hosea was yet a young man and still single, he was called to preach at the rich, luxurious, and influential church at Bethel.
  - He succeeded to the chair and ministry, so to speak, that had been occupied by the country preacher, Amos.
  - 2. Jeroboam the great king of Israel, though somewhat advanced in years, still worshipped at that altar.
  - The church at Bethel was known for its soft-sell and its broadmindedness. It made for a place in its worship for

all who believed in a god of one kind or another.

- The women of the church were, no doubt, delighted to have as their minister a young, single, handsome, and enthusiastic man.
  - 1. Since the new minister was in his first work (Hos. 1:2) and also single, the mothers in Israel would be helpful in entertaining him, and directing him in his courting for a good woman that would serve well as a preacher's wife.
  - Several of the women had, no doubt, an abiding desire to marry their daughters off to the new minister.
    - Such plans called for praise of the new minis-

- ter's work, and also for entertaining him.
- b. The days were, no doubt, busy ones for Hosea.
- 3. Jehovah intervened, however, and instructed the young preacher to go take unto himself a wife of whoredom.
  - Hosea went, therefore, and took Gomer for a wife.
  - b. The scripture records that her mother's name was Diblain.
  - c. Only when women were distinguished by one means or another did their names appear in the holy writ.
  - d. Diblain was, likely, a beautiful and well-known courtesan, and her daughter was likely just as beautiful and alluring as she
- One can envision the humiliation that these Israelite women experienced when their new minister appeared at the house of Jehovah with his new wife.
- She, no doubt, was wearing a mini-skirted dress with a low, v-cut neck.
- One can also envision how that the elders of Israel gazed and gathered around to inquire of her name and of her background.
- Some of those elders may very well have known her mother, Diblain, personally.
- Without question, a reaction was set off in that sophisticated church.
  - 1. According to the "tonguable" of that day, the women of Israel jammed the telephone lines that sabbath afternoon.
    - a. In fact, according to the "tonguable," one of the elders in Israel died, and the members of the family could not get a call through to the funeral home.
    - b. The church in Bethel wras in one more hectic state.
    - c. "Why would a fine young man like Hosea marry such a woman?" they asked.

d. The people's sensibilities were shocked beyond description.

- 2. Even today, scholars are shocked at the thought that Jehovah would tell Hosea to go and take a wife from the land of whoredom.
  - a. Those scholars tell us that we must understand the first chapter of Hosea as being only an allegory.

b. They emphasize that God would never do a thing like that.

like that

- c. Which, however, should have been the more shocking: this is for Hosea to be married to an adulterous prostitute or for Jehovah to be married to Israel, an adulterous prostitute?
- d. Which case should have been more shocking to the sensibilities of those Israelites?
- The fact is that Jehovah intended that the prophet Hosea should be a living object lesson to the people of Israel.
  - Hosea prophesied on the eve of the captivity of Israel.
  - b. His lot was cast in mournful times.
  - He was to be married to he adulterous Gomer, just as Jehovah was married to adulterous Israel.
  - d. Hosea's grief and suffering as occasioned by Gomer's infidelity would reflect and represent Jehovah's grief and suffering as occasioned by the infidelity of Israel.
  - e. Hosea was to bear with Gomer and extend forgiveness to her in just the same way that Jehovah had and would bear with and forgive Israel.
  - f. Further, Hosea's children were for signs in the continued spiritual decline of Israel.

#### II. Hosea's Children

A. Gomer bore Hosea a son, and Jehovah said: "Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, MARCH 28, 1976 107

and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause the kingdom of the house of Israel to cease." (Hos. 1:4.)

1. Though Jehu had destroyed Baal out of Israel and God had commended him for so doing, God was not well pleased with Jehu.

2. Jehu was opposed to unprofitable idolatry, but he was not opposed to profitable

idolatry.

- 3. The birth of Jezreel represented a spiritual decline of the nation of Israel.
- B. Gomer then bore Hosea a daughter, and Jehovah said: "Call her name Loruhamah; for I will no more have mercy on the house of Israel, that I should in any wise pardon them." (Hos 1:6.)
  - Loruhamah represented another spiritual decline in Israel.
  - Justice demanded that Israel be carried into captivity as a means of punishment.
  - With the birth of Loruhamah, captivity for Israel was certain.
- C. Gomer bore another son, and Jehovah said: "Call his name Loammi; for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God." (Hos. 1:9.)

Loammi represented another spiritual decline in Israel.

 Not only would Israel go into captivity: but unlike Judah, Israel would never be brought back.

Further than this, the people of Israel would cease to be known as the people of God.

 Within some sixty-five years, the remaining people in the territory of Israel were not known as Israelites, but rather as Samaritans.

# III. Hosea's Wife Gomer

- A. The second chapter of Hosea opens with the words: "Contend with your mother, contend: for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband." (Hos. 2:2.)
  - 1. By this time, Gomer had left the home and was following after her paramours.

2. Wayward Israel had, of course, done the same.

3. Years pass.

B. The third chapter of Hosea opens with the words: "And Jehovah said unto me, Go again, love a women beloved of her friend, and an adulteress, even as Jehovah loveth the children of Israel, though they turn unto other gods, and love cakes of raisins." (Hos. 3:1.)

 So Hosea bought Gomer back for fifteen pieces of silver and a homer and a half of barley.

- 2. And Hosea said to Gomer: "Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, thou shalt not be any man's wife; so will I be also toward thee." (Hos. 3:3.)
- Gomer would not be permitted to continue her harlotry.
   She would not be allowed to marry another man, and Hosea would not live with her.
- C. The case of Hosea and Gomer was to be representative of Jehovah and his wayward wife, Israel.

 Israel would be a long time without a king or prince that is, without any established civil government.

 Israel would also be without a sacrifice (the center of Israel's religion) without a pillar (the center of idolatrous worship), without ephod (the holy garment which the high priest wore and which included the Urim and Thumin by which inquiry could be made of God), or teraphim (the idolatrous divinations).

IV. The Woman at Jacob's Well

A. The woman at Jacob's well is a characteristic fulfillment of the third chapter of Hosea. (John

4.)

- Jesus and his disciples had come to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, where Jacob's well was.
- Jesus sat by the well to rest while his disciples went to buy food.
- 3. In the meantime, a Samaritan woman came to draw water,

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and "Jesus said unto her: Give me to drink."

- B. The Samaritan woman was much surprised. She said to Jesus: How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman?
  - 1. Now right here is seen the fulfillment of the "many days" when those of Israel were without a king, or prince, or sacrifice, or pillar, or ephod, or teraphim.

 a. The woman was a Samaritan—only a part Jew.

- b. For nigh unto seven hundred years, those half-breeds had no real established order of worship. They were without the Urim Thumin.
- 2. Jesus said to the Samaritan woman: "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. . . Whosoever drinketh of this water . . . shall never thirst."
- 3. The woman said: "Sir give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw."
  - a. The Samaritan woman was just like all other women.

b. She wanted running water right into her home.

- c. One may be certain that if there is a new gadget—a labor-saving device—that comes on the market, the women will work their hands to acquire and pay for the device.
- Jesus said to that woman: "Go, call thy husband," and she said: "I have no husband."
  - a. Jesus answered: "Thou saidst well, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he

whom thou now hast is not thy husband."

b. The woman then said: "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet."

c. Then she said: "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

5. When Jesus had stated that the contention of the Jews was the correct one, he then announced: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit and truth."

 Then the Samaritan woman said: "I know that the Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): and when he is come, he will declare unto us all things."

Now, how did that Samaritan woman know about the Messiah?

b. How may we account for her expectation of the coming of the Messiah?

c. We may account for her anticipation of the Messiah on the very basis of that which is set forth in the third chapter of Hosea.

d. She belonged to those people who would be so long without a king, or prince, or sacrifice, or pillar, or ephod, or teraphim.

## V. Conclusion

- A. One pertinent conclusion must be that God's prophetic word is most remarkable, indeed.
- B. Another pertinent observation is that the Samaritans received the gospel as if they were Jews.
  - The gospel was preached in Jerusalem, then Judea, and then in Samaria.
  - The Samaritans received the word through Philip long before the gospel was preached to Cornelius and his household.

## **Questions for Discussion**

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For how long did Hosea's ministry continue?

When did Hosea prophesy?

prophecies of doom, what other type of prophecies did Hosea make? That prophecy :- 'Y Besides prophecies of doom,

What prophecy in Hosea probably reference to the resurrection of to Christ upon the third day? "Out of Egypt

How did the statement, "Out of Egypt have I called my son," have a primary meaning and an ultimate reference?

#### The Golden Text

Explain Hosea's metaphor of **Ephraim** feeding on wind. In what ways had Ephraim sought the

#### The Prophesy of the Messiah

is the primary fulfillment of phecy? What was the ultimate this What prophecy? fulfillment?

Why did God call Israel "my son"?

# The Wayward Course

Give the roster of the prophets whose words had been rejected by Israel.

How had Jehovah been most mindful of Israel?

What does the yoke," represent? the figure, "lifted the un

#### Israel's Ultimate End

What is the significance of the statement, "They shall not return into the land of Egypt"?

Rather ather than return into Egypt the people would go to what country? What was the reason stated for their cap-

tivity?

#### The Bent of Israel

What was the bent of Israel?

#### Israel Contrasted With Judah

were the differences in the spiritual lition of Israel and the spiritual What condition condition of Judah?

#### A Homily

To what position was Hosea called? At what time in his life?

Describe Hosea's congregation.

What was Jehovah's instruction in the matter of Hosea's taking a wife? Who was Gomer? What was her back-

ground? Why did God tell Hosea to marry a wife

from whoredom? What was significance the οf Hosea's

naming his firstborn Jezreel? What did the name, Loruhamah, mean?

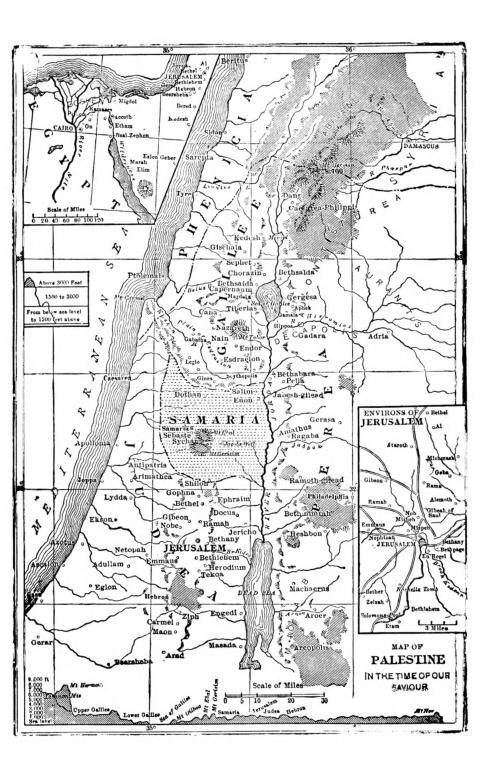
What did Loammi mean? What did he represent?

How did Hosea get Gomer back? What did he tell her at this time?

What did the case of Hosea and Gomer represent?

Who is a characteristic fulfillment of the third chapter of Hosea? How did she know of the coming of the Messiah?

When did the Samaritans receive the gos-pel?



# SECOND QUARTER

# CHRIST VERSUS THE LAW ... (Romans and Galatians)

Aim.-To consider, in detail, Paul's argument that justification is obtainable, not through the law of Moses, but only by means of the gospel of Christ.

# Lesson I—April 4, 1976

# POWER OF THE GOSPEL

## Lesson Text Rom. 1:14-25

14 I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you

also that are in Rome.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righ-

teous shall live by faith.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness;

19 Because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God

manifested it unto them.

20 For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse:

21 Because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened.

22 Professing themselves to be

wise, they became fools, 23 And changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

24 Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves:

25 For that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

Golden Text.-"I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish." (Rom. 1:14.)

Devotional Reading. - Rom. 1:1-13.

## **Daily Bible Readings**

March 29. M	Paul Writes to the Church in Rome (Rom. 1:1-7)
March 30. T	
March 31. W	
April 1. T	Paul's Trip to Rome (Acts 28:11-15)
April 2. F	
April 3. S	

Time. - About A.D. 56.

Places.—Corinth in Greece, and Rome in Italy.

Persons.—Paul and the saints in Rome.

### Introduction

The broad title for the lessons during this quarter is "Christ Versus the Law." The lessons will be taken from Paul's epistles to the

Romans and to the Galatians. The aim for the lessons is to consider in detail Pauls argument that justification is obtainable, not through the

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law of Moses, but through the gospel of Christ. This is a very worthy aim, and it constitutes a very

worthy study.

The study of the respective lessons for this quarter necessarily involves doctrinal concepts that are deeply rooted and of long standing. In the period of the prior generation, or generations even, brethren were acquainted with those doctrinal matters. They attended debates where the doctrinal matters were discussed; they heard sermons where the true doctrine was contrasted with those erroneous long-standing doctrinal concepts; and they were taught that doctrine, the truth of God, does really matter. Many of the present generation of the churches of Christ are not well informed relative to those doctrinal issues, and not a few think that

after all doctrine does not really count. With them, "feelings," "love," and "responses" are the matters which count.

The format for each of the lessons during this quarter will include, for the want of space, an "Annotated Historical Perspective." It will also include a "Doctrinal Perspective." The intent of the Annotations will be to supply, in as brief a manner as possible, certain historical material that will shed greater light on the respective books of Romans and Galatians. The intent of the "Doctrinal Perspectives" will be to set forth briefly the basic erroneous doctrines, together with questions, as a means of alerting the student to the doctrinal matters involved so that he may consider them as the lesson text is examined.

#### ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Paul, first called Saul, wrote Romans from Corinth in A.D. 56 or 57. Some fourteen years intervened from his conversion to his first missionary journey. He was active in preaching Christ during that period . . . was baptized at Damascus in about A.D. 33 . . . remained certain days there and preached in the synagogues . . . then went away to Arabia . . returned from Arabia to Damascus . . . went, after three years, up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas . . . then went to the region of Syria and Cilicia. His native city was Tarsus of the province of Cilicia. He was there until Barnabas sought him out for the work in Antioch of Syria . . . continued there for a whole year . . . then went with Barnabas to Jerusalem to bear a bounty of relief . . . returned to Antioch with John Mark in company.

First missionary journey: Sent out by the church of Antioch about A.D. 47 . . . Barnabas and John Mark in company . . sailed to island of Cyprus . . Barnabas's native land . . preached in synagogues in Salamis and through the whole island to Paphos . . . then sailed to mainland . . went to Perga of Pamphylia, province in Asia Minor, preached in Antioch of Pisidia, then in Iconium, in Lystra, and in Derbe. They returned to those same cities . . confirmed the brethren . . passed through Pisidia . . . came to Perga . . . preached

there . . . went down to Attalia and sailed to Antioch . . . reported to the church all things that God had done through them. This was the end of the first journey. Time: about A.D. 49

Second missionary journey: Paul, in company with Silas, went through the regions of Syria and Cilicia and came to Derbe, Lystra, Iconium . . . chose Timothy to accompany them . . . went through regions of Phrygia and Galatia . . . forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia . . . arrived at Troas . . . received a call by vision to come over to Macedonia. He had then been a Christian and an apostle for about seventeen years and had preached in Philippi. Thessalonica, Beroea and Athens. Time: about A.D. 51-52. He went from Athens to Corinth preached there in fear and trembling staved in Corinth for the staved in t

preached there in fear and trembling . . . stayed in Corinth for a year and six months . . . sailed thence for Syria . . . touched at Ephesus . . . preached and reasoned in the synagogues for a short time . . . promised to return . . . set sail again . . . landed at Caesarea . . . went up and saluted the church, then went down to Antioch. This was the end of the second missionary journey. Time: about A.D. 52.

Third missionary journey: After some time at Antioch Paul went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, establishing the disciples

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. . including especially the churches in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Perga, and Antioch of Pisidia, then went to Ephesus. Time: about A.D. 53. He preached there for two years and three months . . . wrote First Corinthians . . . left Ephesus upon the uproar created by Demetrius the silversmith . . . went to Troas . . found an open door . . . because Titus was not in Troas, as expected, was too troubled in mind to take was too troubled in mind to take advantage of opportunities. In haste he embarked for Macedonia . .. from there wrote Second Corinthians . . . went through those points . . . came to Greece or Corinth . . . received word of the apos-

tasy of the churches of Galatia; result of false Judaizing teachers who required of the Gentile converts circumcision and observance of the law of Moses. From Corinth he wrote the epistle to the Galatians and also the epistle to the Romans. This second stay in Corinth was short. "When he had spent three months there, and a plot was laid against him by the laws as he was against him by the Jews as he was about to sail for Syria, he determined to return through Macedonia" . . . then came to Troas . . . first step on the journey to bear Gentile Christians' bounty to the poor in Jerusalem and Judea. Time: about A.D. 57.

#### DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES

Martin Luther (1483-1546), a religious reformer of Germany, was first a devout Catholic. He had been taught to look upon Christ as an exacting law-giver who would at the last day demand to know how Luther had atoned for his guilt, and how many good works he had done to balance against his evil works. Luther, however, had entertained doubts concerning quirements or works required of quirements or works required of him by the Roman Catholic Church—works consisting of rites, ceremonies, relics, ancestries, and austerities of penance. Then one day he chanced upon a copy of the word of God and read from Paul's epistle to the Romans that "the just shall live by faith." He concluded immediately that Paul's statement was the answer to his doubts and misgivings—he would be saved by faith, not -he would be saved by faith, not by peculiar rites and ceremonies. He began to preach salvation by faith only rather than by works.

In 1517, John Tetzel came peddling his spiritual wares-indulgdling his spiritual wares—indulgences. He told the people that "as soon as your coin clings in the chest, the souls of your friends will rise out of purgatory to heaven." He invited the people to come and pay well, not only for the sins that they had already committed, but also for the sins which they intended to commit; whereupon Martin Luther proceeded to post on the tin Luther proceeded to post on the oaken door of the Wittenberg Ca-thedral a parchment containing ninety-five theses or propositions for debate relating, primarily, to the sale of indulgences. Thus, histori-ans have made October 31, 1517, the

date of the posting, the beginning date of the Great Reformation.

Calvin (1509-1564), a theologian and reformer, John French was a brilliant, exact, and finished scholar. Luther was a translator, but Calvin was an interpreter of the Word. He wrote, what he termed, "The Institutes." In that writing he carefully set forth his system of doctrine, with which Luther, in the main, agreed.

John Calvin has had a tremendous, but erroneous, influence upon the people of Christendom from his day until now. The disciples of Calvinism define the doctrines of Calvinism by an acrostic of the word "tulip," as follows: T—Total depravity.

U—Unconditional predestination. L—Limited design of atonement.

I—Irresistible grace. P—Perseverance of the saints.

In short, the doctrine of Calvinism teaches that every newborn baby is a reprobate sinner; that God, from all eternity unchangeably foreordained and predestinated those who would be saved—in fact whatsoever comes to pass—and the number is unalterable; that Christ is the atonement only for the limited elect; that the limited elect cannot resist the irresistible grace effected by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit which gives life not Holy Spirit, which gives life not only to the elect as dead sinners but also to the Word which, without the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, is merely a dead letter of the gos-pel; and that the limited elect will persevere to the end and be saved, without the loss of a single one.

Jacob Arminian (1560-1609) a Dutch theologian, a native of Holland, was at first a disciple of the doctrines of Calvinism, but in time he fell upon doubt on all of the essential points of Calvinism, especially the doctrine of unconditional election. Arminian's negative reaction to Calvin's doctrines resulted in the setting forth of the creed called, "Remonstrance." The "Remonstance Document" affirmed the following:

- That election is conditional on the ground of foreseen faith —thus not unconditional.
- 2. That the atonement of Christ is universal—thus not a limited one.
- 3. That regeneration is by direct operation of the Holy Spirit, but that it can be resisted—thus not absolutely irresistible.
- 4. That the perseverance of the saints is conditional—thus not unconditional.

John Wesley (1703-1791), a theologian, evangelist, and founder of Methodism of England, was an Arminian in his theology. He laid great emphasis on one's need of the direct reception of the Holy Spirit. "The Wesleyan faith was Arminianism on fire." Wesley inveighed vehemently against the Calvinistic tenet of a limited election.

John Smyth (1570-1612), a nonconformist clergyman, first of Holland, and then of England, baptized himself and declared that immersion is the only scriptural mode of baptism. He thus attacked the "sprinkling" as practiced by both the Calvinists and the Arminians. This movement, however, drew heavily upon the tenets of Calvinism, particularly the tenets of total depravity and the perseverance of the saints. The movement is in agreement, however, with the Arminians on the points that the atonement is unlimited and that regeneration is by direct operation of the Holy Spirit which can be resisted.

Some points of emphasis include the following:

- 1. The entire Protestant world with few exceptions—including both the Calvinists and the Arminians—are in agreement that salvation is by faith only.
- The entire Protestant world is also in agreement that in the absence of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit there can be no regeneration of the sinner.
- The entire Protestant world is also in agreement with the concept that the word of God is a "dead letter" unless united with the direct operation of the Holy Spirit.
- 4. The entire Protestant world is also in agreement that when Paul wrote that one is not saved by the works of the law, he meant that one is not saved by any compliance to a plan or terms of obedience to the gospel—in short, that Paul was speaking of the works of faith, and not the law of Moses in contrast to a system of faith.

#### The Golden Text

"I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish." (Rom. 1:14.)

Paúl's debt or obligátion to share the gospel with all men—the Jew, the Gentile, the civilized and the barbarian, the learned and the ignorant—did not stem from any contributions which they had made personally to his welfare; but rather his obligation stemmed from his having heard and obeyed the gospel—the glad tidings of how that Jesus, the Son of God, had died on the cross as a sinner, a criminal, in his stead. Every Christian today is under a pressing moral and spiritual obligation to preach the gospel to those who are lost in sin.

### The Text Explained

# Paul Desired to Preach the Gospel in Rome

(Rom. 1:14-17)

I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto

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faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith.

Paul had preached the gospel to numerous lands and peoples, and he desired to preach the gospel also to the people in Rome. The opportunity to do so was to be a great source of joy to him. Of a certainty, he was not ashamed to preach the gospel, even at Rome among the learned, the rich, and the imperial and powerful. Often members of the church have been ashamed to let their neighbors know of their religious background and faith, but not so with Paul! He was ready to preach the gospel in face of ridicule and indignities, and in the face of persecutions and physical sufferings.

physical sufferings.

The gospel—its message of the virgin birth, the vicarious death, the atoning blood, and the resurrection of Christ in behalf of man-is the "power of God unto salvation to everyône that believeth." means that a man can hear the gospel, believe it, obey its terms, and be saved. If, as the religionists contend, man is so depraved and/or if the gospel is such a dead letter that no unregenerate sinner can be regenerated and saved without a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, then the gospel is not the power of God unto salvation. In such a case the direct operation of the Holy Spirit would be the power which saves. The gospel, however, is the power to save, and that gospel was first preached to the Jews, and then it was preached to the Greeks.

Man's only means of attaining unto righteousness is through faith, as Habakkuk said: "The righteous shall live by faith." The gospel, therefore, presents to sinful man a righteousness from God, predicated on the basis of man's faith, and that gospel was revealed therefore, in order to effect such faith. God revealed through the gospel that he will justify those who believe on Jesus Christ, and that fact motivates men, or should, to hear the gospel in order to believe—thus the statement: "For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith

unto faith.'

# The Wrath of God is Revealed from Heaven

(Rom. 1:18-23) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness; because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested unto them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse: because knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing themselves to wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptand ible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of and four-footed beasts, creeping things.

There was certainly a need for the gospel as is indicated by the word "for" which introduces the eighteenth verse. The wrath of God, his righteous judicial judg-ment, is revealed from heaven upon all ungodly, and rebellious men; and yet, God's love went out, and goes out, to such men. The gospel is the means, therefore, for sinful men to desist from their sinful course and become righteous. The gospel is God's righteous means of saving men who, through their own

free choice, were lost in sin.

When a person affirms, as many do, that no man can prove that God exists—that one can only believe that God exists—he affirms too much. God has not left man without a witness or without evidence. He has so revealed himself in nature that what is not seen with the eye-the invisible things of heaven -can be contemplated through the powers of human reason and judgment in light of the things that are seen by the eye. Thus, the invisible things of God may be perceived through those things that are made, or that appear. Men, therefore, are without excuse.

Men knew God, but they refused to glorify-to honor, respect, worship—him as God. They were ingrates. When, and as, God blessed them, they refused to recognize his blessings and to give thanks. Thus men became vainempty—in their own imaginations. They were without spiritual pur-

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pose and ideals. They professed wisdom, but they were fools. They changed the glory of the incorruptible God by their own making of gods-their handmade gods-in the forms of man, and of four-footed beasts, and of birds, and of creeping things. Their handmade gods were patterned often after a combination of the form of a man and a beast.

## God Gave Them Up (Rom. 1:24)

Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should

be dishonored among themselves.

God gave them up! What a fearful thought! He left them to their own wicked self-determined course. God gives men strong reasons, motivations, and inducements to follow, to worship, and to obey him; but all the while, he does not tamper with his inviolate provision for man's freedom of choice—his free God sets forth to will of action. man all available and justifiable inducements to righteóusness; man must tip the scales for righteousness. God can have fellowship with man only if he is holy, man can be holy only if he is absolutely free to choose or reject a course of righteousness. Man can be holy only if he chooses the course of righteousness.

God gave those people up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness. In short, God permitted their evil to work out its own certain and fearful retribution. Thus, the bodies of those men came to be dishon-

ored among themselves.

# POSTED THESES

If the Word, or gospel, is a "dead letter" to the unregenerate sinner in the absence of a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, the apostle John certainly made a mistake when he wrote: "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ,

the Son of God; and that believing ve may have life in his name! (John 20:30.)

If there must be a direct operation of the Holy Spirit in order for the Word to have life, John made a mistake when he wrote: "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth!" (John 17:17.)

#### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

Give the broad title for the lessons during this quarter. What is the aim for these lessons?

Annotated Historical Perspectives

Discuss the life of Paul and his missionary journeys.

# **Doctrinal Perspectives**

Discuss Martin Luther, his disagreement with the Catholic Church, and his doctrine of "faith only." the doctrine Discuss of Calvinism as de-

fined by John Calvin's disciples.
iscuss the doctrine of Jacob Ar
and list the affirmations of his Arminian

monstrance Document." Discuss the doctrine of John Wesley. Discuss the doctrine of John Smyth.

List and discuss the four points of doc-trinal emphasis in which the entire protestant world is in agreement.

# The Golden Text

Why was Paul debtor to all men?

#### Paul Desired to Preach the Gospel in Rome

Paul's lack of shame in preach-Discuss ing the gospel to all.

Discuss the gospel as "the power of God unto salvation" in contrast to a so-called "direct operation" of the Holy Spirit.

#### The Wrath of God is Revealed from Heaven

those against whom it is revealed. Define Describe,

escribe, as Paul does, the spiritual con-dition of men who know not God.

#### God Gave Them Up

Why does God never tamper with man's free will of action?

#### Posted Theses

That proof do we have which shows that the Word is not a "dead letter"? What

# Lesson II – April 11, 1976

# **JUSTIFIED BY THE GRACE OF GOD**

# Lesson Text Rom. 3:19-31

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God:

20 Because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for through the law cometh

the knowledge of sin.

21 But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.

22 Even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no

distinction:

23 For all have sinned, and fall

short of the glory of God;
24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God;

26 For the showing, I say, of his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jeśus.

27 Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith.

28 We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.

29 Or is God the God of Jews only? is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also:

30 If so be that God is one, and he shall justify the circumcision by the uncircumcision faith, and through faith.

Do we then make the law of none effect through faith? God forbid: nay, we establish the law.

Golden Text. — "By grace have ye been saved. . . ." (Eph. 2:5.) Devotional Reading.—Rom. 3:1-18.

# **Daily Bible Readings**

		J
April	5. M	Grace Brings Salvation (Tit. 2:1-12)
April	6. T	
April	7. W	Grace an Ornament (Prov. 1:1-9)
April	8. T	Access by Faith into Grace (Rom. 5:1-10)
April	9. F	God's Grace Sufficient (2 Cor. 12:1-9)
April 10.	). S	Riches of Grace (Eph. 1:1-14)
April 1	11. S	Saved by Grace (Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:24) ´
		,

Time. — About A.D. 56.

Places.—Corinth in Greece, and Rome in Italy.

Persons.—Paul and the saints in Rome.

#### Introduction

There is a certain doctrinal pattern in the epistles which Paul wrote about A.D. 55-56, namely: Corinthians, written from Ephesus and borne by Titus; Second Corinthians, written from Macedonia not more than eight months later; Galatians, written from Corwithin some three months later than Second Corinthians; and

Romans, written at about the same time and from the same place that Galatians was written. Paul's authority as an apostle was being denied by certain leaders of the Jews. A rift was underway which threatened to divide completely the church into two warring camps the Jews and the Gentiles, respectively.

#### ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Paul had for a long time desired to visit Rome . . . before the uprising in Ephesus created by the leadership of Demetrius, the sil118 Lesson II

versmith, Luke recorded: "So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed." Paul purposed . . . . when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there I must see Rome." . . . Paul also wrote in his epistle: "I long to see you . . . oftentimes I purposed to come upon you ... I was hindered these many times . . . but now, having no more any place in these regions, and having many years a longing to come unto you, whensoever I go unto Spain (for I hope to see you on my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you). . . When therefore I have accomplished this"—that is his journey to Jerusalem bearing the Gentile bounty to the poor Jews in Jerusalem—"and have sealed to them this fruit"—the bounty—"I will go on by you unto Spain ... I aim to preach the gospel . . . not where Christ is already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation."

When Paul wrote Galatians and Romans, he apparently had just learned of the apostasy of the churches of Galatia. He and Barnabas established those churches on the first missionary journey. Time: about A.D. 48. He and Silas visited those churches on the second journey. Time: about A.D. 51-52. He visited those same churches on the hird journey—"And when he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and saluted the church, and went down

to Antioch. And having spent some time there, he departed, and went through the region of Galatia, and Phrygia, in order, establishing the disciples." (Acts 18:22, 23.) No indication of problems at the time of the third visit . . . went to Ephesus . . . there two years and three months . . . then to Troas ... to Macedonia . . . and to Corinth within an eight-months period, in Corinth for only three months, at that time must have received word of the apostasy of the churches of Galatia . . . wrote the epistle to them . wrote the Roman epistle within the same frame of reference ... at least anticipated that the problems which obtained in the churches of Galatia were somewhat current, or would be, among the Roman saints ... in fact a statement from the Philippian epistle ... at the close of a two year stay in Rome . . . could very well indicate that Paul knew from reports that the problems of Galatia were also current in Rome . . the statement: "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." (Phil. 1:15-18.)

#### DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES

This lesson is entitled, "Justified by the Grace of God." The term "saved" could be substituted for the term "justified." Without question, mortal man is saved by the grace of God. Grace is unmerited favorunearned or undeserved favor-and no man has merited or purchased salvation. What, however, involved in a man's being saved by the grace of God? Does God's unconditionally cover all men, believers or nonbelievers, the universalists contend? Is God's grace operative for all who just believe as the Arminians, along with others, contend? Are there no conditions to be met for the availment of God's grace, other than the con-

dition of faith, as almost the whole of the Protestant world contends? Does grace dispense with law?

The answers to these and other questions are pertinent to those who put forth an effort to teach their religious neighbors relative to the plan of salvation; and further, the answers to these questions are even more pertinent-in light of a growing misconception of the subject of grace-for those who are members of the church. To illustrate, a graduate of a denominational seminary is reported to have said in substance: "There are two classes of preachers in the churches of Christ—those who believe that the sinner is saved by works and

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those who believe that the sinner is saved by grace. I believe that the sinner is saved by the grace of God." Another preacher is reputed to have said that grace excludes all

This writer has never known a gospel preacher who does not emphasize that no man can be saved except by the grace of God. Still further, this writer has known a multitude of gospel preachers who have taught that the grace of God is predicated upon a man's compliance with the conditions or terms of pardon as set forth in the gospelfaith, repentance, confession, baptism. Respecting the assertion that grace excludes all law, Isaiah said: "Out of Zion shall go forth the law" and Paul wrote, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Isa. 2:3; Gal. 3:2.) Why, therefore, would a gospel preacher make such statements as represented above?

#### The Golden Text

"By grace (Eph. 2:5.) are saved. yе

is defined as unmerited, unearned, and undeserved favor. No man has a right to salvation as a result of his own righteousness or meritorious works. "There is none righteous, no, not one." Rom. 3:10.) God's offer of salvation to man is positively a matter of grace. The offer is to all men! What a glorious contemplation! What love hath been shown to fallen man!

Paul wrote: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves [not procured by your works], it is a gift of God; and not of works [God provided salvation for all through the death of Christ], that no man should glory [boast of his own devices and ac-complishments]." But there are works by which man appropriates the salvation that God's grace has provided for all men. (Tit. 2:11.) To illustrate the fact that there are works which are included. Peter declared at the house of Cornelius: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35.) A point of emphasis is that whatever is included under the term "righteousness" is included in the gospel plan of salvation. Certainly, salvation is by faith, but it is not by faith only or alone.

James wrote: "Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith apart from works is barren? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? Thou seest that faith wrought with his works, and

by works was faith made perfect." Paul wrote: "Belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. 10:17.) Faith is the result of teaching, and the acts of obedience are the results of faith in God—thus faith is made perfect by obedience. Within this very frame of reference, Paul wrote the Galatians: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." tized into Christ did put on Christ." To the Ephesians, Paul wrote: "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." Paul also wrote the Galatians: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, uncircumcision; but working through love." The clusion of this whole matter is that a faith that saves is a faith that takes God at his word, believes what he says, obeys what he commands, and becomes what he demands. The faith that saves is a live, energetic, and active faith. (James 2:20, 21; Rom. 10:17; Gal. 3:26, 27; Eph. 2:10; Gal. 5:6.)

While the grace of God has provided salvation for all men, all men will not be saved. The offer of God's grace is predicated upon a faith that works by love. Paul emphasized this fact still further in his letter to Titus. He wrote: "The grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men [that is within the reach of all men], instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this pres-

ent world." (Tit. 2:11, 12.)

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# The Text Explained

# No Man Can Be Saved by the Works of the Law

(Rom. 3:19, 20)

Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin.

The "law" of verse 19 is the Old Testament law of Moses. That law was given to the Israelites-the best people, not the worst. It spoke to those Israelites who were under that law, and through that law the Israelites came to have a knowledge of sin. That law was given in order that every mouth might be stopped—that is, that every man should be humbled, or become speechless, by his knowledge of his own guilt of sin. If by the knowledge of sin every Israelite should be humbled, what defense did the heathen have? This law was given that all the world, both the Israelites and the Gentiles might be brought under the judgment of God. The Israelites were a kind of object lesson for the nations about them. While Israel was not a missionary society or nation, as such, the Gentile nations were to learn to fear and respect the God of the Israelites; and further, through God's dealings with the Israelites, the Gentiles were to learn of their own guilt of sin. The law of Moses was given so that the Israelites might have a knowledge of sin, but no flesh could be justified before God under that law. One single sin one single violation—brought the violator under the condemnation of that law. No system of law can declare a person just, or free from guilt, who has violated a single statute of that system of law. The fact was that all mankind-both Iew and Greek-"had sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

# There Is a Righteousness—A Plan for Salvation Apart from the Law (Rom. 3:21-23)

But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the

righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God.

Apart from the law—that is apart from the law of Moses-there is a righteousness of God. This righteousness of God is a plan, a scheme, a means whereby man can become righteous—or whereby he can be saved. While no one could be saved by the law of Moses, that very law, together with the prophets, did witness or testify of the plan or scheme for salvation which was to be revealed later. The law of Moses and the prophets prepared the way for a calvation which the way for a salvation which was to be revealed through the gospel, or the righteousness of God. This was a righteousness unto salvation to all men—not just to the Jews and not just to a few elect—and this plan or scheme of righteousness was, and is, attainable on the basis of faith in Christ Jesus without distinction of race whether to the Jew tinction of race, whether to the Jew, or the Greek, or the barbarian. Though the Israelites, or Jews, had Abraham for their father, though to those Jews had been committed the oracles of God, they, like all other peoples, were under They, like all other men therefore, were in dire need of that righteousness or plan which God had freely set forth and prepared for their justification or salvation.

# Justification Is through the Grace of God

(Rom. 3:24-26)

. . . being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the showing, I say, of his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus.

The plan or scheme whereby man might become righteous was a matter of absolute grace on God's part. All men were under sin. No man had or could have procured his salvation by means of his own merito-

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rious works. True, the Jews had the law of Moses, but the law did not save the Jews from sin. It only convicted them of sin. It was not given to save; but rather, it was given to convict.

Salvation procured by God's grace is extended to all men through his Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his body as a propitiation, an atonement for the sins of men. Through his propitiation Christ has provided a means for the redemption of fallen man.

Christ made the atonement for the sins of men by dying on the Cross. This was a matter of meeting the terms of justice which required "life for life." Man through sin, so to speak, had taken his own life. His redemption, therefore, could only be obtained on the basis of a life for his life. Since the "life is in the blood," Christ came to earth through means of a body prepared for him in order that he could give his life, which necessarily required his atoning blood, for the redemption of man. Therefore God could at the same time be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Christ Jesus. God is first of all just and righteous, and if he were to "pass over the sins done aforetime" without the demands of violated justice having been met, he would have ceased at that very point to be a righteous and just God. Christ made atonement for all men. Christ's atonement for all contrary to Calmen is certainly vin's doctrine of limited atonement, or atonement for a certain and predetermined elect only. The atonement which Christ made is predicated, however, on the basis of man's faith in him and in the blood that he shed.

Man Has No Basis for Glorying (Rom. 3:27-31) Where then is the glorying? It is

#### POSTED THESES

When a preacher leaves the impression that through the means of God's grace there are no works of obedience to be performed, no conditions to be met, he is potentially as dangerous as the man who affirms outright that a sinner is saved by faith only.

"Jehovah said to Joshua, See, I

excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith. We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. Or is God the God of Jews only? is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also: if so be that God is one, and he shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make the law of none effect through faith? God forbid: nay, we establish the law lish the law.

In the light of God's grace for the redemption of man through faith in the blood of Christ, man has not whereof to glory or to boast. Man's basis for glorying is excluded by his not having performed perfectly the works of the law of Moses. Man's salvation, therefore, can be secured only by a righteousness of faith—a new law or system—that is by a system of grace which is above and beyond the law of Moses. This righteousness of God, or law of faith, has struck a death blow to self-righteousness. self-righteousness and self-glorification. This law of faith is a "faith that works by love."

Contrary to the concept held by the Jews relative to their special covenant advantage, God is the God of the Gentiles as well as the God of the Jews, and he, therefore, shall justify the circumcision, the Jews, by faith, and the uncircumcision, the Gentiles, through faith. In answer to an anticipated objection that such a system would make the law of none effect through faith, Paul declared that salvation declared through faith in Christ's blood did not make void the law of Moses; but rather, Christ was the end of fulfillment of the law, and thereby the law of Moses was established its validity, its fulfillment, and its examples in righteousness recorded for the admonition and learning of those under the law of Christ.

have given into thy hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and mighty men of valor." (Josh. Joshua then, in keeping with God's instructions, marched ` his around the walls of Jericho one time each day for six days and seven times on the seventh day. When the seventh round was completed, the priests gave a long blast

the ram horns, the trumpets the people shouted, and walls came tumbling down. Now if by gift or grace, the conditions of law, is excluded, walls would have fallen without a single march, or blast, or trumpet, or shout.

### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

Where, here, when, and under v stances was the epistle to what circumthe Romans

What were the problems prevalent in the church at this time?

#### Annotated Historical Perspectives

Upon which occasion did Paul hope to visit the church in Rome?

with Discuss Paul's acquaintance churches of Galatia.

Why were the ep and the Romans the epistles the Galatians to written in the frame of reference?

#### **Doctrinal Perspectives**

What is the term which can be substituted for the word "justified"? Define grace.

Why are the questions raised by the author so pertinent today? Discuss statement: "Grace excludes

all law." Discuss why this statement is contrary to the teaching of Christ.

#### The Golden Text

Why does no man have a right to salvation as a result of his own righteousness?

What procured salvation for all men? How do men accept salvation? Discuss our salvation by faith. Why will all men not be saved?

> No Man Can Be Saved by the Works of the Law

Discuss the "law" in verse 19 of the text. Why was that law given?

There Is a Righteousness-A Plan for Salvation Apart from the Law

Define the righteousness of God and discuss how this righteousness saves us.

Justification Is through the Grace of God Discuss God's being at the same time just and the justifier.

Man Has No Basis for Glorying

Why does man have no basis for glorying in his salvation?

#### Posted Theses

Discuss the falling of the walls of Jericho and how the law of God was obeyed.

# Lesson III — April 18, 1976

# **JUSTIFIED BY FAITH**

#### Lesson Text

Rom. 5:1-6; Gal. 5:1-6

1 Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;

2 Through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh stedfastness;

4 And stedfastness, approvedness;

and approvedness, hope:

- 5 And hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through Spirit which was the Holy unto us.
- 6 For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly.

1 For freedom did Christ set free: stand fast therefore, not entangled again in a yoke of bondage.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that, if ye receive circumcision,

Christ will profit you nothing.

3 Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

4 Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace.

5 For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteous-

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor unbut faith circumcision; through love.

Golden Text.—"Faith apart from works is dead." (James 2:26.) Devotional Reading. — James 2:14-26.

# Daily Bible Readings

A	pril 12	M	Law Unable to Justity (Gal. 3:6-14)	
A	pril 13	T	Law a Tutor (Gal. 3:23-29)	)
A	pril 14	W	Active Faith Blesses (Heb. 11:24-28	)
A	pril 15	T Fait	h Perfected by Works (James 2:14-26)	ĺ
			ion Not by Faith Only (James 2:24-26	
			The Principle of Faith (Rom. 3:21-31)	
A	pril 18	S Fai	th Leads to Obedience (Acts 16:25-33	3)

Time.—For Romans about A.D. 56; for Galatians, about A.D. 55-56.

Places.—For Romans, Corinth in Greece, and Rome in Italy. For Galatians, Paul wrote the churches in Galatia when he was in Macedonia.

Persons.—Paul and the saints in Rome and the saints of the churches of Galatia

#### Introduction

The lesson text for today's study is taken from both the Roman epistle and the Galatian epistle. Emphasis should be laid upon the fact that there is a certain doctrinal pattern that runs through those two

epistles.

Many commentators of the past assumed that Paul's epistle to the churches of Galatia was addressed to churches in the northern region of Galatia, and that they were established by Paul and Silas on the second missionary journey when "they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia." (Acts 16:6.) The assumption, however, was not without certain problems: for one thing, there was hardly sufficient time in Luke's travel log of Paul for such an extensive program of preaching as seems to be indicated; for another thing, there is not a single reference in the New Testament that gives a specific location of a single church in the entire region of Galatia; and for a third thing, there is not a single reference in the New Testament that gives the name of a particular disciple from the entire 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 well 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 region of "Galatia" in Asia Minor; whereas the political sense embraced not only the Galatia of the northern country, but also the southern provinces of Lycaonia, Pisidia, Pamphylia, and a large part of Phrygia.

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Sir Walter Ramsey concluded, therefore, that Paul, being a Roman citizen, used the term "Galatia" in the Roman political sense. Thus, according to Ramsey, the churches of Galatia were those churches that Paul and Barnabas established on the first missionary journey, namely: Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe of Lycaonia, and Perga of Pamphylia.

Now, those very churches were the ones that had been led into apostasy through the baneful influence of the Judaizing teachers, and the apostasy of those churches called forth Paul's epistle to them. Without doubt, the apostasy of those Galatian churches was heavy on Paul's mind as he wrote his epistle to the Romans.

#### ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

The Roman Catholic Church contends that the church in Rome was founded by the apostle Peter . . . that Peter was the first pope . . Luke, an exact historian, gave an extended account of the work of the apostle Peter (Acts 1-12), but he made no mention of Peter's having gone to Rome . . . Peter was an especially prominent person . . . had he established the church in Rome,

surely Luke would have recorded the fact . . . Paul in his salutation of the last chapter of Romans saluted twenty-seven persons by name, but not Peter . . . had Peter been there, Paul's failure to salute him would have been an outright affront, especially since Peter was the chief apostle to the circumcision . . . Paul desired to visit Rome that he might impart spiritual gifts to those

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Christians to the end that they might be established . . . had Peter, or any other apostle, been to Rome, there would have been little need for such impartation of gifts. Paul must have received advanced word of the state of the Christians in Rome . . . having had a long desire to visit Rome but having been as long detained . . . knowing of the needs and problems . . . and having just leaned of the apostasy among the churches of Galatia, he took another way to communicate his message to the Romans . . . the way of his profound epistle.

Jews had settled in Rome as early as the second century B.C. . . . the number was considerably augmented by prisoners-of-war through Pompey's conquest of Judea, 63 B.C. . . . two years later, many Jewish prisoners-of-war—including Aristobulus—marched before Pompey's triumphal car in procession through the city of Rome . . in A.D. 19, Emperor Tiberius expelled the Jews from Rome ... in about A.D. 49, Claudius also expelled the Jews from Rome ... in

each instance the effect of the expulsion order seems to have been short lived.

When Paul wrote . . . the church in Rome was not a recent development ... it had been establishêd longer than Paul had been a Christian ... he had been a Christian for some twenty-four years exact history of the church's beginning ... on Pentecost, present were sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes . . . only Europeans mentioned . . . likely individuals on Pentecost carried the gospel to Rome . . . and were joined by others who moved there .´ . . the church consisted of small groups . . . was a mixed lot of Jews and Gentiles . . . many were from the provinces of Asia Minor . . . Gentile Christians seem to have outnumbered Iewish Christians . . . the congregations there were numbered among the Gentile churches (1:5-7) . addressed as Gentiles . . . but Jewish believers were quite numerous ... Phoebe's departure to Rome provided Paul with a means of his sending the epistle to Rome.

#### DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES

The present lesson is entitled: "Justified by Faith." As has been pointed up in a prior "Doctrinal Perspective," the whole Protestant world, with few exceptions and including both Calvinists and Arminians, are exponents of the doctrine of salvation by faith only or by faith alone. There is no question as to the fact that salvation is by faith. The Word so affirms in passages too numerous to be mentioned. The question, or questions, involved are as follows:

 Does the Word of God teach that salvation is by faith only or by faith alone?

 Does the Word of God teach that in conviction and conversion the Holy Spirit exercises a power or influence in addition to the written or spoken word—an operation of the Spirit independent of the word? Does the Word of God teach, as the Calvinists claim, that all who are elected and/or saved by faith only can never so fall as to be eternally lost?

Members of the churches of Christ may become so sophisticated as to refrain from any show of legalism and/or emphasis on the matter of doctrine-some evangelists now close sermon after sermon without stating the conditions for the primary obedience to the gospel —bût one thing is certain, and another is prevalent, namely: the denominations of protestantism do not cease to teach salvation by faith only and also the necessity of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, separate and apart from the Word, in the conviction and conversion of (he sinner. Further, the doctrine of the absolute perseverance of the saints is taught prevalently by more than one-half of the denominational world.

#### The Golden Text

"Faith apart from works is dead." (James 2:26.)
Martin Luther was so convinced

that a sinner is saved by faith only that he rejected the book of James as having a right and place in the APRIL 18, 1976 125

New Testament canon. He called the book of James a bundle of hay.

The book of Romans and the book of James, however, are not in conflict. True enough, in the epistle to the Romans, Paul wrote: "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin." True enough also Paul True enough also, wrote: "Now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested . . . even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe, and "being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul, however, did not write that a person is justified by faith only, nor is there a single passage in the New Testament that so teaches. Paul was contrasting the law of Moses—which was never intended to be intended. which was never intended to bring salvation of man-with a system of faith, or a plan or scheme of redemption whereby God could at the same time be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Christ Jesus. Paul called this plan or

scheme the righteousness of God. This was a system where God as a God of justice, provided a means for meeting all of the demands of violated justice, and at the same time, a means whereby his mercy could rejoice against his judgment.

The plan revealed in the gospel of Christ was predicated on the basis of faith in Christ. This faith in Christ did not, however, exclude the works of faith as being unnecessary to salvation; but rather, "by works for compliance with the conditions of the gospel] was faith made perfect." James declared: "Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself. . . . The demons also believe, and shudder." The apostle Peter summed up the principle of the faith and works of the gospel when he said to Cornelius: Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Rom. 3:20-22; 4:1; 3:36; James 2:22, 17, 19; Acts 10:34, 35.)

# The Text Explained

## The Blessings of the Justified (Rom. 5:1-6)

Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and ice rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribula-tions: knowing that tribulation worketh stedfastness; and stedfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope: and hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us. For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly. Paul's "therefore" of verse one

connects that which follows with that which he had set forth in the prior chapters. Paul had ably set forth a righteousness of God, a plan for making man righteous, whereby could be saved. sinner Salvation was not, nor could be, by the works of the law of Moses. The remedy for sin, the death and blood of Christ for sinful men, was by the

grace, of God; and it was predicated on faith in Christ's blood.

Paul's statement: "Being therefore justified by faith" does not mean that a person is justified by faith only, nor does the statement mean that a person is justified instantly, or the moment he believes. Instant justification is often enthusiastically described in such language as follows: "Justification is something that happens suddenly, instantly, in the twinkling of an eye, in the moment you look in the face of God and say, 'I receive your Son.' At that moment you are justified!" Paul, however, taught that person is justified by a content of a person is justified by a system of faith—"a faith working through faith working through

love." (Gal. 5:6.) The "Hall of Faith" chapter, Hebrews 11, shows quite clearly that a person is not justified the very moment he believes. The following cases of justification by faith are worthy of contemplation:

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."

"By faith Noah, . . . moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house."

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"By faith Abraham . . . obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance."

"By faith Abraham, being tried,

offered up Isaac."

"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months by his parents."

"By faith Moses . . . forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath

of the king."

"By faith Moses . . . kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, that the destroyer of the firstborn should not touch them."

"By faith they [the Israelites]

passed through the Red Sea."

"By faith Rahab the harlot perished not with them that were disobedient, having received the spies."

Did Abel make his offering the very moment that he believed on God? Did Noah's ark rise up instantaneously the moment he believed on God? Was Abraham in another country the very moment that he believed on God? Was Isaac bound as a sacrifice the very moment Abraham believed? Need more questions be asked?

The blessings or benefits that accrete to those who are justified by a system of faith are itemized by

Paul, and they are as follows:

1. Those who are justified have peace with God—that is a full and complete stability and

serenity with God.

2. Those who are justified have access by faith into God's grace—that is they have the privilege of approaching the throne of God through prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

Those who are justified have the privilege of standing unashamed and uncondemned be-

fore God.

 Those who are justified can rejoice in the hope of the glory of God—that is in the glory

and blessings yet to come.

 Those who are justified can rejoice in their tribulations knowing that their tribulation worketh steadfastness; and steadfastness worketh approvedness, and approvedness worketh hope, and hope putteth not to shame.

"Hope is the anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast." It putteth not to shame. The Holy Spirit by inspiration, together with miraculous demonstrations during the miraculous age of the church, made known the love of God which is shed abroad for all men. (Heb. 6:19.)

Men were weak—pitiably weak morally, and disgustingly lacking in reverential awe—when Christ died for them. They were enemies of God, wanton, helpless, and con-

demned.

"In due season Christ died for the ungodly." This is to say that at the proper time, according to infinite wisdom, God sent his Son into the world to die for all men. Paul wrote the Galatians: "When the fulness of time came, God sent forth his Son." (Gal. 4:4.)

# The Galatians Fell from Grace (Gal. 5:1-6)

For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that, if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. Yea,

I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace. For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love.

Galatians were predomi-The nantly Gentiles under bondage to the rudiments of the world. Paul and Barnabas preached Christ them, and they readily embraced the gospel. They were, thereby, made free from the bondage of heathenism and sin. The Judaizing teachers came among them and taught them that they had need also to be circumcised and keep certain tenets of the law of Moses. Thus those Galatians, who had so readily embraced the gospel of Christ and were freed from bondage, as readily embraced circumcision and of the law of Moses and came under a system of bondage all over again.

In this light, Paul urged: "For

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#### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

Discuss the opinions of commentators of the past concerning the location of the churches of Galatia.

Discuss the conclusions of Sir Walter Ramsey concerning the use of the term "Galatia."

Name the churches which comprised "the churches of Galatia."

#### Annotated Historical Perspectives

Relate and discuss the evidences which emphasize the fact that Peter did not establish the church in Rome.

Discuss the history of the church at Rome prior to the time of Paul's epistle.

# **Doctrinal Perspectives**

Discuss the three questions which are involved in the teaching of the Protestant world concerning salvation by faith only.

#### The Golden Text

Explain how this passage is not in conflict with the book of Romans.

The Blessings of the Justified

Discuss the remedy for sin. Upon what is this remedy predicated?

Contrast the doctrine of instantaneous justification with Paul's teaching on justification.

Discuss the examples of justification by faith and show how each was not justified instantaneously.

Itemize, as Paul did, and discuss the blessings of those who are justified by a system of faith.

How has the love of God been made known?

#### The Galatians Fell from Grace

Discuss how the Galatians had come under bondage all over again.

What would the Galatians profit from accepting circumcision?

What was the spiritual condition of those who would be justified by the law of Moses?

#### Posted Theses

Why is the debate among the denominations over what constitutes baptism a useless one?

Discuss the faith that saves.

# Lesson IV-April 25, 1976

# JUSTIFIED BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

## Lesson Text Rom. 5:8-21

8 But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of *God* through him.

10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life;

11 And not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

12 Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned: —

13 For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come.

15 But not as the trespass, so also is the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the

gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many.

16 And not as through one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment came of one unto condemnation, but the free gift came of many trespasses unto justification.

17 For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, *even* Jesus Christ.

18 So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life.

19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous.

20 And the law came in besides, that the trespass might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly:

21 That, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Golden Text.—"For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin'' (Heb. 10:4.)

Devotional Reading.—Heb. 10:1-18.

# **Daily Bible Readings**

	, ,
April 19. M	Blood of Christ Cleanses (1 John 1:1-10)
	Animal Sacrifices Ineffectual to Save (Heb. 9:1-10)
	Blood of Christ Fully Effective (Heb. 9:11-28)
	Redeemed by the Blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:1-19)
April 23. F	Offerings of Law Typical (Heb. 10:1-4)
April 24. S	

Time.—About A.D. 56.

Places.—Corinth in Greece, and Rome in Italy.

Persons.—Paul and the saints in Rome.

#### Introduction

The title for today's lesson, "Justified by the Blood of Christ," introduces a very important study. The doctrine of the atoning blood is one of the four cardinal doctrines of Christianity—namely, the virgin birth, the vicarious death, the aton-

ing blood, and the resurrection. Elders of churches will do well to provide for in-depth studies in these basic doctrines. The young people of the church, by all means, should be fully instructed in the cardinal doctrines of Christianity.

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#### ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Paul's purpose in desiring to visit Rome was that he might "impart unto them some spiritual gift, to the end that they might be established"... spiritual gifts were the nine miraculous gifts of 1 Corinthians 12:4-11... conferred by the laying on of the hands of the apostles. (Acts 8:17-19; 2 Tim. 1:6.) Those who received gifts could not confer them to others ... attested by the case of Philip (Acts 8), who had gifts ... but Peter and John went down to confer gifts upon the Samaritans ... Paul, having been so long delayed in going to Rome, took occasion by letter to proclaim with great clarity the gospel of Christ ... the gospel was, and is, the power to save ... Paul felt, under the cir-

cumstances, that the greatest contribution that he could make to the Romans would be to explain fully the basis and implications of the gospel of Christ . . . the full gospel would be the answer to the errors of false doctrines which were rising . . . that same gospel is the answer to false doctrines today. The Romans had varied backgrounds . . . were being exposed to widely divergent views . . . Paul shows man be wholly unable to righteousness by his own meritorious works and/or by the works of the law of Moses . . . sets forth the righteousness of God ... a plan to save man ... a system of faith . . . with conditions of faith.

#### DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES

This lesson is concerned with the doctrine of the atoning blood of Christ. Further, proponents of the doctrines of original sin and total depravity rely on the text of this lesson for proof of their doctrines.

Relative to the atoning blood of Christ, certain pertinent questions

are continually raised, namely:

Why was the death of Christ

necessary?

- If God is all powerful, all benevolent, and all merciful, why did he not provide for man in some manner short of the death of Christ?
- 3. Was the death of Christ not mere pageantry?
- 4. Why is so much emphasis placed on the blood of Christ?
- 5. What, after all, could blood really have to do with man's eternal salvation?
- 6. Why did God require the blood of so many animals?
- 7. How could the blood of animals really affect man's salvation in any way?
- 8. Does God delight in seeing blood flow from animals as they die?

While space for this lesson will not permit a full answer to these questions, and give at the same time a treatment of the text of the lesson, the fact remains that every person who does not have a ready and adequate answer to the questions is in great need of an in-depth study of the subject. No person is really well and properly supported in his faith unless he knows the answers to the questions submitted.

In brief, God is just and righteous as well as merciful. As a just God. he will meet every demand of violated justice. The justice of God requires life for life. Adam and Eve forfeited their lives, and justice demanded that there could be no respite for them except as a life of a sinless person was given in the place of their lives; but life is in the blood, and so justice required a life of another by the means of the shedding of blood. Jesus posed his life for Adam and Eve, and their posterity as well, since they were "the sharers of flesh and blood," he needed also to partake of the same. His body-bone, flesh, and blood—he sacrificed on the cross in behalf of man. On the cross Jesus died, and on the cross his blood was poured out for man. At that point of Christ's death and atoning blood for man, God could be at the same time just and the justifier of sinful man. Men faith availed themselves of temporary cleansings from their sins by their offerings of animal sacrifices. 2:17; 19:21: (Gen. Deut. 17:11; Heb. 2:14; 10:5-7; John 19:33; Rom. 3:16.)

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#### The Golden Text

"For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin" (Heb. 10:4.)

Until, in God's own good time, Jesus came into the world and sacrificed his human body, no sin in actuality could be forgiven. A temporary atonement for sin was made by means of animal or blood sacrifices, but the blood of those animals could not take away sin. Only the blood from the body of the sinless son of God could actually

for sin. When atone Iesus was raised from the dead, he guaranteed resurrection of all men-the the unrighteous. righteous and That which all men lost by Adam's one sin, they regained through the one gift by the second Adam; but more than this, through the atoning blood of the second Adam, all who will may have the forgiveness of all their sins. (Heb. 10:5-7; Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:18.)

## The Text Explained

# Justified by the Blood (Rom. 5:8-11)

But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more than, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life; and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

The prior lessons have set forth how that the gospel which reveals God's plan of salvation, is the power by which man can be saved; how that in keeping therewith man is justified; how that man is justified by faith, and in this lesson how that man is justified by the blood of Christ.

Paul, in these verses, emphasizes the magnitude of God's love in contrast to man's love. Scarcely for a good man will a fellow man die, but when men were enemies of God by wicked works, ungodly and helpless to the point that they were absolutely incapable of atoning for their guilt or ridding themselves of their bondage, Christ died for them. His death opened the way for their justification through the means of his blood atonement—a vicarious, sacrificial, and expiatory atonement.

Now, since men, while being worthless, ungodly enemies of God, were justified by the blood of Christ, how much more as being friends of Christ shall they be saved from wrath to come—that is, saved from that wrath which will be

poured out upon the ungodly in the final day.

If, while men were enemies, they were reconciled—restored through communion and fellowship with God—how much more through that reconciliation and sanctification they would be saved by Christ's life. Christ was strong in death, but he is even stronger in life. He now lives to intercede for those who through faith and obedience have availed themselves of that grace. This great reconciliation is a real, vital, and viable source of joy for all Christians.

# The Consequences of Adam's Sin (Rom. 5:12)

Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed upon all men.

At this point Paul makes an abrupt departure in order to answer a certain difficulty which likely would be raised by Jews who put so much stock in their law which was given by Moses. Paul returns to his chief point in verse 14 with the words: "who is a figure of him that was to come." Such a parenthesis, or digression, from the main thought of a discourse is not uncommon with speakers and writers, and especially with Paul. After the return to his main point in verse fourteen, Paul digresses again and then returns to his main point in verse eighteen, "for all have sinned."

Combining the main thought of verse twelve with the continuation of the thought in verse fourteen and then in verse eighteen, the reading is as follows: "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into

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the world, and death through sin; and so death passed upon all men ... who is a figure of him that was to come. ... So then as through one trespass the judgment [physical death] came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift [the resurrection from the dead of both righteous and unrighteous came unto all men to justification [contingent on man's free will acceptance] of life."

Verse thirteen together with the verses that follow are relied upon to teach the doctrine of original sin. The proponents of the doctrine of original sin affirm that Adam conveyed or imputed his guilt of sin—his corrupt nature—to all his posterity; that through Adam all men, including infants and idiots, have sinned; and that all the posterity of Adam are, therefore, under the sentence of both physical and spiritual death as a direct result of Adam's sin. The Genesis record does not infer—nor does any other Old Testament reference, for that matter—that Adam's posterity inherited his sin. These verses from Romans constitute the proof text for the proponents of imputation of guilt through Adam's transgression. In these verses lies the chief basis for Calvin's doctrine of original sin and his emphasis on the doctrine of total depravity, which doctrine has had such a tremendous influence upon the religious world. Now, the question of the moment is whether or not Calvin's findings—or any modifications of his doctrine-are herein taught by the apostle Paul.

True enough, through Adam sin entered into the world; and equally true, through Adam's sin death also entered into the world; and also, as is so obvious, through Adam's sin physical death was passed upon all men; but did Adam also pass spiritual death upon all of his posterity? This is the pertinent question! Did Paul teach in the verses under consideration that all babies, including idiots, are born in sin and thus inclined to all evil?

The matter of accounting for the why and the how that through Adam's sin death passed unto all men is not difficult: Adam and Eve were spirit beings housed in animal life; their perpetual existence was dependent upon the fruit of the tree of life in the midst of the garden of Eden; thus as and when they were driven from the garden as punish-ment for their disobedience, their physical death was not only decreed, but also was made certain. On the very basis that Adam and Eve were driven from the garden, and thereby separated from the tree of life, all their posterity necessarily suffered physical death as a natural consequence. The same principle by which all men die, as a natural consequence of Adam's sin, holds today. As was the case then, so is the case today: the innocent suffer for the guilty. If a prosperous farmer and landowner with a large family, through a life of debauchery, drinks and gambles the farm away, those children suffer the consequences of their father's debauchery, but the fact that they do so suffer does not make them guilty of their father's

## Death from Adam to Moses (Rom. 5:13, 14)

for that all sinned:-for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to

The chief aim of the apostle Paul—the high mark of the lesson—was to show the superiority of Christ over Adam. "For as in Adam all die. so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:22.) In Adam all die, but in Christ all-the righteous and the unrighteous-are made alive or raised from the dead. Christ's death and resurrection did more, however, than just cancel out the death that passed from Adam to all men, and this fact will be pointed up more specifically as this lesson progresses.

"And so death Paul declared: passed unto all men, for that all sinned." Is Paul to be understood to say that "all sinned in Adam," or is he to be understood as here digressing from his main thought so as to answer some anticipated ques-tions and/or objections which likely would be raised? Is Paul stating that all sinned in Adam and are thus sinners by means of original sin, or is he stating that all men have 132 LESSON IV

sinned through their own active disobedience? There is no question that physical death passed from Adam to all men, but does Paul have this "death" in mind, or does he have in mind "spiritual death" which came as a result of the peo-

ple's own sins?

Paul had already affirmed that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23.) Did he mean by that affirmation that all men had sinned in Adam, or did he mean that they had sinned of their own stubborn will? The latter must be the case, and if so, the "for all have sinned" of verse twelve of this text would have reference also to a spiritual death as a direct result of the people's own sins.

"For until Paul said: the law [the law of Moses] sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed where there is no law [no system of law of any kind]." Is Paul to be understood as saying, as many com-mentators conclude, that there was no sin in the world, or imputed, until the law of Moses was given; or is he to be understood as saying that there was sin in the world from Adam to Moses, that sin is not imputed where there is no law, and that, therefore, there was law from Adam to Moses, contrary to the contentions of those who were unduly jealous for the law of Moses? Was there not law, both positive law and moral law, in the world from Adam onward?

If there was no *positive law* in the world before the giving of the law of Moses, how may one account for blood sacrifices being offered as a temporary cleansing from sin? How may one account for Abel's animal sácrifice which he made by faith? How may one account for Noah's carrying into the ark the clean beasts and birds, not just two of each kind, the male and his female, but rather seven and seven, so that he would have whereof to sacrifice when the flood abated? Further, how did Noah know to sacrifice? How did he know how to sacrifice? The inescapable conclusion is that Noah sacrificed after the flood just as he had sacrificed prior the flood. (Gen. 4:1-4; Heb. 11:4; Gen. 6:7.)

If there was no moral law in the world before the law of Moses, how may one account for the fact that Cain was driven out of the land as a murderer for having slain Abel, his brother? How may one account for the fact that in the days of Seth "men began to call upon the name of Jehovah"? How may one account for the fact that "Enoch walked with God"? How did Enoch walk with God if there was no law? How may one account for the fact that Noah was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations and walked with God? How did Noah know how to walk with God? How may one account for the fact that Abraham was called "obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance"? (Heb. 11:7; Gen. 6:9.)

In light of these matters, Paul necessarily saying that since men had sinned from Adam to Moses, and since no sin is imputed where there is no law for "sin is a transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4), then law, both positive and word did over the same had been been as a supply of the law. did exist from Adam to moral, Concerning the Gentiles, Paul had already said: "For when Gentiles that have not the law [the law of Moses] do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are the law unto themselves; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts." True enough, the law of Moses made the Israelites even more conscious of sin than the prior general order of law could do. Paul said, by way of example, "I had not known coveting, except the law had law of Moses] do by nature the known coveting, except the law had said, "Thou shalt not covet." The law of Moses relative to covetousness made Paul more keenly aware of the evil of it than he would have been otherwise. (Gen. 4:26; 5:24; Rom. 2:14, 15; 7:7.)

In proof of the fact that there was law in the world-both positive and moral-before the law of Moses was riven, Paul states unequivocally: 'Nevertheless death [spiritual death as well as physical] reigned from Adam's trangression." This was Paul's way of saying for the benefit of the Jews that there was a system of law in existence before the law of Moses was given. His inference was that since all had sinned and, thereby, could not be justified by the general or common to the common to the since we have to be successful. law that prevailed from Adam to Moses, just so all who were under

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the statutory law of Moses had sinned and, therefore could not be justified by the law of Moses. Death, both physical and spiritual, reigned from Adam to Moses, but it reigned "over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression." Now, if men had sinned in Adam—that is if Adam's sin was imputed to all men—then they would have sinned in the same way, or likeness, of Adam's trans-gression. Paul's statement that they "had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression" was grounded in the fact that Adam's sin brought physical death upon all men. No other man then, through his own sin, could bring death upon all men. No man could bring to pass that which had already been brought to pass. No one could in-vent the cotton gin after it had already been invented or discover penicillin after it had already been discovered. Adam had already brought death upon all men, and he was reprobated thereby; and within this very context he was a type of Christ—"a figure of him that was to come." Paul wrote the Corinthians—and that prior to his writing Romans: "For since by man came death by man came death by man came death hy came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ... So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit." (1 Cor. 15:22, 23, 45.) Every man, whether good or bad, will regain through the resurrection of Christ all that he lost in Adam's sin.

# A Contrast of Adam and Christ (Rom. 5:15-17)

But not as the trespass, so also is the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many. And not as through one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment came of one unto condemnation, but the free gift came of many trespasses unto justification. For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ.

In these verses Paul contrasts Adam's sin with Christ's free gift. For the one sin of Adam, physical death was passed upon the entire human race; but for the one gift of Christ death will be wiped out for the entire human race; for as in Adam all die, so in Christ—through his resurrection—shall all be made alive. The point of emphasis is that while the one gift of Christ cancelled the penalty of the one sin of Adam, it did far more than cancel that one sin. The free gift of Christ also covered or justified the many sins of the many peoples, but the provision for the justification does not mean that all people will be justified and saved, as the universalists contend. Except for the cancellation of the condemnation for the one sin of Adam—that is, physical death—the justification provided through the one free gift was predicated upon each person's acceptance on the basis of his own free choice. Every person has been left absolutely free to either choose spiritual life is actually to choose spiritual life is actually to choose spiritual death.

# A Comparison of Adam and Christ (Rom. 5:18-21)

So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous. And the law came in besides, that the trespass might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly: that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There was one trespass and thereby, the condemnation of physical death upon the many. There was one act of righteousness—that is, the one death for man—and thereby the cancellation of that physical death; but the one act of righteousness also brought justification from spiritual death within the reach and free will acceptance of all men.

"Through the one man's disobedi-

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ence the many were made sinners."
Did Paul mean that the many sinned in Adam? If not, what did Paul

mean? Who were the many?

Paul did not mean to say that the many sinned in Adam, but he did mean to say that Adam, by his sin, opened the flood gate for a progression of sin through his having subjected his posterity to the trials, the hardships, and the temptations of a cursed ground, a ground of thorns and thistles, which would, only by "the sweat of the face," provide a livelihood for those who lived upon it. (Gen. 3:17, 18.) From that uninviting background and environment, the posterity of Adam became sinners through their temptations to disobedience. The "many" were, no doubt, those who arrived at the age of accountability and sinned through their own free will.

"Through the obedience of the one shall many be made righteous." Does Paul mean that many will be made righteous regardless of their own free choice in the matter? Is Paul teaching the doctrine of irresistible grace—a direct operation of

the Holy Spirit?

Through the obedience—the death—of the one, many sinners are led to righteousness and thus to reconciliation with God, but not with-

out their free choice. God can have communion and fellowship with only those who are holy, and no man can be holy except through the exercise of his own free will. As the first Adam set the environment for a progression of sin among his posterity, the second Adam set the environment for a progression of righteousness among his disciples.

The law of Moses was brought in to make men the more conscious of their sins, and also, to make them more keenly aware of their need for a system of justification. Where sin abounded through the bringing in of the law, the grace through Christ, who was the end of the law,

did abound more exceedingly.

"Sin reigned in death . . . . grace reigned in righteousness." Paul mentions four reigns in the over-all lesson text: "death reigned" . . .

lesson text: "death reigned" . . . . "sin reigned" . . . . "grace reign(s)" . . . and the believers "reign in life." (Verses 14, 21, 21, 17.) The emphasis here is that grace reigns through the power of the gospel plan of salvation—or as Paul puts it in another verse, through the righteousness of God. Through his obedience to the gospel the sinner is cleansed from his sins. He is then a new creature.

#### POSTED THESES

The Hebrew writer said: "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself in like manner partook of the same." (Heb. 2:14.) The meaning is that Christ partook of all that was characteristic of Adam's posterity, and therefore, if men sinned in Adam, then Christ also sinned in Adam.

Some contend that God did not command that animal sacrifices be offered; but rather, men came to sacrifice animals out of the bounty of their own hearts. If such a concept be true, the blood of Christ loses much of its power and significance, and therefore, such proponents do not know the cardinal doctrines of Christianity.

#### Questions for Discussion

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

### Introduction

What are the four cardinal doctrines of Christianity.

Annotated Historical Perspectives

Discuss Paul's purpose in desiring to visit Rome. What did Paul proclaim by his letter to

What did Paul proclaim by his letter to the Romans?

#### **Doctrinal Perspectives**

Discuss the questions frequently raised relative to the atoning blood of Christ.

Discuss how the interposition of the life of Jesus shows the justice of God.

#### The Golden Text

Why was a temporary atonement provided until the time that Christ's blood was shed?

In addition to the atonement for sin, what other guarantee was made by Christ's being raised from the dead?

#### Justified by the Blood

Name the three ways in which man is justified.

Contrast the love of God with the love of men.

The Consequence of Adam's Sin

erroneous doctrine Discuss the which has been falsely based on these verses. Did all the human race sin in Adam?

Are infants born in sin? What is the consequence of Adam's sin

which all men suffer?

#### Death from Adam to Moses

What was the chief aim of the apostle Paul in Romans 5?

sinned." "for that Discuss statement, all Does he mean that we are all guilty of Adam's sin?

How have all men sinned? Discuss the statement, "for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not im-puted where there is no law."

Are we to conclude by the above ment that there was no law from to Moses? Give the arguments proposed by the author.

two types of law must have existed? Give reasons.

Discuss the proof which Paul gives for law before the law of Moses.

Why could no man sin after the likeness of Adam's transgression?

In what way is Adam a type of Christ?

Adam's sin with Christ's Contrast free thereby showing Christ's gift, superior, itv.

#### A Contrast of Adam and Christ

Discuss the one trespass of Adam and the one death of Christ, emphasizing what each did for mankind. ho are "the many"

re "the many" who were made sin-and how shall they be made righ-Who are ners, teous?

Discuss how this righteousness is cated on man's free choice.

#### A Comparison of Adam and Christ

Name the four reigns mentioned in the lesson text.

#### Posted Theses

What is the conclusion to be drawn if all men sinned in Adam? What contention is made by some con-

cerning animal sacrifices?

# Lesson V—May 2, 1976

# UNITED WITH CHRIST IN BAPTISM

## Lesson Text Rom. 6:1-11

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?

Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus

were baptized into his death?

4 We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have become united with *him* in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the like-

ness of his resurrection;

6 Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin;

7 For he that hath died is justified

from sin.

8 But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him.

10 For the death that he died, he died unto sin once: but the life that

he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.

Golden Text.—"Having been buried with him in baptism. . . (Col. 2:12.)

Devotional Reading.—Rom. 6:12-23.

# Daily Bible Readings

April 26.	MBaptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:13-17)
April 27.	TBaptism Commanded (Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38)
April 28.	W Baptism a Burial (Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:12)
April 29.	TBaptism of the Eunuch (Acts 8:26-40)
April 30.	FBaptism a Command (Acts 10:48; 22:16)
May 1.	S
May 2.	S

Time.—About A.D. 56.

Places.—Corinth in Greece, and Rome in Italy.

Persons.—Paul and the saints in Rome.

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### Introduction

The subject, "United with Christ in Baptism," involves a positive divine command wherein human reason is lost. With the learned and wise of this world, the requirement of baptism is utterly foolish. The wise ask: "What possible connection can there be between baptism and the remission of sins? What is there in water that can wash away sins?"

There can be no doubt: in the re-

quirement of baptism, human reason is lost. In the case of the requirement of baptism, however, as well as in other cases, "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 shall glory before God." (1 Cor. 1:27-28.)

#### ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

be, and sincere concern for the weaker brother.

Condemnation included the heathen world (1:18-32), the moral man (2:1-16), and the Jew (2:17-3:8) . . . the result: "All were under sin" (3:9) . . . salvation was and is God's method of justification . . . called the "righteousness of God" ... also the power of the gospel . . . was a plan or scheme . . predicated on faith and obedience . . . Abraham is presented as a classic example . . . Abraham believed God (4:3) and he obeyed God (Heb. 11) . . . the how of salvation is the point of the present lesson.

## DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES

The present lesson necessarily involves the study of the subject, Baptism, and a number of pertinent questions are raised thereby, namely:

- 1. What is baptism—sprinkling or immersion?
- Were infants baptized?
- 3. With what formula or words must baptism be administered?
- 4. Must an alien be baptized to be saved?
- 5. Does the phrase "for the remission of sins" mean "in order to the remission of sins," or does it mean "because of the remission of sins"?
- 6. What does the denominational world in general teach relative to the subject of baptism?

The sixth question above rightly belongs to this section on "doctrinal perspectives." The other questions

will be answered in one form or another under the heading, "The Text Explained." The Calvinists and the Arminians are agreed that sprinkling is baptism, or that sprinkling will suffice for baptism. The followers of John Smith, or Smythe, while partaking in part of the Calvinist doctrine and in part of the Arminian doctrine, disagree resolutely with both on the action of baptism. Those followers of Smythe affirm quite confidently that only immersion is baptism.

The followers of Smythe agree, however, with both the Calvinists and the Arminians in declaring that baptism is not essential to salvation. The three representative segments of Christendom agree that the sinner is saved at the point of faith, which faith is brought about by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, which in turn energizes the word of God.

#### The Golden Text

"Having been buried with him in baptism..." (Col. 2:12.)

The Colossians were buried with Christ in baptism—that is, they

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were immersed or completely covered in water, and not by their merely having had water sprinkled on them or water poured on them.

They were buried in water, and they were raised out of that same water.

## The Text Explained

# Shall the Saved Continue in Sin? (Rom. 6:1, 2)

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?

having set forth God's After having set forth God's abounding grace for men in that while they were yet sinners Christ died for them, and also how that sin abounded, grace did abound exceedingly, Paul more then anticipates the cavil of the disobedient Tews-and for that matter the learned through the centuries who depreciate Christian ethics —by asking the question: "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" The thought here is that opponents would reply by saying: "Now, if grace is so all inclusive, let us sin even the more so that grace can the even more abound."

With a burst of indignation, Paul revolts at the thought. "God forbid," he says, "We who died to sin,"—this could not include infants and children—"how shall we any longer live therein?" Paul, along with others, had been crucified with Christ. They had repented of their sins. They were dead to sin but alive to righteousness. No person could be a recipient of God's grace and con-

tinue a life of sin.

# Are Ye Ignorant? (Rom. 6:3, 4)

Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

The very thought of a person's continuing in sin was repulsive to Paul. He was asking in substance, "Do you realize that when you were baptized into Christ, you were baptized into his death?" If they had realized that they had been baptized into the death of Christ, or the benefits of that death, they certainly

should have been on notice that they could not any longer continue in sin

There is great significance in a person's being baptized into Christ and thus into his death. No responsible man can be saved without the blood of Christ; but then, that blood was not shed until Christ had died on the cross. John recorded how that when the soldiers "saw that he [Christ] was dead already, they brake not his legs: howbeit one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and straightway there came out blood and water." (John 19:33.) The point of emphasis is that the alien sinner can come into the benefits of the blood only by his coming into contact with Christ's death, and baptism is the consummating step that puts one into Christ and into the benefits of the contact with the consummating step that puts one into Christ and into the benefits of the character of the contact the character of his death. Once the sinner is baptized into the death of Christ and comes into the benefits of his shed blood, he is separated from his sins and thereby made free from them. That blood then continues to cleanse for him, and it thereby keeps him free of sin. John wrote: "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 cin." (1 John 1:7) sin." (1 John 1:7.)

There is no wonder then that in giving the great commission to his apostles, Christ said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." (Mark 16:15, 16.) Belief and baptism are conditions to be met in order to be saved. The case is that belief plus baptism equals salvation. At another time, Jesus said to his apostles: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28: 18, 19.) Those who would be subjects for baptism were to be "believers" or "disciples." Infants and

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children cannot, therefore, qualify for baptism.

Paul, along with others, had been buried, not sprinkled or poured, through baptism into the death of Christ. What can be clearer, or more emphatic, than this? There is absolutely no burial in sprinkling or in pouring! When a person is immersed in water, he is buried therein.

Without a burial there cannot be a resurrection. Paul declared: were buried," and then he went on to say "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." In short, Paul, as well as others, "became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching" or doctrine. (Rom. 6:17, 18.) The teaching or doctrine was the gospel—the death, the burial, and the resurrection of logic Christ To the Control of Jesus Christ. To the Corinthians, Paul wrote: "Now I make known brethren, the you, which I preached unto you. . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received; that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures." (1 Cor. 15:1-4.)

A person cannot die on the cross as Christ died, and be buried in a tomb as Christ was buried, and be raised from a tomb as Christ was raised; but he can obey a form of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. When a person repents of his sins—or dies to sin—he obeys a form of the death of Christ; when he is baptized or buried in water, he obeys a form of the burial of Christ; and when a person is raised from a burial in water, he obeys a form of the resurrection of Christ. With that resurrection from a grave of water, the person begins a " ʻwalk in the newness of life."

# The Old Man Has Been Crucified (Rom. 6:5-7)

if For we have become united of his in the likeness death, we shall be also in the likeof his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with, him, that the body might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to

sin; for he that hath died is justified from sin.

Through baptism a person is not only united with Christ in death, but also he is united with him in life. Paul draws an analogy between the death of Christ and the death of the sinner. As Christ died, was buried, and arose to a new life; even so, the sinner dies to sin, is buried in water, and is raised therefrom in a new life with Christ. The "old man," or the "body of sin"—the sinner—is crucified or put to death. Paul wrote on one occasion: "I have been crucified with Christ." (Gal. 2:20.) When a sinner repents, he dies to the practice of sin. The "old man"—the body of sin—is then fit for burial. Úpon being buried in water and raised therefrom, he comes forth therefrom a new man. His state changed is from the state of a sinner to that of a saint. He is no longer in bondage to sin, for when he died to the practice of sin, and was buried and raised in baptism, he was released therefrom.

# The Dead in Christ Live with Christ (Rom. 6:8-11)

But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him. For the death that he died, he died unto sin once: but the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.

The "if we died with Christ" does not imply doubt or uncertainty. One meaning of the word "if" is "allowing that" or "on the basis that." On the very basis that Paul, and those to whom he wrote, had died with Christ, they were to live with him—that is, they were to love and hold him in awe, and they were to model their lives after his. The fact that Christ was alive, and that he would die no more was a great source of encouragement to Paul—and is to all, for that matter. Christ lives to the honor and glory of his father, and Christians, therefore, who live for Christ live also for God.

The Romans had obeyed the gospel. They had died to sin, and they

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could, therefore, reckon—that is calculate or judge—that they were dead to sin. This Paul encouraged them to recognize or do. A seeming

paradox is that the Christian is to reckon himself to be both dead and alive—that is dead to sin but alive to Christ and God

## POSTED THESES

In order to break the force of the design and action of water baptism, as per Romans 6:3, 4, opponents often contend that this is Holy Spirit baptism. In such a case, the justifiable reading would be: "We were buried with him in the Holy Spirit . . . and we were raised to walk in newness of life; or we were buried with him in the Holy Spirit baptism, wherein we were also raised with him." Now, if they were buried in the Holy Spirit baptism and then raised up out of it, they were no longer in it. They no longer had it.

Paul wrote: "There is . . . one

baptism." (Eph. 4:4.) If Holy Spirit baptism is established, then water baptism is eliminated. Why then do those who contend for Holy Spirit baptism practice anything which they term water baptism?

The denominational world in general teaches that a person does not have to be baptized to be saved. Peter, on the other hand, told the inquiring Pentecostians: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto [in to order to receive] the remission of your sins." (Acts 2:38.) Who is right—the denominational world or the apostle Peter?

# **Questions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

What are the questions raised by the wise of the world concerning baptism?
What did Paul say in 1 Corinthians 1:27, 28. about the "foolish things of the world"?

#### Annotated Historical Perspectives

What are the four divisions of the treatise found in the letter to the Romans? What is the point of this present lesson?

#### **Doctrinal Perspectives**

What are the six pertinent questions raised in the study of baptism?
What are the teachings of the Calvinists, the Arminians, and the followers of Smythe concerning baptism?

#### The Golden Text

In what manner were the Colossians baptized?

Shall the Saved Continue in Sin? What argument of the disobedient Jews, as well as others in the future, did Paul anticipate, as recorded in verse 1? What were Paul's feelings, as evidenced

by the intensity of his reply, about this argument?

#### Are Ye Ignorant?

What is the significance of being baptized into Christ's death?

What does Christ's blood do for the alien

sinner? For the Christian? Why must baptism be a burial?

How do we obey "that form of teaching"?

#### The Old Man Has Been Crucified

Discuss the analogy which Paul draws between the death of a sinner and the death of Christ.

The Dead in Christ Live with Christ

How can a Christian be both dead and alive?

#### Posted Theses

Discuss the three reasons given as to why the baptism of Romans 6:3, 4, cannot be Holy Spirit baptism.

# Lesson VI-May 9, 1976

## NO CONDEMNATION IN CHRIST

Lesson Text Rom. 8:1-14

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from

the law of sin and of death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the

Spirit.

5 For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6 For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is

life and peace:

7 Because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be: 8 And they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteous-

iess

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the

flesh:

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Golden Text.—"If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom. 8:31.) Devotional Reading.—Rom. 8:14-25.

# Daily Bible Readings

May 3. M	Body of Christ, the Church (Eph. 1:19-23)
	Salvation in Body of Christ (Eph. 1:1-7)
	Baptized into the Body of Christ (Rom. 6:1-6)
	No Condemnation to the Faithful (Gal. 5:13-18)
	Godliness Essential (Tit. 2:1-12)
May 8. S	Fruitless Branches Burned (John 15:1-7)
May 9. S	

Time.-About -A.D. 56.

Places.-Corinth in Greece, and Rome in Italy.

Persons.—Paul and the saints in Rome.

#### Introduction

The text for today's lesson on the subject, "No Condemnation in Christ," can be understood properly only in the light of its relationship with the seventh chapter, which might very well be entitled, "Freedom From Law." The student should remember that Paul did not divide his epistle into chapters and verses; and while the division into chapters and verses is quite helpful, it often hinders the student in getting the over-all thought of the message.

The Israelites or Jews gloried in the law of Moses. With the more worldly ones, it was a law of rites and ceremonies; but with the more spiritual ones, it was a great source of spiritual strength and a strong deterrent against sin. David wrote: "The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul." David's purpose throughout life was to keep the law. In one of his psalms, he wrote: "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way ... I will walk within my house with a perfect heart"; but

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David certainly missed the mark. He failed to measure up to his goal. Saul of Tarsus (Paul) was another who had set his aim to keep the law of Moses. He was a very religious man. When he stood before the council, he said: "Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day." When he science until this day." When he stood before Governor Felix, he said: "Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offense toward God and men always." (Acts 23:1; 24:16.)

Paul, however, had already come to recognize how that he had failed. When standing before Agrippa, he explained: "I verily thought within myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name Jesus of Nazareth." He had persecuted Christians unto death, and he never lost sight of that fact. He re-ferred to himself as the chief of sin-

ners. (1 Tim. 1:15.)

The student must have this background in mind as he reads how that Paul, in the seventh chapter of Romans, makes himself a type of those who were under the law. When Paul explains, "Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver

me out of the body of this death?" he is not to be understood as being wretched at the time of his writing. Paul was then in Christ-dead to sin and alive to righteousness. He had been delivered, and that deliverance was through the body of Christ. He, therefore, was making himself a type of the helpless Jews who were still in bondage to the law. The law was righteous, but it had no saving power, and those under the law shared the conflicts which Paul described.

Paul answered his question, "Who shall deliver me out of this body of death?" by saying: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." In short, Jesus was the answer. This deliverance Paul had experienced when he was baptized into Christ. He raised the question, therefore, as if he were still under the law so that he could give the solution for the benefit of those under the law. The beginning of the eighth chapter with the statement, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," is to be understood within the context of the foregoing seventh chapter.

#### ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

In prior perspectives . . . Paul had dealt with condemnation, salvation, and the how of obtaining salvation . . . chapters six, seven, and eight constitute a unit on sanctification: . . . involves freedom from sin, chapter six; freedom from law, chapter seven; freedom from death, chapter

In study of Romans it is necessary to know what Paul means by certain terms, namely: law, sin, righteousness, grace, faith, body, flesh, spirit, etc. . . . two most important: "flesh" and "spirit" . . . Greek scholars are uncertain as when to write spirit with a minuswhen to write spirit with a minuscule "s" and when to write it with a capital "S" . . . Paul used the terms "flesh" and "spirit" out of an Old Testament background: "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for that he also is flesh." (Gen. 6:3.) ... "I will pour out my Spirit when all flesh " (Icol 2:28) upon all flesh." (Joel 2:28.) . . .

flesh is set over against spirit . . . "The Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit." (Isa. 31:3.) . . . "Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusted the grainst the Spirit and the eth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." (Gal. 5:16, 17.) . . . "Who walk not after flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:4.)

Principal usages of "spirit": (1) As spiritual part of man's constitution . . . "God is my witness, whom serve in my spirit." (Rom. 1:9.) (2) As a synonym for soul . . . "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." (Luké 1:46, 47.) (3) the Holy Spirit and called "the spirit of holiness," "the Spirit of God," and "the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead." (Rom. 1:4, 9; 8:11.)

#### DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES

consisted ity; (2) unconditional predestina-tion; (3) limited design of atone-Iohn Calvin's doctrine of the following: (1) total deprav-

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ment; (4) irresistible grace; and (5) perseverance of the saints. The followers of John Smyth hold in common with the Calvinists the doctrine of total depravity and unconditional predestination. If man is totally deprayed and if Cod department of the conditional predestination of the cod department of the c is totally deprayed, and if God determined, unalterably and irrevocably, unconditional election and reprobation— and that before the foundation of the world-then, the perseverance of those elected to salvation must of necessity follow. In such an event, man is a mere animal without freedom of choice or exercise of volition. "Thus the the-ory is the doctrine of divine discrimination and of providential partiality. . . . God saves, God damns. No man can do anything to

be saved, because the theory requires the direct operation of the Spirit to regenerate him. Holv After his conversion he cannot do anything to be damned, because the theory asserts that he cannot fall from grace." (F.E.W., Jr.)

Now, those of the "perseverance doctrine" claim for Romans 8:1, of today's lesson, that it teaches that those in Christ are beyond condemnation. Is this what Paul taught? If so, why does the Bible give falling? warnings against Ŵhv does it tell how to keep from falling, and why does it tell what to do in case one does fall? (1 Cor. 10:12; 2 Pet. 1:10; 1 John 1:9; 2 John 2:1, 2.)

#### The Golden Text

"If God is for us, who is against

us?" (Rom. 8: 31.)

question rhetorical its own answer. God was for those who were in Christ, and walked not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. They had no need, therefore, to fret

themselves because there those against them. What mattered when God was for them? If God loved them to the point of his having given his Son to die for them, certainly he would provide all good things for them.

# The Text Explained

There Is Now No Condemnation (Rom. 8:1, 2)

There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of

Paul was "free from the law of sin and death." This fact emphasizes that in the prior chapter he necessarily was speaking of himself as a type of those who were under the law; otherwise, what acceptable harmony could there be effected be-tween his statement: "Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" and his statement: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death." Had not Paul been since he was baptized Christ and thus into his death?

Paul's emphasis, therefore, is that there was then deliverance from the body of death—and thus his statement: "There is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Through the gospel, the Jews were freed from law. Such freedom, however, did not,

and does not, rob a person of his freedom of will, and neither of his personal responsibility that stems therefrom. Jesus said on one occasion: "My sheep hear my voice, and

I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand." The sheep were secure with Christ so long as they, through their own free choice, chose to remain with him, but there were those who did not choose to so continue with him. To illustrate, John records: "Upon this [the hard saying of Jesus] many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Jesus said therefore unto the twelve, would ye also go away?' No power, including all the power of Satan, could snatch a disciple out of the hand of Christ, but the disciple could, of his own free will, remove himself therefrom. One thing is certain: God does not tamper with the principle of man's free moral choice or agency. In order for man to be holy—and thereby fit for communion with God—be must for communion with God-he must be free to choose, and he must deliberately choose Christ and reject Satan. (John 10:27, 28; 6:65, 66.)

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# The Law Was Weak (Rom. 8:3, 4)

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

The law was weak, but not within the scope of its own contents. It was weak because it had no Christ, except by prophecy and anticipation, who could motivate the mind of man to a higher or-

dered way of life.

The endowment of men with both spirit life and physical life gave him a predisposition, on the one hand, to fear, reverence, awe, conscience, and benevolence; but, on the other hand, it gave him a pre-disposition to sin. To explain, without the basic physical drives of the body for food and liquids, man would soon die of malnutrition and dehydration. Without the basic sex drive, man would fail to reproduce himself by way of offspring. Without ambition, aspiration, and competition, man would make significant contributions for the welfare of society. A negative or lustful response to such basic drives of the physical body necessarily brought the violator under the sentence of the law.

While the flesh, as such, is not sinful, it does have, as a result of its basic drives, a predisposition to sin. The law condemned sin in the flesh regularly as violations made, but it could not extricate those who thus fell under its condemnation. Without question, the law of Moses was not given as a

system of salvation for mankind.

Christ was the end and fulfillment of the law; and when he came, he delivered from condemnation those who became dead to sin and alive to righteousness. Paul therefore, could confidently affirm: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus . . . who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." The "now no condemnation" is conditional: first a person must get into Christ, and baptism is the consummating step that will put him into Christ; and second, he must walk after the Spirit-and not after the flesh. If a person ceases to walk after the Spirit, he will most certainly die spiritually. Paul said later in the chapter, "For if ye walk after the flesh ye shall die." To the Galatians he wrote: "Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." (Rom. 8:13; Gal.

Do these statements confirm the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy—or once in grace always in grace? Can a child of God lie? If not, why did Paul write the Colossians: "Lie not one to another?" John wrote: "And all liars . . . shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." (Rev. 21:8.)

## The Mind of the Flesh Is Death (Rom. 8:5-8)

For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace: because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be: and they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

To walk by the Spirit is for the mind of man to dominate and control the lusts of his body. Those who give themselves over to the selfish ambitions of the mind and the lustful drives of the body walk, thereby, after the flesh. They leave all spiritual matters out of their plans, and they live for this life only; whereas, those who walk after the Spirit take God and his word into thought and contents. Word into thought and contemplation at every point along the way of life. The mind of the flesh—or the course of a man who gives himself over to the desires and lusts of the body—is spiritual death. In short, spiritual death is the outcome of such a dissolute course of life. The mind of the Spirit—or the course of a man who dedicates himself to the service of God—is life and peace.

Those who devote themselves to the things of the flesh—who are of the mind of the flesh—are at enmity with God. Through their very course of life, they refuse to be subject to the law of God. In fact, they cannot be subject to God so long as they continue in their sinful

course.

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# Ye Are Not in the Flesh (Rom. 8:9-11)

But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in

Those to whom Paul wrote were not in the flesh—that is they were not living according to the course of the world by walking in the lusts of their flesh. They were walking in the Spirit—that is by their human spirit they were controlling the lust of the flesh, as well as their desire for power and the vain glory of life. The spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, indwells in the Christian. Paul does not discuss the how—whether by a direct indwelling or by an indwelling through the agency of the Word.

As has been already observed, the

physical body through its basic drives has a predisposition to sin. The cravings, passions, and appetites of the body—or flesh—lead to sins of all sorts; but if Christ is in a person his body is dead to the practice and/or state of sin. His body is dead to sin, but it is alive in Christ. Paul wrote the Galatians: "They that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts thereof." (Gal. 5:24.)

fied the flesh with the passions and lusts thereof." (Gal. 5:24.)

The Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead is the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit dwells within a person—the Spirit dwells at least by the teaching or the agency of the word—the body of that person becomes alive to righteous activities. This point is in agreement with Paul's urging when he wrote: "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. 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 ac-

red, the (Rom. 12:1, 2.)

# POSTED THESES

David wrote: "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." (Psalm 58:3.) This passage is used as a proof text for the proponents of the doctrine of inherent total depravity, but

1. Where does the passage say that the wicked are born astray—that is estranged in the womb? The passage says that they have *gone* astray.

2. When did they go astray? Whoever heard a newborn baby speak, much less to speak lies?

3. From whom did they go astray? If they were totally depraved, they could only have gone astray from Satan.

ceptable and perfect will of God."

Paul wrote the Romans: "If ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. 8:13.) In light of this plain passage of scripture, how can the proponents of Calvinism contend that when a man is once saved he can never be lost. The legs of the lame are not equal.

#### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

How can the text for today's lesson be properly understood?

Describe the law of Moses as it appeared to the more spiritual Jews.

Of whom was Paul making himself a

Of whom was Paul making himself type in the seventh chapter of Romans? What did the law of Moses lack? Annotated Historical Perspectives

What is the theme of Romans, chapters six, seven, and eight?
What are the three principal uses of the word "spirit" as used in God's word?

#### **Doctrinal Perspectives**

What would be the resulting condition of man if he were totally depraved as Calvin taught?

What verse do those of the "perseverance doctrine" claim as the basis for their belief?

What warnings does the Bible give which refute this doctrine?

There Is Now No Condemnation

What had made Paul free?

From what had he been freed?

How were the Jews freed from the law? the does God never tamper with principle of man's free moral agency?

#### The Law Was Weak

In what way was the law of Moses weak?

What are the contrasting predispositions of man which come because of his endowment of spiritual life?

the condemnation of the law of with the absence of condemna-Contrast the tion in Christ.

What are the conditions for "no condemnation"?

#### The Mind of the Flesh Is Death

What does it mean to walk by the Spirit? What does it mean to walk by the flesh?

spiritual condition What is the who devote of those themselves to the things of the flesh?

#### Ye Are Not in the Flesh

What is the condition of the person whom the Holy Spirit dwells? How does the Holy Spirit guide man condition the word of God?

#### Posted Theses

hat are the three arguments given against using Psalm 58:3 as a proof text for the doctrine of total depravity? What are

# Lesson VII—May 16, 1976

# CHRIST, THE END OF THE LAW

# Lesson Text Rom. 10:1-15

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved.

For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not

according to knowledge.

- 3 For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.
- 4 For Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth.

5 For Moses writeth that the man that doeth the righteousness which

is of the law shall live thereby.

6 But the righteousness which is of faith saith thus, Say not in thy heart. Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down:)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up

from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach:

Because if thou shalt confess

with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved:

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame.

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him:

13 For, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!

Golden Text.—"He hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross." (Col. 2:14.)

Devotional Reading.—Rom. 10:16-21.

# Daily Bible Readings

May 10. M	Purpose of the Law (Gal. 3:16-25)
	No Justification by the Law (Gal. 2:15-21)
May 12. W	Christ Fulfilled the Law (Matt. 5:17-20)
May 13. T	. Jews Separated from the Law (Rom. 7:1-7)
May 14. F	Law Nailed to the Cross (Col. 2:14-17)

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TIME.—About A.D. 56.

PLACES.—Corinth in Greece, and Rome in Italy.

PERSONS.—Paul and the saints in Rome.

#### Introduction

The text for today's lesson, Romans 10:1-15, is taken from a special section of the epistle. The section, chapters nine, ten, and eleven, is concerned with matters pertaining to the fact that the gospel was to be preached to the Jews first, and also to the Greeks." In two short lessons from this section (the next lesson is from Romans 11:11-24) space is not provided for a thorough discussion of the matters involved, which matters pertain to God's adoption of Israel, his rejection of Israel, and his grafting in of the Gentiles.

Some four principles involved in this section, however, deserve to be particularly set forth, namely:

- For one principle, God's rejection of the Israelites was grounded in the fact that they had rejected Jesus Christ who was the end of the law of Moses, itself. Those Israelites refused through their own volition and freedom of choice to accept Christ.
- 2. For a second principle, God can and does exercise the liberty to choose and revise his choices—and adjust or alter his program—as men fail in their respective positions and appointments.

- 3. For another principle, the very fact of God's rejection of Israel stresses how that God has provided that every responsible soul in every age, clime, and dispensation must respond, or refuse to respond, in keeping with his own free will.
- For a fourth principle, the fact that God made certain choices, especially Israel, is not to be interpreted as God's having held a partiality in favor of the Israelites above that of all other peoples. "God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35.) The Gentiles were in God's plan from the beginning, and the choices that God made were the most immediate means of his reaching the Gentiles, as well as the Israelites. If a man has two sons, and if, on a basis of each one's aptitude and innate capacity, he enters one in a university the other in a school. he does not show thereby that he loves one son more than the other.

#### ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

The present lesson is taken from chapter ten . . . the student should observe that Paul had developed the "righteousness of God,' the gospel, the only means whereby men may be saved . that men. whether Jew or Greek, can be saved only through faith and obedience to the gospel . . . was logical for him to proceed from chapter eight directly to chapter twelve . . . from condemnation, salvathat is tion (including the how in chapter six), to exhortation (consisting of chapters twelve through sixteen) . . . except for the fact that in his introductory statements, he had said: "For I am not ashamed of the gos-

pel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" . . . the matter of "the Jew first, and also the Greek" warranted a full explanation . . . thus the departure, as per chapters nine, ten, and eleven . . . the three chapters are concerned with questions that would naturally arise relative to the rejection or the casting off of the Jews with whom the covenant had been made. . . . Was the casting off just? . . . Why were they rejected? . . . Why did they reject the gospel? . . . Did the rejection include the entire nation? ... If not,

why? . . . What would be their final destiny? . . . . Why did God show partiality to Abraham and a certain line of his descendants in the first place? . . . Why, for instance, was Jacob chosen over Esau? . . . Was Jacob a better person than Esau at the time the choice was made? . . . These and other questions that

would naturally arise account for the section—a kind of parenthesis—between the natural order that would have proceeded from Romans eight to twelve . . . one special point in chapters nine, ten, and eleven was Paul's justification for his preaching the gospel to the Gentiles.

## **DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES**

One significant statement in to-day's lesson is that "Christ is the end of the law." The meaning is that not only did the law end with the death of Christ, but also that Christ was the fulfillment of the law. During his personal ministry, Christ had said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished." Further, Paul wrote the Colossians how that Christ "blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross." (Matt. 5:17, 18; Col. 2:14.)

Now, the pertinent consideration is the question of just what constituted that law, or the bond, written in ordinances? For instance, the Sabbatarians contend that the law which was fulfilled, nailed to the cross, or abolished, was the law of Moses; that there is a difference in the ten commandments and in the law of Moses was abolished; and that the ten commandments, therefore, are in force today.

Granted, nine of the ten commandments have been restated in the New Testament, and that after a higher order of things. Thus, those nine commandments are in force today; but they are in force because they are incorporated into the new law, and not because they were recorded in the old. One of the ten commandments, the fourth, has not

been brought forward and incorporated into the new law, but the Sabbatarians contend that the sabbath law is in force today.

In reality, the Sabbatarians' concern for the fourth, or sabbath day commandment, lies in the fact that the sabbath is a major tenet in their premillennial scheme of doctrine. They believe that those who do not keep the sabbath day will receive the mark of the beast, that they will be kept from heaven, and that just before the return of Christ, the Sunday observance will be enforced by law. At that point and time, they affirm, the whole world will be shown the obligation for the observance of the sabbath, and those who transgress the command to keep the sabbath will be honoring popery above God. They will receive, therefore, the mark of the beast, and they will be destroyed in the battle of Armaged-

the Sabbatarians call commandments the law of God; whereas, they call the remainder of the Old Testament the law of Moses. They claim that the law of God was written on stones; whereas, the law of Moses was written in a book. They affirm that the law of God was written by his own finger; whereas, the law of Moses was written by Moses. They further affirm that the law of God was placed in the ark; whereas, the law of Moses was placed in the side of the ark; and they conclude with the affirmation that the law of God is to continue forever; whereas, the law of Moses was done away.

#### The Golden Text

"He hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross." (Col. 2:14.)

The law of Moses was a barrier, or wall, between the Jews and the Gentiles. Jews and Gentiles could

never be one until that wall, or barrier, was taken out of the way, and this Jesus did when he was nailed to the cross by the Jews. In short, Jesus, in turn, nailed the law, 148 LESSON VII

so to speak, to the very cross to which he was nailed. To the Ephesians, Paul wrote: "For he [Christ] is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordi-

# The Text Explained

# Paul Prayed for Israel To Be Saved (Rom. 10:1-3)

Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

Above the three chapters of this section—nine, ten, and eleven—could be justly written the title, "The Free Moral Agency of Man." The Israelites as a nation had been rejected, but God did not first reject Israel; instead, Israel rejected God and crucified the saviour of man. All the Israelites, however, had not come to nought. Paul, and all other Jews who embraced the gospel, had not been cast off.

Like Jeremiah of old, Paul was regarded by the Jews as being a traitor; and yet, he experienced in heart great sorrow and unceasing pain when he contemplated the plight of those kinsmen of his according to the flesh. Paul's heart's desire and prayer was that they might be saved. They could not be saved as a nation, but they could be saved one by one as individuals.

Paul gave the Jews full credit for having a zeal for God. They hung on tenaciously to their law and to their traditions. Since the Babylonian captivity, they had not tolerated idolatry. Their zeal, however, was misguided, and it developed into a malicious fury against the Son of God. In their mad, raving zeal, they crucified Christ on a Roman cross.

Those Jews had not understood their law and the teaching of their prophets. They were ignorant, but their ignorance was willful. There were three elements in their failure namely: (1) they were ignorant of God's righteousness—or scheme of

redemption; (2) they sought to establish their own righteousness; and (3) they refused to accept Christ. They were betrayed by their own zeal, and pride, and obstinacy.

nances; that he might create in himself of the two [Jew and Gen-

tile] one new man [the church], so making peace; and might reconcile

them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the

enmity thereby." (Eph. 2:14-16.)

# Christ Is the End of the Law (Rom. 10:4, 5)

For Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses writeth that the man that doeth the righteousness which is of the law shall live thereby.

As has been pointed up in prior lessons, no Jew was ever able to earn his salvation by the means of the law of Moses, which law required absolute righteousness. It could not extricate a person even from one single violation thereof. God's righteousness, or scheme of redemption through Christ, was introduced to redeem those who were under the curse of the law.

Now the golden text reads: "He [Christ] hath taken it [the law] out of the way, nailing it to the cross." (Col. 1:14.) The point of emphasis here, however, is the fact that the purpose of the law was to lead both Jew and Gentile to faith and obedience to Christ. Through acceptance of the gospel—faith, repentance, confession, and baptism—the believer is made righteous, and in this way Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness.

Verse five has reference to a statement from Moses. He wrote: "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and mine ordinances; which if a man do, he shall live in them." Concerning this same law, James wrote: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all." The thought here is that righteousness by the law was an achievement. The man who could achieve to the point of perfection would thereby earn his salvation. The kind of righteousness which is of

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God by faith, on the other hand, is easily within the reach of every man. (Lev. 18:5; James 2:10.)

## The Righteousness of God Is Near Everyone (Rom. 10:6-10)

But the righteousness which is of faith saith thus, Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down:) or, Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

In verses six and seven, Paul quotes the words of Moses. When Moses had completed the setting forth of the law, he emphasized that the law, therefore, was nigh them, and in their mouth, and in their heart. It was within the easy reach of those Israelites, but they were unable to achieve unto righteousness through it.

Paul accommodates the words of Moses to the case at hand. The righteousness of God by faith was also within their easy reach, and it was, and continues to be, attainable. Contrary to the concept of the Jews who expected Christ to come down and reign in person on earth, there was no need to ascend into heaven to bring Christ down—he had already come down from heaven through the means of a body prepared for him. Then too, there was no need to descend into the abyss to bring Christ up—he had already been raised from the dead by the power of God. The word of faith was nigh them (available to them), and in their mouth (communicated through the medium of speech), and in their hearts (suited to the heart).

The "word of faith" is another expression for the gospel of Christ. The matter of becoming a Christian is so simple—so easily accomplished. It is not something that a

person achieves; but rather, it is the unmerited gift of salvation.

Words may be empty, or they may be profound, depending on a person's understanding of mind and attitude of heart. The simple but profound confession that will save is not a mere lip recital; but rather, it is a humble confession stemming from a heart of faith and resolute determination. It is both the inward and outward acceptance of Christ as the Son of God.

# Whosoever Calls Shall Be Saved (Rom. 10:11-15)

For thescripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him: for, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things.

"Whosoever believeth on him [Christ] shall not be put to shame"—that is he will never be disappointed in Christ. With men, a person may experience many disappointments; but with Christ, there will be no disappointments. The Lord shows no partiality; he makes no distinction between Jew and Gentile; and he saves both on the same basis of his righteousness, or

plan of salvation.

"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." "Whosoever" includes both Jew and Gentile. The matter of salvation turns on the free choice of the individual. God does not, has not, and never will force his system of righteousness upon a single soul. There is no such thing as "irresistible grace." If a person would be saved, let him call on the name of the Lord. The process of calling on the name of the Lord is not by the mere means of repeating "Lord, Lord, Lord," but it is acting upon the Lord's authority and instruction.

In verses fourteen and fifteen,

Paul's rhetorical questions carry

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their own answers. Neither Jew nor Gentile could call on the Lord before they believed on him, nor could they believe on him unless they had heard, nor could they hear without a preacher, nor could there be preachers unless they be sent. Paul had in mind, here, the apostles who were to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. In contemplation of the

work of these men, Paul contemplated the words of Isaiah which had been written centuries before. The full quotation is as follows: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, and that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." (Isa. 52:7.)

### POSTED THESES

Paul wrote the Corinthians that the ministration of death, written, and engraven on stones (this was necessarily the ten commandments, Exodus 32:16) had passed away. He said: "For if that which passeth

away was with glory, much more that which remaineth is in glory."

(2 Cor. 3:7-11.) In the light of this one passage of scripture, the Sabbatarians do not have any basis for their seventh-day observance doctrine.

Christ arose on the first day of the week, as may be unequivocally ascertained from Luke 24, as follows:

 The body of Jesus was missing from the tomb when the disciples came to the tomb at early dawn on the first day of the week. (Luke 24:1, 2.)

2. Jesus had informed his disciples prior to that time that he would arise on the third day. (Luke 24:46; 24:7.)

3. The first day of the week, when Christ's body was missing from the tomb, was also the third day. (Luke 24:21.)

4. The first day of the week, therefore, was necessarily the third day, the day upon which Christ rose from the dead.

5. The first day of the week is, therefore, the greatest day in all the annals of history. This is the day upon which the saints assembled for worship—to break bread, as a matter of fact. (Acts 20:1-7.)

# Questions for Discussion

Christ

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

#### Introduction

With what fact is this section of the book of Romans concerned?
What are the four principles involved in this section?

## **Annotated Historical Perspectives**

What is the reason for Paul's departure from his subject, as per chapters nine, ten, and eleven?

What are these three chapters concerned with?

#### **Doctrinal Perspectives**

What is the meaning of the statement,
"Christ is the end of the law"?
What constituted the law which

fulfilled and abolished? What is the Sabbatarians' contention concerning the law which Christ abolished?

#### The Golden Text

Why did the law of Moses have to be done away with before the Jews and the Gentiles could be one?

Paul Prayed for Israel To Be Saved What is the other title which could be given this section of Romans? How did the Jews regard Paul? Over what did Paul experience great sorrow?

What had the Jews' zeal led them to do? What were the three elements in the Jews' failure to understand their law?

#### Christ Is the End of the Law

What could the law of Moses never do for those under it?

How is Christ the end of the law unto righteousness?

#### The Righteousness of God Is Near Everyone

What is the meaning of the statement, "the word is nigh thee"?
What kind of confession saves?

## Whosoever Calls Shall Be Saved

Why does one experience no disappoint. ments in Christ?

Upon what does the matter of salvation turn?

What does it mean to call upon the name of the Lord?

What conditions must be met before men can call on the Lord?

#### Posted Theses

What are the five facts, ascertained from Luke 14, which make the first day of the week the greatest day in all the annals of history?

## Lesson VIII-May 23, 1976

## ISRAEL S LOSS THE GENTILES' GAIN

#### Lesson Text Rom. 11:11-24

11 I say then, Did they stumble that they might fall? God forbid: but by their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy.

12 Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how much

more their fulness?

13 But I speak to you that are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry;

14 If by any means I may provoke to jealousy them that are my flesh, and may save some of them.

flesh, and may save some of them.

15 For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

16 And if the firstfruit is holy, so is the lump: and if the root is holy,

so are the branches.

17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and thou, being a wild olive, wast grafted in among them, and didst become partaker with them of the root of the fatness of the olive tree;

18 Glory not over the branches:

GOLDEN TEXT.—"For God hath shut might have mercy upon all." (Rom. 11:32.)
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rom. 11:1-10.

but if thou gloriest, it is not thou that bearest the root, but the root thee.

19 Thou wilt say then, Branches were broken off, that I might be

grafted in.

20 Well; by their unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by thy faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

21 For if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare

22 Behold then the goodness and severity of God: toward them that fell, severity; but toward thee, God's goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

23 And they also, if they continue not in their unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in

again

24 For if thou wast cut out of that which is by nature a wild olive tree, and wast grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

up all unto disobedience, that he

Daily Bible Readings

	Dully blote reduings
May 17. M	Paul's Lament Over Israel (Rom. 10:1-10)
May 18. T	Israel's Rebellion Against God (Rom. 10:13-21)
May 19. W	
May 20. T	
May 21. F	
May 22. S	
	Every Nation Invited (Acts 10:34, 35)

TIME. - About A.D. 56.

PLACES.—Corinth in Greece, and Rome in Italy.

Persons.—Paul and the saints in Rome.

#### Introduction

The subject, "Israel's Loss the Gentiles' Gain," is a sad commentary on the nation of Israel. They were God's adopted people. Theirs was the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises. They, however, stumbled at Christ.

God's rejection of Israel was a

boon to the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. As the Jews from city to city rejected Christ, the apostles—especially Paul—turned, in the preaching of the gospel, to the Gentiles. Those Jews were the most arrogant and bitterest enemies of Christ. They opposed the gospel

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at every juncture. They stirred up Christians; persecutions against and in time, when the nation was completely destroyed in A.D. 70, the preaching of the gospel was the more facilitated.

### ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

One highlight of Paul's teaching in the section of "the Jew first and also the Greek" (chapters nine, ten, and eleven) is that God is not responsible for any man's lost state . .. his rejection of the nation of Israel was not arbitrary . . . destiny is not set by an arbitrary decree, but by human response . . . God cuts off, but he also grafts in . . . perverted Israel was trimmed away . . . only the stump and roots were left . . . Gentiles were grafted in . . . but had not whereof to boast ... if Gentiles as grafted branches bore

much fruit . . . how much more could the Jews bear fruit should they be converted . . . behold the goodness and severity of God . . . goodness is the popular view of God . . . but severity and justice is another important view . . . back of every act of God to punish is a man's stubborn act of rebellion . . . there is no genuine well-being for a man in the absence of his straightforward free choice response of faith and obedience to God—the acceptance of Christ.

#### DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES

the chapter from which the text for today's lesson is drawn is the following reading: "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved."

(Rom. 11:25—26) On the basis of (Rom. 11:25, 26.) On the basis of this reading, certain men have the-orized that in time God will bring in a special dispensation for the Israelites at which time Israel shall be nationally restored.

To illustrate, in a written debate with the late H. Leo Boles, the late R. H. Boll affirmed the proposition: "The Scriptures teach that Israel descendants of Abraham) be nationally restored." shall When defining the proposition, Boll wrote: "By 'nationally restored' I mean that they shall be reconstituted in their own land, the land of their ancient heritage (which God by oath granted to their fathers for an everlasting possession) as a free and autonomous nation. This res-toration involves the people, the land, and the city, Jerusalem, and necessitates in connection a spiritual restoration; for no one would should contend that the Jews will be restored in their present unbelief and disobedience or that fleshly Israel, as such, will be restoreď."

One of Boll's major arguments was based on Romans 11:17-32, as has already been indicated.

fact is that all who subscribe to the doctrine of premillennialism, or the thousand year reign, rely on the same passage as constituting major argument in favor of the doctrine. One commentator from the denominational world has written: "Till the accomplishment the conversion of the Gentiles, there will be among the Jews only individual conversions; but this goal reached, their conversion en masse will take place." A paraphrase of another commentator is as follows: "God has set Israel aside for an age, and at some future time (in the next age) God will fulfill to the letter every promise he has made to Israel as a nation. ... If God's fore-knowledge of us as individuals cannot fail, neither can it fail when it comes to this nation of Israel which he foreknew in ages past. So it is a fact that his foreknowledge does not allow him to cast them off; they may be set aside, but he will bring them back."

In reply to R. H. Boll's argument from Romans, H. Leo Boles wrote: "When it is claimed that the Jews as a nation will be converted to Christ, it is proper to ask, By what means will they be converted? Will they be converted by the gospel of Christ? I know of no other means for conversion than the gospel. I know that no other gospel can be preached without bringing condemnation on the angel or person who preaches another gospel. (See Gal. 1:8, 9.) The gospel dis-

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pensation does not in conversion deal with nations, but with individuals. There was a time during the patriarchal age when God dealt with people by families; then under the Mosaic dispensation he dealt

with nations; but now he deals with people in conversion *individu*ally. ... If the Jews are ever converted to Christ, this must be done by the gospel, and that individually."

### The Golden Text

"For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all." (Rom. 11:32.)

Paul had already testified that "all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God," and on that very basis he later states that "God hath shut up all unto disobedience." In short, God counted all men-both Gentiles and Jews—under sin. In order to meet the demands of violated justice, he sent his Son to earth to die for fallen men. This is the theme of the gospel of Christ. In this way God has provided mercy for all who will by faith and obedience accept his grace. God is no respecter of persons, and men are shut up unto disobedience, except as they of their own free choice embrace the gospel of Christ.

# The Text Explained

# Did God Intend That Israel Should Fall? (Rom. 11:11, 12)

say then, Did they stumble that they might fall? God forbid: but by their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy. Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how

much more their fulness?

The student should bear in mind that chapters nine, ten, and eleven constitute a special section—a kind of parenthesis or departure from the main course or logical order of the message. Paul took the detour in order to discuss a matter introduced in the outset of his epistle when, having averred that "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," he stated "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." In this section, then, Paul is anticipating questions and arguments that would be raised by both the Jews and the Contiles. both the Jews and the Gentiles.

"Did they [Israel as a nation] stumble that they might fall?" In other words, Did God desire that Israel fall? Did he so purpose and plan their fall? With righteous in-dignation, Paul answers his quesaignation, Paul answers his question with a "God forbid." All the day long God had spread out his hands to a "disobedient and gainsaying people." God had not cast off his people—that is all the Jews. True, he had cast off all the disobedient ones. He had cast Israel off as a nation, but men of faith like Paul had not been cast off. The na-

tion of Israel had been cast off through unbelief—through an outright rejection of Christ to the point of their having maliciously crucified him on a Roman cross. "God gave them up to a spirit of stupor." Those Israelites had "eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day" and so Israel was cast off as a nation. Their only means of continued standing was through Christ, and they rejected him. The Jews as individuals can again gain the favor of God, but only upon their free choice acceptance of Christ.

Through the fall of the Jews, the gospel was the sooner preached to the Gentiles. When the Jews blasphemed, Paul and Barnabas shook off the dust of their feet against them. To the disobedient Jews at Antioch of Pisidia, by way of ex-ample, Paul and Barnabas said: "It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eter. nal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:44-47.)

statement, "to provoke them to jealousy" is not to be un-derstood as an intentional effort to drive them still further away from Christ, but rather, it is to be understood as an effort or means to so provoke the Jews that they would earnestly desire to be recipients of the spiritual blessings which the Gentile converts enjoyed.

In verse twelve, Paul is to be understood as saying that if by the

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fall of the Jews, the Gentiles were the more; then consider what blessing would have, or could, fall out to both Gentiles and Jews in the event the Jews should be led through jealousy to accept Christ. The Jews had a great background of moral and spiritual values with which they could have blessed all peoples of the world, but they stumbled at Christ through their pride and obstinacy and thereby, cut off.

# What Shall Be the Receiving of the Jews?

(Rom. 11:13-21)

But I speak to you that are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry; if by any means I may provoke to jealousy them that are my flesh, and may save some of them. For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? And if the firstfruit is holy, so is the lump: and if the root is holy, so are the branches. But if some of the branches were broken off, and thou, being a wild olive, wast grafted in among them, and didst become partaker with them of the root of the fatness of the olive tree; glory not over the branches: butt if thou gloriest, it is not thou that bearest the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, Branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.
Well; by their unbelief they were
broken off, and thou standest by thy
faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare thee.

Lest the Gentiles should fail to understand his concern for his kinsmen according to the flesh, Paul turns his thought from the Jews to the Gentiles. He is an apostle to the Gentiles, and he is exceedingly grateful for his ministry. He glories in it. He earnestly desires that his brethren according to the flesh, through jealousy of the Gentiles, might be led to accept Christ. Paul then proceeds to give a parable of a good olive tree and a wild olive

Relative to verse fifteen, the casting off of Israel as a nation resulted in the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. Now, should some those Israelites, as individuals, em-

brace Christ, the outcome would be as if they had been received back from the dead. After all, all the Jews who stumbled at Christ were

dead in trespasses and sins.

The emphasis of verse sixteen is that the Jews were the first converts to the Christian faith. They were the firstfruits of the gospel. Under the law, the firstfruits were carried to the priest, and the whole harvest became holy; and just so, the first converts to Christianity the believing Jews—made holy the entire harvest of souls among the Gentiles. In this sense the Israelites were holy, and all Israel will be accepted as individuals if and as they accept Christ.

In verse seventeen, Paul makes the point that if the firstfruit is holy, so is the lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches. The meaning is that if the sheaf of the firstfruit of the harvest be waved by the priest and declared to be holy, then the he-lamb and meal-offering is also holy; and just so, if the root—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and Christ—be holy, branches-the Jewish converts

— are also holy.

In verse seventeen, Paul proceeds to anticipate another question that would be raised, namely: Why were the Jews-the branches-broken off from the holy root? and why were branches—the Géntiles grafted into that holy root? majority of the branches of good olive tree—the Jews—had died from the disease of unbelief and had been thereby cut off from that holy root; whereas and in the meantime, the branches of the wild olive tree—the Gentiles—had shown more than normal growth, having been, through their association with and observation of the Jews, ordained or disposed to have 13:48, eternal life. (Acts wild branches Thus the were grafted into that holy root which the dead branches had been cut away.

In verses eighteen and nineteen, Paul proceeds from his parable to warn the Gentiles to "be not high minded, but fear." "Glory not over the branches," he warns. After all, the Gentiles were not the bearers of faith; but rather the Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David and

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Christ—was the bearer of the system of salvation by faith.

There was the very possible danger that the Gentiles would become prideful and boastful of their new position in Christ. He anticipated that some would reason that the branches—the Jews—were broken off so that the Gentiles might be grafted in. This was not the case. The Jews had been broken off solely on the basis of their unbelief.

Thus, Paul concludes his warning by stating that "if God spared not the natural branches"—because of their unbelief—then certainly he would not spare the Gentile branches

if they, too, became disobedient.

# Behold Both the Goodness and Severity of God (Rom. 11:22-24)

Behold then the goodness and severity of God: toward them that but toward thee. severity; fall, God's goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they continue not in their unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wast cut out of that which is by nature a wild olive tree, and wast grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

God is good and merciful, but he is also just and righteous. As a just God, he must meet the demands of violated justice. If he should save just one unbelieving and disobedient person, he would, by that one act, cease to be a righteous and just God. The mercy of God has been overdrawn—not that his mercy can really be overdrawn, but there are

many lost sinners who pass up one gospel invitation after another with the attitude that, "After all, God is so merciful that he would not condemn us to hell even if we should die without having rendered obedience to the gospel."

In contemplation of not only God's mercy but also his justice and righteousness, Paul charged the Gentile Christians to "behold the goodness and severity of God." The severity of God was fully demonstrated, on the one hand, by his having cut off the nation of Israel as a result of their unbelief. The mercy of God was fully demonstrated, on the other hand, by his having grafted in the Gentiles as a result of their belief. "Otherwise thou shalt also be cut off." Paul warns. In short, if the Gentiles should fail to continue in a course of faith and obedience, they would be cut off fust as the Israelites had been cut off. Further, if those Jews who had been cut off through unbelief should be led to accept Christ, they would be grafted into the root of the tree again.

The grafting in again of the Jews through their acceptance of Christ is not difficult to contemplate. If branches—the Gentiles—of a wild olive tree could be grafted contrary to nature, into the root and thereby receive their source of then certainly, the branches could be grafted into the root from which they had, previous to their having been cut off, retheir source of life. Jews had been cut off through their unbelief. They could come back to God as individuals, but through the means of the same faith whereby the Gentiles had come into

favor with God.

#### POSTED THESES

The statement, "and so all Israel shall be saved" should be applied in a restricted sense to all true Israelites—that is to all who walk in the footsteps of the faith of Abraham, and thereby believe on Christ. Paul write: "For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel: neither, because they are Abraham's seed, are they all children." In another place he wrote: "Know therefore that they that are of faith, the same are

sons of Abraham." (Rom. 9:6; Gal. 3:7.) All Israel—that is, all true Israel consisting of both Jews and Gentiles who believe—shall be saved.

No man can become, or be, holy in the absence of responsibility and freedom of choice. The Israelites, themselves and not God, were responsible for their fall and rejection.

# Questions for Discussion

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

#### Introduction

Why is today's subject a sad commentary on the nation of Israel?

#### Annotated Historical Perspectives

Why was the rejection of Israel by God not arbitrary?

#### **Doctrinal Perspectives**

What is the theory of certain men, cluding R. H. Boll, concerning statement, "so all Israel shall inthe be saved"

Why will the Jews, as a nation, never be converted to Christ? How does God now deal with all people

in conversion?

#### The Golden Text

In what way has God provided mercy for all men?

Did God Intend That Israel Should Fall?

What is Paul anticipating in this of his epistle to the Romans? How did he answer the anticipated

tion, "Did they stumble that they might fall?"

Because of what condition were the Jews cast off?

What was the only means of the Jews' continued standing with God?
What was brought about the sooner be-

cause of the fall of the Jews?

hat is the meaning of "to provoke them to jealousy"? Paul's statement,

#### What Shall Be the Receiving of the Jews?

What was the parable that Paul connection with the preaching used in Gentiles?

Who were the firstfruits of the gospel?
What is the meaning of Paul's reasoning that if the firstfruit is holy, so is the lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches? Explain Paul's discussion of the

in of wild branches into the holy root.
Why could the Gentiles not glory over

their being grafted in?

#### Behold the Goodness and Severity of God

How were the goodness and the severity of God demonstrated in his grafting in of the Gentiles?

nough the Gentiles had only seen goodness of God, how could they Though the the seen experience his severity?

#### Posted Theses

Of whom does the true Israel consist? Who was responsible for the fall and rejection of Israel?

# Lesson IX—May 30, 1976

# DOCTRINAL PROBLEMS IN GALATIA

#### Lesson Text

Gal. 1:6-17

6 I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel;

Which is not another gospel; only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of

Christ.

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema.

9 As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be an-

athema.

10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.

For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man.

For neither did I receive it 12 from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it:

14 And I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for traditions of my fathers.

15 But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace,

16 To reveal his Son in me, that

I might preach him among the Genstraightway I conferred not with flesh and blood:

17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus.

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Golden Text.—"By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. 2:16.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Gal. 1:1-5.

# **Daily Bible Readings**

May 24. M	Missionary Work in Galatia (Acts 16:6-10)
	Paul Returns to Galatia (Acts 18:22-28)
	Fickleness of the Galatians (Gal. 1:6-10)
	The Foolish Galatians (Gal. 3:1-14)
May 28. F	Galatians' Attitude Toward Paul (Gal. 4:12-20)
May 29. S	Paul Defends His Apostleship (Gal. 2, 3)
May 30. S	Doctorinal Issues in Galatia (Gal. 3, 4)

TIME. - About A.D. 55-56.

PLACES.—Paul was in Macedonia when he wrote the churches of Galatia—Antioch of Pisidia; Iconium of Phrygia; Lystra and Derbe of Lycaonia; and Perga of Pamphylia.

Persons.—Paul and the saints of the churches of Galatia.

### Introduction

The first eight lessons for the second or spring quarter are taken from Paul's epistle to the Romans, and the remaining five lessons are taken from his epistle to the Galatians. This planning or arrangement for the lessons is quite fitting and logical. There is a great similarity in content of the epistle to the Galatians to that of the epistle to the Romans. There are strong inferences that Paul wrote Galatians from Corinth during his second stay there, which stay was only for a period of three months.

There are also strong inferences that Paul wrote Romans at about the same time—one inference being the similarity of content of the two epistles.

In both epistles, Paul draws a meaningful contrast between the law of Moses and the law of Christ. He shows clearly that by the law of Moses no person can be saved; whereas, by the law of Christ—the gospel, or the righteousness of God—any person who will, whether lew or Gentile, can be saved.

### ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

The Galatian epistle is polemic, controversial, and theological—a debate . . . characterized by pressing interrogations, by expressions of exasperations, by pointed and underscored logical arguments . . . Paul was the author . . . the churches of Galatia were established by Paul ... at a time of physical ailment or infirmity . . . was such to cause them to turn away in disgust . . instead, they received him as an angel . . . the churches were made up primarily of Gentiles, converted from heathendom . . Jews were prevalent among the Gentiles.

There are two theories as to the location of the churches of Galatia—the northern theory and the southern theory . . . northern theory: the churches were located in the northern region known as Galatia . . southern theory: the churches were located in the southern part of the Roman province of

Galatia . . . Paul being a Roman citizen, would more probably speak of the location of the churches from a political viewpoint rather than from a regional viewpoint . . . thus they likely were the churches established by Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey . . . Paul visited those churches again on his second journey and again on his third journey . . . after his third visit, he went to Ephesus in the province of Asia . . . was there for two years and three months . . . left because of the stir raised by Demetrius the silversmith . . . went to Troas . . . then to Macedonia, then to Corinth ... was there only three months ... was during this stay in Corinth that he learned of the defection of the churches in Galatia as a result of Judaizing teachers . . . writes letters to those churches . . . apparently wrote Romans also during the three months stay at Corinth.

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#### DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES

Today's lesson has to do with Judaizing teachers who taught the Gentile converts in the churches of Galatia that their males needed to be circumcised and that they all needed to keep certain other tenets of the law of Moses, as well. Those Judaizing teachers were very jealous for their established customs, particularly circumcision, and they defended their customs on the basis of the law of Moses. Though Christ had nailed the law to the cross, those Judaizing Christians were much more concerned about their customs and traditions than they were about the gospel of Christ.

were about the gospel of Christ.

Those of the "restoration movement" are very much indebted to Alexander Campbell for his famous sermon on the law, which was first delivered when he was only twenty-eight years of age. In that sermon—which was made the ground of his impeachment and trial for heresy—Campbell clearly differentiated between the law of Moses and the law of Christ. A footnote from him reads: "There are not a few professors of Christianity who suppose themselves under equal ob-

ligation to obey Moses or any other prophet, as Christ and his apostles. They cannot understand why any part of the divine revelation should not be obligatory on a Christian to observe; nor can they see any reason why the New Testament should be preferred to the old; or why equally by each."

The same concepts described by Campbell prevail among many religionists today. Just as the Jews were jealous for their practice of circumcision and appealed to the then abolished law of Moses for their authority; just so, and on the same basis, the Roman Catholics justify their practice of burning incense in the worship; the Mormons justify—or rather did until the practice was made unlawful—their practice of polygamy; the Sabbatarians justify their observance of the sabbath; the paedo-baptists justify their practice of infant baptism and infant church membership; and the Catholics and Protestants justify their use of a mechanical instrument of music in the worship

# The Golden Text

"By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. 2:16.)

In another place, Paul wrote: "The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." The law of Moses with its commandments, rites, and ceremonies could not give righteousness and life. Consider the following inspired statements: "If there had been a law given which could make alive, verily righteousness would have been by the law." . . . "If righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought." . . . "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead

to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God." . . "For Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth." . . "He hath taken it [the law] out of the way, nailing it to the cross." ... "Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace." (Rom. 6:23; Gal. 3:21; 2:21; Rom. 7:4; 10:4; Col. 2:14; Gal. 5:4.)

# The Text Explained

# The Perverters (Gal. 1:6-9)

I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other

than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema.

Upon receiving word of how the Galatians had defected through the influence of Judaizing teachers, Paul was exasperated. He mar-

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veiled that the Galatians were so quickly removing from the grace of Christ—and thereby from him unto a different gospel. Paul and Barnabas had preached the gospel to those Gentiles, and they had readily turned from their bondage of heathenism to accept Christ; but now, they were just as readily turning from their new freedom in Christ to embrace Judaism, and thus

a system of bondage all over again.
The "different gospel" was not really another gospel-there is only one gospel-but rather, the Judaizing teachers had perverted the gospel of Christ. To pervert is to cause to turn aside or away from what is good or true or morally right—to corrupt. This those false teachers were causing the Galatian Christians to do. The Judaizing teachers were binding circumcision and the "observance of days, months, and seasons, and years." (4:10, 11, 5:2-4.) One thing is certain: a perverted gospel will not save.

Paul charges that not only would he and his companions be anathema if they should preach any other gospel; but also if an angel from heaven should preach another gospel, he, too, would be anathema. In order to impress the gravity and severity of the case, he repeated his

statement with emphasis.

# The Perverters' Charges Against Paul (Gal. 1:10)

For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.

Paul was a threat to the designs and purposes of the Judaizing teachers. In their minds, his influence needed very much to be broken. They charged, therefore, that Paul was seeking to please men, else he would have required the Gentiles to be circumcised in the first place. These false teachers first place. Those false teachers emphasized that Paul was not one of the original apostles; and further, they probably reported that even he had required circumcision other circumstances. had caused Timothy, a half-Jew, to be circumcised so as to keep down criticism from the Jews; but he did not give way for Titus, a Gentile, to be circumcised, no not for an hour. Designing men, such as those Judaizing teachers were, would certainly know how to take advantage of a matter that could easily seem inconsistent to an unthinking per-

Paul was not a man-pleaser. If he were seeking to please men, he would not have undergone the service and the many hardships for the cause of Christ, as had been characteristic of his life.

# Paul's Manner of Life in the Jews' Religion

(Gal. 1:11-14)

For I make known to you, brethtouching the gospel which ren, as was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I reafter man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it: and I advanced in the Jews' religion heaved against the person of the second again. gion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the tions of my fathers.

Paul had an enviable background. In the area of culture, he was a Greek; in the area of citizenship, he was a freeborn Roman; and in the area of religion, he was a Hebrew of Hebrews. He was reared in the city of Tarsus, in the province of Cilicia, which he described as being "no mean city." (Acts 21:39.)

In his program of education, Paul had been a student of Gamaliel of the Hillel School of Religion. He had advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of his own age. He was especially zealous for the traditions of the fathers, and he was also zealous for God. He had lived in all good conscience before God and thus exercised a conscience void of offense. In his zeal for the fathers and the law of Moses, he verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name Jerusalem, Jesus of Nažareth. In he both shut up the saints in prison and gave his vote against them when the sentence of death was passed upon them.

At the time Christ appeared to Paul, he was on his way to Damascus, and he was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against 160 Lesson IX

disciples. This appearance of Christ, Paul had in mind when he wrote the Galatians that the gospel which he preached was not after man. He received the gospel gospel through the of revelation **Tesus** Christ. He reminded the Galatians of that which he had formerly told them: how in time past, when in the Jews' religion, he had persecuted the church of God beyond measure; in fact, he had made havoc of it. If ever a man had been loyal and zealous for the Jews' religion, Paul was that man. The revelation of Christ to Paul—the actual appearance of him—was Paul's good reason for his having counted things as refuse in order to preach Christ.

# **Paul's Call or Separation** (Gal. 1:15-17)

But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me: but I went away unto Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus.

If, in light of Paul's persecutions of Christians, there seems to be an incongruity in his having been called to the apostolic office, emphasis should be placed upon the fact that he believed that he was doing what God would have him do. He was earnest, sincere, and conscientious in his persecutions of Christians.

God had separated Paul, "even from his mother's womb, and called him through his grace to reveal his Son in him." There may be a need to take a second look at the expression "from my mother's womb." Is Paul to be understood as having been so "predestinated" as to have had no exercise of his free will? Could he have marred in God's hand in the plan and purpose which God had for for him? God had called him-had a plan for himfrom his mother's womb, but the execution of that plan must have turned on Paul's having reached the age of accountability and on his having made the free will choice to serve God. David said: "The wicked are estranged from the womb," but this did not mean that they were estranged at the time of their birth, that is, born in sin, for the same verse states: "they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." (Psalm 58:3.) speaking lies.
Thus "from the mother's womb″ must contemplate a sufficient age for a person to be morally and spiritually responsible—old enough fact to speak lies. Who ever heard a new born baby speak? and much more, who ever heard a new born baby speak lies? In this case then, and without doubt, an age of responsibility had been reached, and the free wills of those under considwere being eration exercised by speaking lies.

Upon receiving his call, Paul had not consulted with men, nor had he even gone up to Jerusalem to confer with the original twelve apostles. This he likely would have done had he been of weak character with a mind and desire to please men; but he was a man of strong character. He was a man of conviction, a man of determination, a man who could stand alone even if all of the world were against him. He was another Jeremiah who would stand for God regardless of the ravings of the disobedient.

#### POSTED THESES

There is as much authority for the burning of incense in the worship as there is for the use of a mechanical instrument of music in the worship.

Regardless of a man's academic

theological background, if he does not know how to properly differentiate between the Old Testament and the New, he is no real scholar of the Bible, nor can he be.

#### **Questions for Discussion**

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

What are some of the similarities between Paul's epistle to the Romans and his epistle to the Galatians?

Annotated Historical Perspective

what is the Galatian epistle charac-By

terized?

What are the two theories as to the location of the churches of Galatia? Which is the more likely?

Paul when he learned of the Where was defection of the churches in Galatia?

#### **Doctrinal Perspectives**

the Judaizing teachers With what were more concerned concerned Christ?

What did Campbell say about people themselves under equal obliga-obey Moses as Christ and his apostles?

hat are some of the practices which prevail among many religionists today that show the concepts described by What are Campbell?

The Golden Text

What could the law of Moses never give?

The Perverters

What was Paul's reaction to the defection

of the Galatians through the Judaizing teachers?

What was the "different gospel"?

What were the tenets which the Judaiz-ing teachers were binding upon the Galatians?

What was Paul's charge concerning any who preached another gospel?

The Perverters' Charges Against Paul

the were charges Paul by the false teachers?

> Paul's Manner of Life in the Jews' Religion

were the characteristics Paul's background an which characteristics were made enviable one to any of his time?

What was Paul's attitude toward his religion before his conversion to Christ?

#### Paul's Call or Separation

was raul's attitude and conscience while he was persecuting Christians?

Discuss the statement, "from my mo womb." Was Paul predestinated the work God called him to do?

Upon what condition did the execution of God's plan for Paul depend?

# Lesson X-June 6, 1976

# FREEDOM THROUGH CHRIST

# Lesson Text

Gal. 2:1-10

Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me.

2 And I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in

3 But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was com-

pelled to be circumcised:

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:

5 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.

But from those who were re-

puted to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man's person)—they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me:

7 But contrariwise, when they saw that I had been intrusted with gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the

circumcision

(For he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the

Gentiles);

9 And when they perceived the grace that was given unto James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision;

10 Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do.

Golden Text.—"For ye, brethren, were called for freedom. . . ." (Gal. 5:13.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Gal. 2:11-21.

# Daily Bible Readings

May 31. M	All Are One in Christ (Gal. 3:26-29)
June 1. T	.God Accepts All Nations (Acts 10:34, 35)

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Iune	2. W	Brotherliness Required (Rom. 12:9-21)
Íune	3. T	Liberty in Christ (Gal. 5:1-6)
		Liberty Not License (Gal. 5:13-16)
Iune	5. S	Freedom Through the Truth (John 8:31, 32)
June	6. S	The New and Living Way (Heb. 10:1-20)

Time.—About A.D. 55-56.

Places.—Paul was in Macedonia when he wrote the churches of Galatia —Antioch of Pisidia; Iconium of Phrygia; Lystra and Derbe of Lycaonia; and Perga of Pamphylia.

Persons.—Paul and the saints of the churches of Galatia.

### Introduction

lessontitle for today's Through Christ"—is "Freedom quite fitting. The epistle to the Galatians has been titled by scholars, "The Charter of Christian Liberty." Paul expressed the central theme of the epistles when he wrote: "For freedom did Christ set us stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bon-(Gal. 5:1.) The Galatians, prior to their conversion to Christ, had been "in bondage to them that by nature are no gods"; they then, through their faith and obedience to Christ, came to be free in him; but they were turning from that newfound freedom to embrace tenets of the law of Moses, and they were, thereby, bringing themselves under another system of bondage.

Paul branded the Galatians as being very foolish. He asked: "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh?" (Gal. 3:3.) He then stated: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone who continueth not in all things

that are written in the book of the

law, to do them." (Gal. 3:3, 10.)

#### ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

There are two accounts of the Jerusalem conference . . . account of Luke, Acts 15 . . . account of Paul, Galatians 1 and 2 . . . conference was held in about A.D. 50 . . . some twenty years after the church began on Pentecost . . about fourteen years after Paul's conversion . . Paul wrote Galatians about five years after the conference was held ... in about 55 or 56 . . . many Christians Jews had regarded Christianity as being an extension of the Jews' religion . . . certain leaders moved to force circumcision upon those who, like Cornelius, had already been baptized.

Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch at the close of their first missionary journey . . . had on that journey established "the churches of Galatia" . . . returned after an absence of three years . . . were soon weighted down and harassed by certain men from Judea who with deliberate effort sought to bind circumcision and the law of Moses upon the Gentile converts . . . controversy raged . . men from Judea pretended to represent the original twelve apostles . . . the original twelve were all from Judea . . . Paul, being an apostle "born out of

season" was compromised . . . not in his own mind . . . but in the eyes of the brethren . . . church in Antioch did not know whom they should believe . . . brethren concluded that Paul and Barnabas, together with certain other brethren, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about the question . . Paul went up "by revelation"—that is, he was directed by the Holy Spirit to go . . . would not have gone otherwise . . . was just that certain of his position and course.

At the conference, "there was much questioning" ... in short, the Judaizers had their day in court . . . James, the Lord's brother and elder, presided . . . Peter made the decisive address . . . gave a full account, in order, of the conversion of Cornelius and his household . . . was followed by Paul, then Barnabas ... issue was 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 . . . cited how that the bringing in of the Gentiles was the fulfillment of a prophecy by Amos . . . proposed that they trouble not the Gentiles on those mat-

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ters, and write instead that those Gentiles "abstain from the pollution of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood" . . . the apostles, elders and the whole church concurred . . . this was not a popular vote based on the

emotional attitude of those present ... was instead based upon apostolic authority, as set forth by the apostles . . . the letter, or epistle, written on that occasion was the earliest known document to have been issued from inspired men.

## **DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES**

The epistle of Paul to the churches of Galatia, like his epistle to the Romans, emphasizes at least four major principles, namely:

1. No man can be saved the works of the law of Moses.

2. Christians who go to the law of Moses for some of their religious worship and observances are severed from Christ; they are under obligation to keep the whole law; and they are fallen away from grace.

There is no true freedom for any person, except in Christ.

 Christians must not use their freedom as an occasion for the fulfillment of the lusts of the flesh.

These principles outlined should impress upon every disciple of the Lord how that he must properly differentiate between the law of Moses and the law of Christ; how that if he goes to the law of Moses for one practice or observance—such as the burning of incense in the worship, or the use of the mechanical instrument in the worship or for the observance of the sabbath day, or for a justification of polygamy—he is under obligation to meet all of the requirements and observances thereof; how that the New Testament law teaches unequivocally that a child of God can apostatize or fall from grace and be finally lost; and how that there is no true freedom except in Christ.

Further, the disciple of the Lord should be equally impressed with the fact that he may not, or must not, use his liberty and freedom in Christ to give vent to the lust of the flesh, or to run roughshod over the conscience of a weak brother. Many, if not almost all, members of the church today tend to be worldly

and materialistic.

# The Golden Text

"For ye, brethren, were called for freedom...." (Gal. 5:13.)

Freedom is the central theme of the epistle to the Galatians. In the epistle, Paul writes of freedom from the weak and beggarly rudiments of the world; of freedom from the law of Moses; and of freedom from the sins of the flesh. All this freedom is in Christ, and thus Paul wrote: "For freedom [ that is, for the sake of the freedom of the Jews from the law and also for the sake of the freedom of the Gentiles from the bondage of the beggarly rudiments of the world] did Christ set us free." (Gal. 5:1.) There is no true and real freedom except in Christ, and that freedom is available to every person who will accept it.

# The Text Explained

The Jerusalem Conference (Gal. 2:1-4)

Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem Barnabas, taking Titus with with me. And I went up by revelaand I laid before them the gospel I preach among which the Gentiles but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain. But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, compelled to be circumcised: and that because of the false brethren privity brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.

Paul had been a convert to Christ for fourteen years when he went up from Antioch to Jerusalem to attend the conference on the question of whether or not the Gentile converts to Christ needed, in addition thereto, to be circumcised according to the law and to keep other tenets of the law as well. During that fourteen year period, and some three years after his conversion,

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Paul had visited with the apostle Peter for a period of fifteen days. Others of the apostles he had not met, save James the Lord's brother. He had not, therefore, conferred with flesh and blood when he was called to the apostolic office—not even with the apostles in Jerusalem who were before him. He was definitely not a man-pleaser; and further, he was an apostle of Christ in his own right. He was not inferior in any respect to the apostles who were called before he was called.

Paul went up to the conference by "revelation"—that is, he went up by the instruction of the Holy Spirit. Except for the inspired instruction: he would not have attended the conference, so sure was he of his position and authority and that he was correct in all his teaching and practice. He carried with him Barnabas and also Titus who

was a full-blooded Gentile.

Paul, Barnabas, and their company journeyed through Phoenicia and Samaria, and they availed themselves of the opportunity to preach the gospel and to report the reception of the Gentiles to the brethren along the way. When they arrived in Jerusalem, they were well received of the church and the apostles and the elders.

(Acts 15:4.)

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 meeting was 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 the time—namely, James, Cephas, and John—and laid before them privately the gospel which he had preached to the Gentiles, lest by any means he "should be running. or had run in vain." Those apostles imparted nothing to Paul, and his companion. Titus, a Greek, was not for one moment regarded as needing to be circumcised. This fact spoke to the credit of Paul in the preaching which he had done in the churches of Galatia. Paul recited the matters, therefore, to show that his authority as an apostle was completely on a par with the original twelve, and also to point up the fact that the apostles in Jerusalem

had concurred with him in his preaching to the Gentiles.

Not one of the three apostles inferred for one moment that Titus, a Greek, should be circumcised, nor would Paul have stood for such, no not for an hour. On his second missionary journey, however, Paul caused Timothy to be circumcised. The Judaizing teachers pointed this fact up as being a great inconsistency in Paul; and many scholars, from time to time since, have contended that, in having Timothy circumcised, Paul was quite inconsistent with principle and practice.

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 necto 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 Christian-

ity.
The "false brethren" to whom Paul referred were those who had come into the church so as to spy out the liberty that the Christians enjoyed and to bring them under

the bondage of the law.

# The Outcome of the Conference (Gal. 2:5-10)

... 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. But from those who were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man's person) they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me: but contrariwise, when they saw that I had been intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision (for he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles); and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they

were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision; only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous

Those of repute-James, Cephas, and John—imparted nothing Paul, thereby testifying by their inability to so do that Paul, as an apostle, was every whit on a par them. Contrary to those men's having imparted additional inspiration to Paul, when they saw how that he had been intrusted with the gospel to the uncircumci-sion—the Gentiles—even as Peter sion—the Gentiles—even as Peter had been intrusted with the gospel of the circumcision—the fews—they gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that they should go unto the Gentiles. James, Cephas, and John would, at the same time, go unto the Jews. Peter's epistle to the Dispersion—in

Galatia, Cappadocia, Bithynia—reflects how Peter in a very significant way did go to those of the circumcision.

Paul emphasized that James, Cephas, and John were men of "repute and pillars." His chief intent in so doing was to show that his apostleship was on a par with theirs, and that, therefore, his authority was to be respected on a par with theirs.

Paul stated specifically that those pillars in the church at Jerusalem "imparted nothing to me . . . only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do." things are worthy of note just here:
(1) the term "poor" is generic, and while Christians are to do good especially to the household of the faith, they are also to do good to all men; and (2) Paul certainly dem-onstrated his interest in the poor by the bounty which he raised among the Gentile Christians for the poor in Judea.

### POSTED THESES

The Galatians are a striking case of how that Christians can fall from grace and be lost,

The case of the Galatians demonstrates the fact that "doctrine" does count, the anti-legalist to the contrary, notwithstanding.

There is a growing element or tendency among members of the churches of Christ to discount importance of doctrine. Love, is supplanting principles. The church, generally speaking, is on a dangerous course.

#### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

What is the title which scholars given the epistle to the Galatians? have How were the Galatians entangling them-selves in a yoke of bondage?

How did Paul brand the Galatians?

#### Annotated Historical Perspectives

When was the Jerusalem conference held? What was the purpose of the Jerusalem conference?

What conclusions were reached in the meeting as shown by James's of the meeting? summary

#### **Doctrinal Perspectives**

What four principles does the epistle to the Galatians emphasize?

What two things should these principles impress upon the Lord's disciples?

#### The Golden Text

What is the central theme of the epistle to the Galatians?

#### The Jerusalem Conference

What contact did Paul have, following his conversion, with the original twelve following apostles?

Under what motivation did Paul go to

What action of Paul's shows that ye was confident of his position as an apostle? How was Paul and his company received of the church in Jerusalem?

or the church in Jerusalem?

For what purpose did Paul meet with James, Cephas, and John after the first public meeting?

What was the outcome of Paul's meeting with the apostles?

What did the Judaizing teachers point up as an inconsistency in Paul?

Why was Paul in no way inconsistent?

Why was Paul in no way inconsistent?

# The Outcome of the Conference

In what way did James, Cephas. and John show that Paul, as an apostle, was on a par with them? What one request did the three men ask

of Paul? How did Paul fulfill this request?

#### Posted Theses

Of what principle are the Galatians striking case?

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# Lesson XI-June 13, 1976

# PURPOSE OF THE LAW OF MOSES

## Lesson Text Gal. 3:19-29

19 What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made; and it was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator.

20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one.

21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could make alive, verily righteousness would have been of the law.

22 But the scripture shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Ye are severed fro

unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

24 So that the law is become our tutor *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But now that faith is come, we

are no longer under a tutor.

26 For ye are all sons of God,

through faith, in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.

28 There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one *man* in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace." (Gal. 5:4.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Gal. 3:1-18.

# Daily Bible Readings

June 7. M	
June 8. T	Because of Transgressions (Gal. 3:16-19)
June 9. W	
June 10. T	
June11. F	
June 13. S	

TIME. - About A.D. 55-56.

PLACES.—Paul was in Macedonia when he wrote the churches of Galatia—Antioch of Pisidia; Iconium of Phrygia; Lystra and Derbe of Lycaonia; and Perga of Pamphylia.

Persons.—Paul and the saints of the churches of Galatia.

#### Introduction

The alert student will take note of the distinct connections between all of the lessons in this quarter of study. There are direct connections between the respective lessons from the book of Romans; there are also direct connections between the theme of Romans and the theme of Galatians; and there are also direct connections between the respective lessons from the book of Galatians.

In the book of Romans, Paul gave, so to speak, a treatise on the gospel of Christ versus the law of Moses. He differentiated between the law of Christ and the law of Moses. In the book of Galatians, he

deals with a problem which arose in the churches of Galatia because those Galatians had failed to differentiate between the law of Christ and the law of Moses.

The lessons from Galatians form connecting links, and the student who fails to observe those connecting links will not profit from the lessons to the degree that the more observant students will profit. Those of any class will do well to make a hurried review of the lesson topics for the entire quarter so as to be the more familiar with the thrust of the subject matter that is being studied.

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## ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

With the exceptions of Romans and Ephesians, Paul's letters and epistles dealt strictly with problems and emergencies . . . were not a systematic presentation of theology . . . . especially the case with the epistle to the Galatians . . . assumes the existence of God and his personal relation to men . . . makes no effort to prove his assumptions ... is a remarkable characteristic of the entire Bible . . . especially the first chapter of Genesis, relative to God as he ordered the creation . . . true relative to animal sacrifices for the temporary cleansing of sins . . . the actuality of God and matters pertaining thereto are taken for granted ... no man takes time in a letter or in a personal conversation to prove his existence . . his existence is self-evident . . . and certainly the existence of God is self-evident.

Relative to Paul's assumption of God, as per the Galatian epistle,

reference is made to the Father . . . indicating the personal aspect of God . . . mentions relationship of God to Christ . . . assumes the sovereignty of God . . seeks the favor of God, not men . . . God is not mocked, or is infallible . . initiated the salvation of man by sending Christ and the Holy Spirit . . believers are declared to be sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus ... chapters three and four constitute a doctrinal section . . . this is the heart of the book . . . the central question is a doctrinal one.

Paul argues from the point of personal experience . . . from the point of the Old Testament teaching . . . from the point of the superiority of Christ . . . from the point of the danger of observing days, and months, and seasons, and years . . . from the point of the danger of attitude with respect to authority . . . and from the point of a contrast of

bondage and liberty.

#### DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES

One significant statement in today's lesson has to do with the necessity of baptism. The statement reads: "For ye are all the sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ."

In the doctrinal perspectives for this quarter's study, the basic doctrines of the denominations have been defined, and emphasis has been placed upon the fact that while the various segments of the denominational world differ stringently on numerous doctrinal matters, they are generally agreed upon the following doctrines, namely:

1. That in conviction and conversion, the Holy Spirit operates upon the heart of the sinner separate and apart from the Word, thereby energizing the Word and bringing to life the sinner. The Calvinists contend that the operation of the Spirit cannot be resisted. The Arminians and the Smythites grant that the Spirit can be resisted.

2. That the sinner is saved by

faith only, or by faith alone.

3. That baptism is not a condition to salvation; but instead, it is a condition to church membership. This means, of course, that more is

required for church membership than is required for entrance into heaven.

Baptism is a condition of pardon to the alien sinner. True, baptism must have certain prerequisites—namely, faith, repentance, and the confession of faith—but the Word of God teaches unequivocally that the alien sinner *must* be baptized to be saved.

Baptism is a positive command, and positive commands test a person's faith and humility. A person may be ever so weak through the flesh and yet have the faith and humility to obey the terms of the gospel and also to expend great effort in overcoming the weakness of the flesh; whereas, another person may be ever so moral, outwardly speaking at least, and yet too faithless and too prideful to submit to the so called "foolishness" of baptism.

In order that the student may have in one single listing all those passages of scripture which state that baptism is a condition of pardon to the alien sinner, the following is submitted:

ing is submitted:
"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father

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and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28:19, 20.) "Go ye into all of the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." (Mark 16:15, 16.)

"And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins...

(Acts 2:38.)

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." (Acts 22:16.)

"And hé commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus

Christ." (Acts 10:48.)

". . . after a 'true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God." (1 Pet. 3:21.)

"Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6:4.)

". . . having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him

from the dead." (Col. 2:12.)

"For we are all the sons of God through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3:26, 27.)

"There is . . . one Lord, one faith,

one baptism." (Eph. 4:5.)

### The Golden Text

"Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace." (Gal. 5:4.)

The golden text means just what it says. Those who had accepted circumcision and the rites and customs of the law through the in-

fluence of the Judaizing teachers had been severed from Christ. They had fallen away from grace. They had done that which, according to the Calvinists, just cannot be done. Those who teach the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy have closed their eyes so that they cannot see.

## The Text Explained

# What Then Is the Law? (Gal. 3:19, 20)

What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made; and it was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one.

Paul had argued his case from the point of the Galatians personal experience. He asked those Galatians how they had received Spirit—the miraculous gifts whether by the work of the law, or hearing of faith?, the gospel. He then proceeded with an argument from the Old Testament teaching: "Know ye therefore that they that are of faith, the same are the sons of Abraham," he averred. (3:7.) His next argument turned on the question of the priority of promise. He said: "Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not. And to

seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." (3:16.) The law of Moses could not disannul that covenant made with

Abraham, he emphasized.

Contemplating the questions which build be raised by the Gawould latians, he asked: "What then is the law?" He meant by his question, "What was the function of the He answered the question by saying: "It [the law] was added because of transgressions, till [and here a limit was set] the seed [Christ] should come to whom the promise hath been made [Christ had been promised to Abraham and thus to the Israelites, and the law was added to train and fit them for his coming]; and it was ordained through angels by the hands of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one [does not represent just one party]; but God is one." God was one of the parties, the Israelites were the other party, and Moses was thus the mediator between God and the Israelites.

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# Is the Law Against the Promises of God?

(Gal. 3:21, 22)

Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could make alive, verily righteousness would have been of the law. But the scripture shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Paul anticipates the next question that will be asked: "Is the law against the promises of God?" He answers the question with strong emphasis: "God forbid," he said. He proceeds to state that the law could not make alive or fulfill the promise to Abraham, for righteousness would have been by the law, and those under the law would have earned their salvation; but though the promise could not be fulfilled by the law; nonetheless, it was not against or contrary to the promise. All men—both Jew and Gentile—were under sin, and thus shut up by that fact as the scripture had said. God provided, therefore, that both Jew and Gentile should enjoy the promise—salvation in Christ—on an equal basis, that basis being through faith in Jesus Christ.

# The Law Was Only a Tutor (Gal. 3:23-25)

But before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor.

Here Paul speaks of the case of the Israelites, including himself. Prior to the time that Christ came—that is, "before faith came"—the Israelites "were kept in ward," a legal term, meaning, the process of guarding, custody, protection of a minor, surveillance, "under the law." Moses had been the Israelites' leader, teacher, and law-giver. The law which he gave the people as it came from God served as a tutor to train and fit the people for the coming of Christ. The law together with God's punishments for the people's violation of that law, gradually over a long extended period

of time, brought forth a sufficient remnant who were adequately prepared to accept Christ. "In the fulness of the time," when sufficient preparation had been made, "God sent forth his son."

## The Prepared Remnant Put on Christ

(Gal. 3:26-29)

For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye are one man in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

The purpose of the law of Moses was to train and fit the Israelites for the reception of Christ, based of course, on their free will which is always a condition precedent with God.

Paul explains how that through faith the Israelites were made sons of God. They were baptized into Christ, and when they were baptized into Christ, and strictly not before, they put on Christ. How, in view of Paul's statement, may anyone rightfully assume that he can get into Christ and dwell in him without having been buried by baptism into him for the remission of sins? Satan is most delighted when he can, through his multitude of devices, lead people to regard one of God's positive commands as being only a mere rite, or a nonessential command

In Christ there is absolutely no distinction. There is no race distinction, for there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is no social distinction, for there is neither bond nor free; and there is neither bond nor free; and there is neither male nor female. Further, all, whether Jew and Greek, or bond and free, or male and female, get into Christ in exactly the same way. Through faith they are baptized into Christ and thereby they put on Christ. This fact is set forth by certainly and finality. Scriptural baptism is, therefore, imperative.

All Christians are one in Christ. They are the true children of Abraham. Abraham believed on the promises of God, and thereby he believed that through his seed, Christ, all the nations of the earth would be blessed. When men today believe on Christ and are baptized into him, they become the true children of Abraham—the true Israelites.

## POSTED THESES

Baptism is a condition of pardon to the alien sinner.

All spiritual blessings are in Christ Jesus. Baptism is the consummating step that puts one into Christ.

True, the word "baptism" is used, at times, in a metaphorical sense—that is in the sense of a figure of speech by which there is some resemblance or analogy or action belonging to or characteristic of one object assigned to another to which it is not literally applicable. The "baptism of the Holy Spirit," and

the "baptism of suffering" are classic examples. The "one baptism" of Ephesians 4:5 is, however, a literal baptism.

To baptize a person literally is to immerse him. The word "baptize" is from the Greek word baptizo, and means to immerse, to plunge, to dip, to submerge. The word baptizo was not translated from the Greek to the English; but instead, it was given an anglicized form and pronunciation—baptize—and brought forward into the English text.

## **Questions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

What are the direct connections between the theme of Romans and the theme of Galatians?

### Annotated Historical Perspectives

What is the assumption found in all of Paul's epistles?
What particular references to God are

made in the Galatian epistle?

## **Doctrinal Perspectives**

What are the three doctrinal matters upon which denominations are generally agreed?

What is baptism to the alien sinner?

What type command is the command to be baptized?

## What Then Is the Law?

What did Paul mean by his question, "What then is the law?"
How did he answer this question?

Is the Law Against the Promises of God?

Why could the law not make alive or fulfill the promise to Abraham?

#### The Law Was Only a Tutor

What was the purpose of the law as a tutor?

The Prepared Remnant Put on Christ

How were the Israelites made to be sons of God?
What is meant by the statement, "In

Christ there is absolutely no distinction"?

Who are the true Israelites?

#### Posted Theses

Discuss the meaning of the word "baptism"

# Lesson XII-June 20, 1976

# ALLEGORY OF THE TWO WOMEN

#### Lesson Text

Gal. 4:21-31

21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid,

and one by the freewoman.

23 Howbeit the *son* by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the soil by the freewoman *is born* through promise.

24 Which things contain an alle-

gory: for these *women* are two covenants; one from mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar.

25 Now this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is: for she is in bondage with her children.

26 But the Jerusalem that is above

is free, which is our mother.

27 For it is written,

Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not:

Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not:

For more are the children of the desolate than of her that hath the husband.

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.

29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that

was born after the Spirit, so also it is now.

30 Howbeit what saith the scripture? Cast out the handmaid and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman.

31 Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of a handmaid, but of the freewoman.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son." (Gal. 4:7.)

DEVOTIONAL READING. — Gal. 4:1-20.

# Daily Bible Readings

June	14.	M
June	15.	T Sarah, Abraham's Wife (Gen. 17:15-21)
Ĭune	16.	WHagar and Ishmael (Gen. 16:1-15)
Íune	17.	T Sarah, Mother of Isaac (Gen. 21:1-8)
Íune	18.	F Hagar and Ishmael Rejected (Gen. 17:22-27)
Íune	19.	S
		S Paul's Allegory of Sarah and Hagar (Gal. 4:21-31)

TIME. — About A.D. 55-56.

PLACES.—Paul was in Macedonia when he wrote the churches of Galatia—Antioch of Pisidia; Iconium of Phrygia; Lystra and Derbe of Lycaonia; and Perga of Pamphylia.

Persons.—Paul and the saints of the churches of Galatia.

## Introduction

Paul ends the doctrinal section of his epistle to the Galatians—chapters three and four—with the allegory of Hagar and Sarah. This was his final and concluding argument in his case for a system of faith versus the works of the law of Moses. The alternative for the Galatian Christians was a choice be-

tween two incompatible courses—a choice between freedom and bondage, or between life and death.

The allegory of Hagar and Sarah has its foundation in the history of Abraham, his two wives, and his two sons. This history is recorded in Genesis 16 and 21, especially 21:8-21.

#### ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

The Bible is the word of God communicated to man ... in the language of man ... and to the understanding of man ... expressed in the everyday terms of man ... no language of man is without its figures of speech ... is the means of conveying the unknown ... is a moving from the known to the unknown ... from the simple to the complex.

Paul used a number of figures of speech in the Galatian epistle . . . afford an insight into the background, mind and temperament of the author . . . Jesus drew illustrations from nature . . . James from an agricultural life . . . Paul's are drawn from institution of slavery, witchcraft, clothing, athletics, and

family. (1:10; 5:1, 13; 3:1; 3:27; 5:7; 6:10.)

Figures of speech used by Paul... the simile, a means of comparison by a simple statement: "Ye received me as an angel" (4:14) . . . the metaphor, a figure that expresses similitude by a single word: For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage" (5:1) . . . the metonymy, a trope, a figurative word in which one word is put for another: "But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (6:14) . . . the *synecdoche*, a figure of speech in which a part is put for a whole, and in which a whole is

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put for a part: "Straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood" (1:16) . . . the *hyperbole*, a figure of speech in which the expression is an exaggeration of a meaning intended to be conveyed: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach any gospel other than that we preached unto you, let him

be anathema" (1:8) . . . the *allegory*, a figurative application of historical or real facts, a continued series of metaphors, and it has the quality of suppressing all mention of the principal subject—the allegory of Hagar and Sarah (4:21-31) . . . and will be covered in today's lesson.

### DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES

In a prior lesson under the heading, "Doctrinal Perspectives," reference was made to the Sabbatarians and how that they contend that all Christians are under obligation to observe and keep holy the sabbath day—the fourth of the ten commandments. The doctrine of the Sabbatarians is a real menace to the teaching of the pure gospel of Christ. The doctrine of the necessity for the sabbath day worship is being promulgated by means of radio, television, and the printed page.

The lesson for last Sunday and the lesson for today turn again on how that the law of Moses has been abolished, which thereby denies and exposes the doctrine of the Sabbatarians. In their contention for the obligation of all Christians to keep holy the seventh day, the Sabba-

tarians aver:

 The word of God differentiates between the ten commandments and the law of Moses.

The ten commandments are the law of God, but that the remainder of the Old Testament is the law of Moses.

The law of God was written on tables of stone, but that the law of Moses was written in a

book.

4. The law of God was written by his own finger, but that the law of Moses was written by the fingers of Moses.

 The law of God was placed in the ark, but that the law of Moses was placed in the side of the ark.

6. The law of God is to continue forever, but the law of Moses

was done away.

The fallacy of the differentiation which the Sabbatarians make between the law of God and the law of Moses may be clearly seen by a statement from the apostle Paul. He wrote: "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven on

stones [observe: the law, or ministration, under consideration was the written on stones—the commandments], came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look stedfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his face [this has to be a reference to when Moses came down from the Mount with the ten commandments which had been written on two tables of stone by the finger of God (Ex. 31:18; 34:1-4, 27-35)]; which glory was passing away: how shall not rather the ministration of the spirit [the apostles' brining in of the new covenant] be with glory? For if the ministration of condemnation covenant containing the commandments] hath glory, much rather doth the ministration of righteousness [the new covenant sealed with the blood of Christ] exceed in glory [Paul argues from the less glory to the greater glory]. For verily that which hath been made glorious hath not been made glorious in this respect, by reason of the glory that surpasseth. For if that which passeth away was with glory [the law of Moses, including the ten commandments written on the two tables of stone, much more that which remaineth [the gospel, the glory of Christ] is in glory. . . (2 Cor. 3:7-11.) There can be no question, therefore, that the law of Moses, including the sabbath, has been abolished.

Now, the great moral principles contained in the ten commandments had been in existence prior to the giving of the law at Mount Sinai, and they were written down in the law of Moses. Those moral principles have been incorporated into the law of Christ, but after a higher order of things. Jesus taught: "It was said, but I say. . . ." In short, the moral principles of the law of Moses are binding because they have always been right, and they are set forth in the New Testament

in their highest form. The command to keep the sabbath day holy

is not one of those continuing moral principles.

## The Golden Text

"Thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son." (Gal. 4:7.)

The Israelites had been in bondage under the law, and the Gentiles had been in bondage to the weak and beggarly rudiments of the world. Since Christ came, both Iew and Gentile who believed on

Christ and were baptized into him were no longer bondservants. Instead, they were sons, and as sons they were heirs of God. They had been redeemed and pardoned. This is the summary, so to speak, of that which had gone before in chapters three and four.

# The Text Explained

# The Allegory of Hagar and Sarah (Gal. 4:21-24)

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid, and one by the freewoman. Howbeit the son by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the son by the freewoman is born through promise. Which things contain an allegory; for these women are two covenants; one from mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage which is Hagar.

The Galatians were eagerly returning to the law, and Paul asked: "Do ye not hear the law?" Then he proceeded to introduce the case of Hagar and Sarah and their two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael was born after the flesh—that is, he came into the world through the usual course of nature, but Isaac was a child of promise. His mother, Sarah, was ninety years of age and his father, Abraham, was one hundred years of age when he was conceived. Ishmael was the son of a bondwoman, but Isaac was the son of a freewoman. In short, Ishmael was a slave; whereas, Isaac was freeborn, and an heir of his father's possessions.

While Paul was reciting a case of literal history, that history had been divinely designed to contain an allegory, and the allegory contained a number of important lessons. As pointed out in the "Annotated Historical Perspective," an al-

legory is a figurative application of historical and/or real facts. It is a continued series of metaphors, and a metaphor is a figure of speech that expresses similitude by a single word—such as "Herod is a fox." The allegory has the quality of suppressing all mention of the principal subject.

Hagar represents the old covenant given at Mount Sinai, and the old covenant, like Hagar, bore children under bondage—children that were slaves, in fact. Sarah represents the new covenant given at Jerusalem, and the new covenant, like Sarah, brings forth only freeborn children.

# Mount Sinai and the Jerusalem Above

(Gal. 3:25, 26)

Now this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is: for she is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother.

Paul proceeds to contrast Mount Sinai in Arabia with the Jerusalem which is above. Hagar represents Mount Sinai in Arabia which answered to the Jerusalem and bondage that was then in existence, but Sarah represented the Jerusalem which is above, which is free, and which is the mother of all Christians whether Jews or Gentiles. The chart which follows reflects the details and the lessons contained in the allegory.

# The Allegory of Hagar and Sarah

(Gal. 4:21-31)

### Two Women

Hagar—A handmaid Sarah—A freewoman

### Two Covenants

Old Covenant—bondage New Covenant—freedom

# Two Sons Ishmael—Natural

Ishmael—Natural birth Isaac—Birth of Promise

# Two Churches

Jewish Church—Natural birth New Testament Church—Spiritual birth

#### Two Social Ranks

Ishmael—Domestic bondage Isaac—Domestic freedom

### Two Spiritual Ranks

Jewish Church—legal bondage New Testament Church—Spiritual liberty

# Two Different Characters Ishmael—A persecutor

Isaac—The persecuted

## Two Different Spirits

Jewish Church—A Persecutor The Church—The persecuted

# Two Physical Inheritances

Ishmael—A slave's portion, bottle of water and loaf of bread.

Isaac—A prince's portion, all of Abraham's possessions.

# Two Spiritual Inheritances

Jewish Church—Gospel of temporal and national promises.

New Testament Church—Gospel of spiritual and eternal promises.

# Abraham Commanded "Cast Out"

Cast out Hagar and Ishmael.

Son of handmaid shall not inherit with son of freewoman.

## Believer's Commanded "Cast Out"

Cast out old covenant and Jewish Church.

Son of flesh shall not inherit with Son of the Spirit—children of flesh are not heirs.

# The Outcome of the Dispute Between Hagar and Sarah

Abraham loved Ishmael. When he was informed that Sarah, at the age of ninety, would bear a son, he said: "Oh that Ishmael might live before thee." (Gen. 17:18.) When Sarah demanded that Hagar and Ishmael be cast out of the household, Abraham was very grieved on account of Ishmael, but Jehovah said: "Hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called." (Gen. 21:9-12.)

Ishmael had persecuted or tantalittle Isaac. This was much for Sarah, and she demanded that both Hagar and Ishmael be cast out. The matter of inheritance weighed heavy on Sarah's mind for she said that the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son the freewoman. The conclusion of the matter was that the Galatians were children of the freeshould. woman. They therefore. cast out the old covenant.

### POSTED THESES

There is no moral principle involved in the seventh day observance. It has not been incorporated into the law of Christ. It should not, therefore, be observed today.

which worship includes the observance of the Lord's supper.

from

the

grave

The Lord's day, the first day of the week, is the day on which Christians are to meet for worship.

Questions for Discussion

Christ arose

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

#### Introduction

What did Paul use as his final and concluding argument in his case for a sysday of the week is, therefore, the greatest day in all the annals of history.

iscussion

tem of faith versus the works of the

the first day of the week. The first

law?
What was the choice the Galatians had to make?

#### Annotated Historical Perspectives

From what areas of life did Paul draw his figures of speech?

That are the figures of speech used by Paul? What What is an allegory?

## **Doctrinal Perspectives**

five things do the Sabbatarians in their contention for Christians What aver in

to keep holy the seventh day?
What statement of Paul shows the fallacy
of the differentiation which the Sabbatarians make between the law of God

and the law of Moses?

Thy are the moral principles of the law of Moses binding on us today?

#### The Golden Text

How had the Galatians become God?

The Allegory of Hagar and Sarah That does Hagar represent in the allegory? What What does Sarah represent?

What kind of children did the old covenant bring forth?

What kind of children did the new covenant bring forth?

Mount Sinai and the Jerusalem Above

Hagar and Sarah as Mount Sinai What comparison Paul make in represented as they the Jerusalem is above?

The Allegory of Hagar and Sarah

What were the two people represented by the two sons?

sented by Ishmael and Isaac? hat was represent What was represented by the casting out

of Hagar and Ishmael?

The Outcome of the Dispute Between Hagar and Sarah

What was the conclusion of the matter as far as the Galatians were concerned? What were they to cast out?

# Lesson XIII – June 27, 1976

# GLORYING IN THE CROSS

# Lesson Text Gal. 6:6-16

6 But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.

9 And let us not be weary in welldoing: for in due season we shall

reap, if we faint not.

10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith.

11 See with how large letters I write unto you with mine own hand.

12 As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

13 For not even they who receive circumcision do themselves keep the law; but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

14 But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

16 And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus." (Gal. 6:17.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Gal. 6:1-5.

# Daily Bible Readings

	,
June 21. M	Fulfilling the Law of Christ (Gal. 6: 1-10)
June 22 T	Helping Others (Acts 9:36-43)
June 23. W	The Holy One of Israel (Isa. 60:9-14)
June 24. T	The Israel of God (Phil. 3:1-7)
Íune 25. F	
June 26. S	
June 27. S	Hope in Christ (Phil. 3:8-16)

TIME. - About A.D. 55-56.

PLACES.—Paul was in Macedonia when he wrote the churches of

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Galatia—Antioch of Pisidia; Iconium of Phrygia; Lystra and Derbe of Lycaonia; and Perga of Pamphylia.

Persons.—Paul and the saints of the churches of Galatia.

#### Introduction

Today's lesson brings to a close a thirteen-weeks study in the area of doctrine wherein, by treatise and by the handling of emergency problems, the apostle Paul shows how that justification is obtainable, not through the law of Moses, but only by the means of the gospel of Christ. As has been indicated as space and time allow, numerous false doctrines of Christendom arise from the inaccurate interpretations that have been made of certain sections of the epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians.

Christians should be impressed with the fact, by the lessons studied, that "doctrine" does count. They should also be impressed with their need, as promulgators of the gospel, to know the conditions and historical circumstances that have called forth the inaccurate interpretations of the sections to which reference has been made. They should be impressed with their need to know the doctrines and how to answer them, else how can they reach those of the denominational world who have been so long committed thereto?

That this quarter's study should close with the lesson entitled, "Glorying in the Cross," is fitting, as has been the connecting links between all of the lessons for this study. The only "glorying" that any Christian can afford to do is in the cross of

Christ.

## ANNOTATED HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

"And God said, Let the earth put forth grass, herbs yielding seed, and fruit-trees bearing fruit after their kind. . . Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind. . . While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." (Gen. 1:11, 24; 8:22.) . . Herein lies God's law of identical harvest. . will hold while the earth remaineth . . seed corn produces identical corn . . . the beasts of the earth produce after their kind . . identical kind, that is . . men are not so foolish as to expect figs from thistles or grapes from thorns.

In the social and spiritual affairs of man, there is an identical harvest ... in social and spiritual matters, there are only two kinds of seed—one good, the other evil . . . the harvest is always a multiplication of the identical seed . . . flesh bears spores of its own corruption . . . death ensues . . . fruit of the Spirit bears character over which spiritual death cannot prevail.

Flesh-minded man sows only by himself and for himself. . . . Spiritminded man sows with mutuality ... sows self . . . gives self for others . . . sows faith, hope, love . . . that which he can take with him when he dies.

## **DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES**

Paul wrote: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." While Paul had in mind specifically the matter of the Galatians' communicating their material things to their teachers who had communicated to them their spiritual things; nonetheless, he stated a universal principle. Jesus said: "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned . . . give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give unto your bosom. For

with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." The author of Hebrews wrote: "For if the word spoken through angels proved stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto them that heard." (Gal. 6:7; Luke 6:37, 38; Heb. 2:2, 3.)

King Saul is a classic example of a man who sowed to the flesh. He had begun his reign as king under

very promising circumstances.

There was much beauty in him that the people should desire him. He was a man above men—tall, strong, brave, handsome, majestic in countenance, graceful in action, and stately in demeanor. He was unassuming, humble, modest, and naturally retiring, but—alas!—in the end of his reign he was self-centered, self-willed, self-exalted, and self-righteous. On the field of battle he died at the hands of the Philistines and in dishonor before God who chose him to be king. The satire of Saul's inglorious death was extenuated by his having died in his regal dress and royal turban and bracelets of splendor which he wore continually—even in battle! (2 Sam. 1:10.) Unfortunate as the case was, the prestige-struck and power-mad king of Israel was dead as a direct result of his having sown to the ambitions and desires of the flesh.

King David is another classic example of a man who sowed to the flesh. He began as the sweet singer of Israel and the man after God's own heart, but he 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, dastardly—adultery and then murder! True enough, David genuinely repented, and God forgave him, but David still reaped a harvest from the seed that he had

sown. In the context of David's sowing—that is, to adultery and murder—Nathan the prophet said: "Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house." (2 Sam. 12:10.) The finality and certainty of Nathan's statement is reflected in the tragedies which fell upon David and those of his immediate family, namely:

- Amnon, a son of David, committed adultery with Tamar, his half-sister and the full sister of Absalom.
- 2. Absalom, in turn, caused his servants to murder Amnon.
- B. Absalom, in further time, rebelled against his father David, set himself up as king in Hebron, put his father to flight, and took his father's concubines and went in unto them under a tent spread on the top of the king's palace and thus in the open sight of all the people of Israel.

 Absalom died at the hands of David's army—at the hands of those who were loyal to

David.

- Adonijah, another son of David, seized the throne when David was old and ill.
- Solomon, still another son of David, was actually made king, and in time he commanded Benaiah to slay Adonijah.

### The Golden Text

"I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus." (Gal. 6:17.)

The apostle Paul had sown to the Spirit. He had literally given himself for the cause of Christ and the salvation of sinners. He bore scars on his body that had been branded by the persecutions which he had endured. When defending himself against the false teachers who had

come to Corinth, Paul described some of his persecutions. He wrote: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned." (2 Cor. 11:24, 25.) Paul's scars were honorable. He had suffered for the right master, for the right cause, and in the right spirit.

# The Text Explained

The Principle of Mutuality (Gal. 6:6)

But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that

teacheth in all good things.

Paul did not accept financial support from the church at Corinth. He worked at his trade and accepted wages from other churches in order that he and his companions might have a livelihood. There were quacks, and sorcerers, and mountebanks who plied their trades for a price, especially in Corinth which was the crossroads of eastern and western civilization. Paul was determined that he would avoid the charge of his having preached the gospel for money. He recognized, however, that there was a principle

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of mutuality that must be maintained if saints were to grow spiritually and if men were to be free to devote their full time to the ministry. Even to the Corinthian Christians, from whom he refused to take "What soldier wages, he wrote: "What soldier ever serveth at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Do I speak the things after the manner of men? or saith not the law also the same? For it is written in the law Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. 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. 9:7-10.)

Within the context of the princi-ple of mutuality, Paul wrote the Galatians: "But let him that taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." The word "communicate" means to convey, to impart, to share. The "in all good things" is not limited to material things, but it includes such material things as food, clothing, shelter, and other such material necessities of life. The principle of mutuality includes the obligation of the faught to share with their teacher their

material possessions.

## The Principle of Sowing and Reaping (Gal. 6:7, 8)

Be not deceived; God is mocked: for whatsoever а man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit

shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.

Paul urged: "Be not deceived." He meant that those Galatians would deceiving themselves if thought that they could sow one thing and reap another. Herein lies the principle of identical harvest.
"Let all beware," Paul was saying,
"God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Seed corn produces corn, and men are not so foolish as to expect to gather figs from thistles or grapes from thorns. The harvest is

always a multiplication of the identical seed that was sown. To the extent that a person sows, to that extent he will reap. If a man soweth sparingly—in good works, par-ticularly giving—he shall reap also sparingly; whereas if he soweth bountifully, he shall reap bountifully.

"He tȟat soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." To sow to the flesh is to gratify the lust and craving desires for the sensual; it is to satisfy the lust for wealth and possessions; and it is to seek after the lust for the prestige, power, and vainglory of this life. Such sowing to the flesh bears and gives off a multitude of spores of corruption-and death with certainty and finality ensues.

"He that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." To sow to the Spirit is to live a God-fearing, faithful, and dedicated life. It is to live an unselfish life—a life for others and for God. The person who sows to the Spirit expends his abilities, his time, and his possessions in behalf of the sick, the poor, the orphans, and the widows, and also in the proclamation of the gospel of Christ. For such a person there will be eternal life.

The Principle of the Certainty of a Harvest

(Gal. 6:9, 10)

And let us not be weary in welldoing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially them that are of the household of the faith.

farmer does not begin gather his crop the day after he has sown his grain. Time is required for the proper cultivation, and time is required for growth; and just so, the person who sows to righteousness does not reap a harvest immediately, nor does the person who sows to the flesh reap a full harvest of corruption immediately, for that matter. Countless as the stars are, as many have been the times when righteous men have asked, "Why do the unrighteous prosper?" Why has my righteousness and dedication brought me no relief from my trials and burdens of life?

Within this frame of reference, and as a source of encouragement June 27, 1976

to the Galatians, Paul said: "And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season [or in contempla-tion of the fact of the necessary elapse of time between the seedtime and the harvest] we [Paul includes himself] chall roap if we faint himself] shall reap, if we faint not." The point is that though there is necessary delay; reaping, nonetheless, is certain. Reaping will be regulated by the quality and quantity of the seed sown; and while the whole crop may not come to ripeness for full harvest in this life, it will of a surety come fully into its own at the end of this life. There is, however, a danger that those who sow to righteousness will relax their efforts through trials discouragements, particularly when they see how that the unrighteous often prosper in this life. Paul added, therefore, the condition, "if we faint not."

In view of the fact and certainty of the harvest, Paul urged: "So then, as we have opportunity [or as opportunities open up] let us work that which is good toward all men [as did the good Samaritan], and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith." While Paul's instructions in this lesson are not necessarily confined to material matters, the overtones of this lesson turn on material things—like food, clothing, and shelter. "Charity begins at home," is an old adage, but it is a scriptural one. When Paul wrote Timothy concerning certain problems he said: "If any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." (1 Tim. 5:8.) The principle that applies to a man's own household also applies to those who make up the church. Christians are obligated to take thought for the material and financial needs of all men and they are especially obligated. men. and they are especially obligated to take thought for the material and financial needs of those of the church.

#### The Conclusion

Paul has now come to the end of his epistle, and so at this point, he takes the pen from the hand of his amanuensis—or secretary—perhaps to show the genuineness of the epistle. He writes with large sprawling letters, which some account for on the basis that his

"thorn in the flesh" was his weak

evesight.

In his concluding and personal handwriting, he returns to the subject of the Judaizing teachers with the warning: "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh [the Judaizing teachers were ambitious to report long lists of Gentiles who had submitted to circumcision, and lot these who are everly ambitious let those who are overly ambitious to report 'responses' beware], they compel [they were demanding, but had not fully succeeded] you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ [ in short, the Gentiles cared not for circumcision and thought it to be a disfiguring custom, and their primary reason for submitting would be to take away the whole sting of the cross]. For not even they who receive circumcision [the especially the Judaizing Jews, themselves teachers] do keep law [theirs was a zeal for circumcision; not a zeal for the practice of the moral principles incorporated into the law, and they thereby were guilty of hypocrisy and insincerity]; but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh." That is, through the circumcision of the Gentiles, those Judaizing teachers could boast of their statistics wherein such and such numbers of Gentiles were circumcised in one year. "But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross [converse to the Judaizers' glorying and boasting over the statistics of how many Gentiles had been circumcised, a gospel preacher with an unhealthy spiritual attitude could have gloried and boasted over his statistics of how many Jews he had baptized into Christ, but not so with Paul, for he would only glory in the group of Christal of our Joyd in the cross of Christ] of our Lord Christ, through which world has been crucified unto me [that is, through the fact and message of the cross, Paul lost all his prior interest in the affairs of this evil world, for he had been crucified with Christ], and I unto the world [that is, the cross separated between two worlds, or two orders of society—the church, including Paul on one side, and the world on the other]. For neither is circumcision anything [that is, it was a matter of indifferencel, nor uncircumcision

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[it too, was a matter of indifference], but a new creature." The matter that really counted was whether or not a person had been baptized into Christ and was thus in Christ. "And as many as shall walk by this rule [the rule that governs all who are in Christ],

peace be upon them, and mercy [this was Paul's desire and earnest prayer], and upon the Israel of God." That is, those who become new creatures and walk by the Spirit's rule of conduct are true Israelites upon whom Paul had invoked God's blessing.

#### POSTED THESES

Christians should beware lest they glory in their number of responses, in their buildings, in their attendance, and in their contributions, rather than in the cross of Christ.

The principle of mutuality is so violated today by the rank and file of brethren of the local churches that the preachers throughout the brotherhood, generally speaking, are an insecure, threatened, and an

unhappy lot. \* \*\*

The saints of Paul's day, in the main, showed no fair appreciation for his labors and sacrifices, and the same spirit sometimes tends to prevail today.

The church of the Lord today, generally speaking, is too worldly and materialistic. It is characterized by a soft doctrine, and a soft way of life.

### **Questions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

With what should Christians have been impressed by this quarter's lessons?

#### Annotated Historical Perspectives

What law of God lies in Genesis 1:11, 13 and 8:22?

What kind of harvest does man reap in his social and spiritual affairs?

#### **Doctrinal Perspectives**

What did Paul have in mind when he wrote, "Be not deceived . . . for what-soever a man soweth that shall he also rean"?

In what ways did King Saul sow to the flesh?

What are the six tragedies which befell the household of David as results of his sowing to the flesh?

#### The Golden Text

Why were the scars, which Paul bore, honorable ones?

#### The Principle of Mutuality

What was Paul's reason for not accepting financial support from the church at Corinth?

What is the principle of mutuality?

In what way were the Galatians instructed to use this principle of mutuality?

The Principle of Sowing and Reaping
What did Paul mean when he urged the
Galatians, "Be not deceived . . . "?

In what way could the Galatians have been deceived in their sowing and reaping? What is the principle of identical har-

wnat is the principle of identical harvest?
What does it mean to sow to the flesh?

What is the harvest?
What does it mean to sow to the Spirit?

What is the harvest?

## The Principle of the Certainty of a Harvest

What questions are often asked by righteous men concerning the reaping of what has been sown?

What principle does "in due seasor point out?

By what is the harvest regulated?

What condition did Paul place upon our reaping for our "well-doing"?

What is a danger which those who sow righteousness are faced with?

What is our obligation in working that which is good toward all men? Toward those of the household of the faith?

#### The Conclusion

What was the ambition of the Judaizing teachers in compelling the Gentiles to be circumcised?

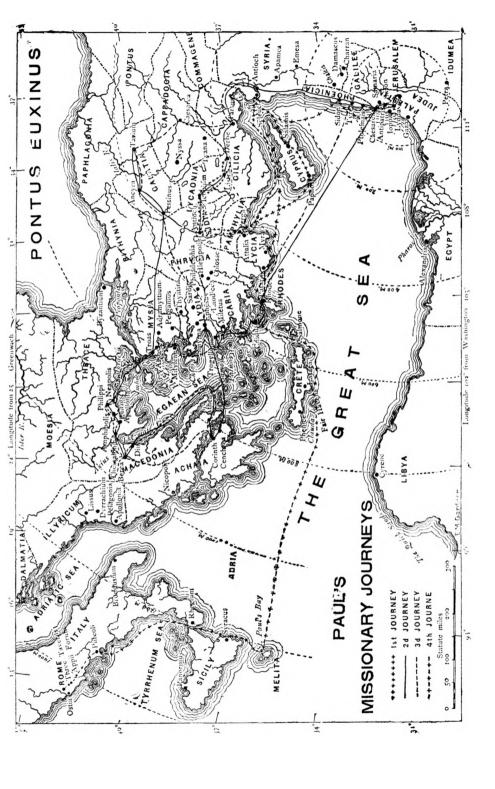
Over what could a gospel preacher with an unhealthy spiritual attitude have gloried?

In what, only, did Paul glory?
How had the world been crucified unto
Paul and Paul unto the world?

What matter counted with Paul above circumcision or uncircumcision?

#### Posted Theses

In what ways is the principle of mutuality violated in the church today?



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## THIRD OUARTER

## CHURCH PROBLEMS AND THEIR SOLUTION (Studies in First and Second Corinthians)

AIM.—To study church problems, common to every age, dealt with Paul's letters to the church in Corinth, and to note their solution by the inspired apostle.

## Lesson I-July 4, 1976

## DIVISION IN THE CHURCH IN CORINTH

### Lesson Text

1 Cor. 1:10-17; 3:1-5

10 Now I beseech vou, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11 For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them that are of the household of there are contentions Chloe, that

among you.
12 Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apóllos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, save Crispus and Gaius;

15 Lest any man should say that ye were baptizéd into my name.

16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know

not whether I baptized any other.

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void.

1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ.

2 I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it: nay, not even now are ye

able:

3 For ye are vet carnal: whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men?

4 For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos;

are ye not men?

5' What then is Apollos? and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him.

Devotional Reading.—1 Cor. 3:6-15. GOLDEN TEXT.—"Is Christ divided?" (1 Cor. 1:13.)

## Daily Bible Readings

June 28. M	Division Fatal to Success (Mark 3:23-27)
June 29. T	
June 30. W	Maintaining Brotherhood Unity (Eph. 4:1-6)
July 1. T	Example of Christian Brotherhood (Phile. 4-29)
July 2. F	The Church a United Body (1 Cor. 12:12-31)
Iuly 3. S	Paul's Visit to Corinth (Acts 18:1-4)
Iulv 4. S	

TIME.—Written in the spring of either A.D. 54 or 55.

PLACE.—Paul wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

Persons.—Paul and the saints in Corinth.

#### Foreword

quarter's The lessons for study are taken from Paul's two epistles to the church at Corinth—

Second First and Corinthians. There is a considerable among some brethren for relevant

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preaching, for relevant class study, and for relevant participation in socommunity, and political af-While a defensible might be established from time to time for a more relevant approach in keeping with the true needs of a particular church, one thing is certain: Paul's letters to the church at Corinth are just as relevant for the churches of Christ today as they were when they were first written. In fact, if Paul were on earth now and should write to a church, or churches, he could not deal with matters more relevant than those specifically set forth in his two letters to the Corinthians.

Paul's letters to the Corinthians, and especially his first, dealt with problems in the church—the very problems, in fact, that plague the church today. The first letter dealt with the problem of division; the problem of worldly wisdom, and general pettiness (1:10-4:21); problem of immorality and the obligation to maintain discipline

the problem of law suits (5:1-13);between brethren (6:1-11); problem of the proper use of the physical body (6:12-20); the problem of marriage, divorce, and remarriage (7:1-40); the problem of the use and abuse of Christian freedom (8:1-13); the problem of the church's obligation for the financial support of its teachers (9:1-14); the problem of total commitment and dedication (9:15-17); the problem of fellowship with evil problem (10:18-11:1); the abuses in the worship—women with uncovered heads, abuse of the love feast which left the Corinthians in no position to properly and discerningly partake of the Lord's supper, the use and abuse of spiritual gifts, women speaking in the public assembly (11:2-14:39); the problem of the denial of the resurrection of the physical bodies of all who have died (15:1-58); and the problem of the saints' laying by in store as they had been prospered (16:1-14).

#### THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY S LESSON

The problem of contentions and divisions, as per this lesson, division in the church as in Corinth, is ever a recurring problem. Alas! How that the work of the Lord has been hindered and handicapped as a result of division is a sad matter to contemplate. While a individual to the contemplate while a individual to the contemplate while a individual to the contemplate while a individual to the contemplate. While inadvertent contemplate. misunderstandings are sometimes the cause of division, real and lasting division comes as a result of sin.

Much of the division within the respective churches turns on jealousy, gossip, and pettiness. Other causes of division include idolatry, as in the case with Israel; pride, as in the case of Solomon; selfishness and ruthlessness, as in the case of Rehoboam; unholy ambitions, as in the case of Jeroboam; personal grudges, as in the case of Ahithophel; and want of respect for the word of God, as in the case of both the Levels and the Creeks the Jews and the Greeks.

The evils of division are enormous and far reaching in evil consequences. The influence and evils division cannot be contained, generally speaking, within a single generation. Many divisions—such as the division of Israel-have been carried forth for centuries. The enumeration of all of the evils of division would be too numerous for one lesson, but such a list or enumeration would necessarily include the following:

1. Division is unpleasant.

Division is a strong deterrent to church progress growth.

Division leads to other sins—

in fact, to sins of all sorts.

Division has an evil and devastating influence on "babes in Christ.

Division drives the Spirit of Christ out of the church.

Unity of brethren is very desirable and it is possible, but only upon certain basic principles, namely:

Unity is possible when it is

sincerely desired.

Unity is possible when the word of God is resorted to as only and all-sufficient guide.

Unity is possible when those who have sinned repent and make restitution, so far as is possible, for their sins. While others should have a forgiving attitude, there can be no real forgiveness and true and full correction short of repentance. No person in reality can re-ceive forgiveness of a sin for which he has not repented.

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#### The Golden Text

Christ divided?" Cor. "Is (1 1:13.)

Paul wrote the Ephesians that "there is one body." (Eph. 4:4.) Paul's metaphor of "the one body" that is graphic and quite striking. The church is the spiritual body of When Christ. divides the one he divides Christ's body. church, He who, through sin, divides the church is guilty of a greater sin who pierced the soldier Christ's physical body.

There is, however, a caution to be raised just here. There is a difference in dividing the church through sin and in dividing it in defense of truth. Jesus said: "Think not that I came to send peace [that is, peace

only] on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." (Matt. Paul charged the saints at Rome: "Now I beseech you, breth-ren, mark them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye Iearneď: and turn away from them." (Rom. 16:17.) In the need and desire for unity should not be pleaded as a defense for a failure to stand against sin or for truth. The physician often cuts in heal. Many order to ungodly things in the church are often allowed to go uncorrected under the pretense of an obligation to maintain unity. There can be, however, no real unity where sin and evil continue to exist.

## The Text Explained

## **Unity Among Brethren** (1 Cor. 1:10-12)

"I beseech you . . ." The word beseech" is a strong word. It means to implore, to make supplication; it means to beg. This was Paul's tender manner of appeal and admonition to the Corinthians in their state of dissension.

"Brethren . . Though the Corinthian church was by race predominantly Gentile, and Paul was by race a Jew, they were all brethspiritually speaking-thus his

affectionate address.

"Through the name of our Lord sus Christ . . " Here lies the Iesus Christ . basis of Paul's admonition. Christ was Paul's Lord, he was the Lord of the Jews, and he was also the Lord of all the Corinthians. Paul, therefore, reminded the Corinthians that he and they were all subject to that common lordship—the lordship of Christ.

"That ye all speak the same thing ." The Corinthians could speak the same thing, but only if they spoke that which the Holy Spirit had instructed them. Brethren can speak the same thing today on the same basis.

"And that there be?io division among you . . " The church at Corinth was divided into parties and factions over a number of matincluding preachers. There was the Paulite party, the Apollos-ite party, the Cephasite party, and those who said, "I am of Christ."

Corinth was very much like many

churches of Christ today.

"But that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment . . Internal dissensions existed, and those dissensions were wrong—sinful, in fact. Paul pleaded, therefore, for restorative action. He would have them to be of the same mind and judgment -that is, of the same frame of mind and the same opinion.

"For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them that are of the household of that there are contentions you." Paul disclosed the Chloe, among source of his information. He had received word of the situation in church at Corinth through members of the household of Chloe. Paul was at the time in Ephesus. A reasonable assumption is that Chloe was a concerned Christian of the church at Corinth; that members of her household were also Christians; and that either she had visited them at Ephesus or that they had visited her at Corinth. Paul showed imitable straightforwardness in identifying his source of information.

"Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ." The "each one of you" does not mean that there were no exceptions—Chloe must have an exception—but it does mean that tb" rivalry and contentions were

widespread.

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Except for differences in personality and methods of preaching, there was no difference in Paul's teaching and in Apollos' teaching. Paul's statement at the close of this same epistle concerning Apollos shows that they held each other in high esteem. The statement reads: "But as touching Apollos the brother, I besought him much to come unto you with the brethren: and it was not at all his will to come now; but he will come when he shall have opportunity." (16:12.)

As for the Cephasite party, Cephas or Peter may be shall his will to come when he shall have opportunity."

phas or Peter may have visited Corinth; but on the other hand, Christians formerly under his instruction in some other city may have migrated to Corinth. Peter was one of the original twelve; and he was an older man than Paul. He definitely showed himself to be more ready to conform to those Jewish customs which were not in direct violation to the basic truth of the gospel than did Paul. (Gal. therefore, some difference of emphasis in Peter's preaching in contrast to Paul's preaching; but Peter and Paul were preaching the same gospel.

As for those who said, "I am of Christ," nothing is known for sure, except that the party fell under the same censure as the other three parties. The likelihood is that certain ones who prided themselves on their spirituality declared themselves to be followers only of Christ; and through their spirit of self-righteousness they became a party by refusing to have fellowship with the other parties.

## **Factions in The Church** (1 Cor. 1:13-17)

"Is Christ divided? teas Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" One means of giving emphasis to a subject is by asking questions. Thus, Paul expressed his strong indignation over the prevalent quarrelings and dissensions with a series of rhetorical questions—questions that carried their own answers.

No, Christ had not been divided up or parcelled out. Such was utterly impossible. Christ was and is one: further, the church, which is

his body, must be one.

No, again. Paul had not been cru-

cified for them. The thought was ridiculous, and this was Paul's way of emphasizing the significance and

singularity of the cross of Christ.

No, still further, the Corinthians had not been baptized into the name of Paul. They had been baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. They had been baptized into Christ, and into the death of Christ, and they had been made free from sin by their having come into contact with the cleansing power of the blood through their having been baptized into the death of Christ, where the blood was applied.

"I thank God that I baptized none of you, save Crispus and Gaius; lest any man should say that ye were baptized into my name. And, I baptized also the household of Stebesides. I know vhanas:

whether I baptized any other."

Paul preached; but for the most part, others did the baptizing. This is often the practice among churches today. Under the prevailing circumstances of the four parties in the Corinthian church, Paul was glad that others had done the baptizing. He was strongly and devoutly opposed to the parties; and since he had baptized only a few, the majority of the Paulite party could not boast of their having been baptized by him.

Paul did not remember whether or not he had baptized others than those that he mentioned. The principle involved here is that while the Holy Spirit revealed to Paul all truth relative to the salvation of man, and that under all circumstances; yet the Spirit did not make known matters of indifference or of known matters of indifference or of no consequence to man's salvation.

"For Christ sent me not to bap-tize, but to preach the gospel." The statement has been seized upon and violated by those who contend that baptism is a mere rite. preaching of the gospel came first, and then baptism. Paul was not sent to baptize only, but to first preach the gospel. There were others who could easily attend to the baptizing. Paul's first and foremost obligation was to preach the gospel, which preaching would necessarily include baptism.

"Not ill wisdom of words, lest the

cross of Christ should be made

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void:" As might be expected, certain ones of the Greeks were placing a high priority on those who who spoke the gospel in terms of Grecian rhetoric, eloquence, and attendant references to philosophy. Paul insisted that "wisdom of words" was not a part of the gospel and that such words tended to draw men to the preacher rather than to the cross of Christ. Paul's point of emphasis is as pertinent and timely today as it was then.

## "Ye Are Yet Carnal" (1 Cor. 3:1-5)

"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 yet able to bear it; nay, not even now are ye

With the affectionate term "breth-ren," Paul proceeds to set forth the conditions which prevailed among the Corinthians when he They were then carnal, or inevitably they were babes in Christ. This was all that could be expected of them at the time. In keeping with the qualities of a wise teacher, Paul fed them with the mill of the reader. fed them with the milk of the word and not meat. As babes in Christ they were not able to partake of meat—the spiritual meat of word. Paul did not, therefore, force upon them that food which was beyond their spiritual capacity to digesť.

There is, however, a strong rebuke in Paul's statement: "Nay, not even now are ye able." More than five years had intervened since Paul had first preached the gospel to Sufficient time had passed for them to have grown into strong,

teachers. They were like mature those described in the Hebrew epistle, who, "when by reason of time" should have been teachers, yet they had need again to be taught "the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God." (Heb. 5:12.)

ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men? For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not men? What then is Apollos? and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him."

Paul here issues those Corinblistering indictment. thians a They were carnal, men who had had time to grow to spiritual maturity, but they had not grown, they were dwarfed. They were men who had walked after the flesh rather than after the Spirit. Their jealousy and strife, their emulations and squabblings, their self assertions spirited rivalries, were prima facie evidence of their carnality.

Paul selects only two of the four contending parties as an illustration —those who said they were of Paul and those who said they were of Apollos. Paul and Apollos were especially close; and of a certainty, if Paul put those two parties under his strong censure, then the other two parties, without saying, also under that strong censure.

What then was Apollos and what was Paul? The "what" directs attention to the functions of those two men, and away from their persons. They were only lowly servants of God. They could work and perform only as the Lord to them and directed them.

PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

John Doe knows of certain grievous sins among certain members of the church. He does not want to become involved; and he believes that if he carries the information to the elders, he will stir up a rage of hard feelings among brethren. Now, for your reaction: (1) He is justified in keeping quiet on the matter. (2) He should go to those involved. (3) He is under heaven's obligation to do something.

Street church is The Average seething with divisions. Certain prominent members are guilty of selfish and vying sins against other brethren. Evangelist Jones comes for a meeting, and he makes a strong emotional appeal for all, including those who have been sinned against, to just forgive everyone and love everyone. Now, for your reaction: (1) If all will do this, the problems of that church will be solved. (2) Nothing will be solved

unless the guilty parties repent and their sins. (3) After Christians are human beings, and divisions within a church are not especially alarming.

In the Main Street church is a certain party that has embraced the Neo-pentecostal movement, those who subscribe to the doctrine are operating by means of a "cell" of teaching and communion. The The elders do not subscribe to the doctrine, but they contend that they are obligated to act in such a way

and manner so as to preserve the unity of the church, and they have refráined from taking any forthright action. Now, for your reaction: (1) The elders are correct in their stand on the matter. (2) The elders should mark and withdraw from the members of the cell. (3) The elders should first teach the party, and if those of the party per-sist, the elders should lead the church in marking and withdrawand de The elders them. from should teach warn publicly buť the doctrine, should not withdraw from them.

#### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Foreword

what conditions do With Paul's letters the Corinthian church deal? With what problems does the first letter

to the Corinthians deal? With what problems does ter to the Corinthians deal? the second let-

The Problem for Today's Lesson What is the problem in today's lesson? What are some causes of this problem? What are some of the evils of division? Upon what principles only can unity based?

#### The Golden Text

What happens when one, through sin, divides the church?

difference Discuss the in dividing church through sin and dividing it defense of truth.

#### The Text Explained

In what way and on what basis did Paul admonish the Corinthians?

For what did Paul plead? What was the source of Paul's

informaconcerning tion the situation inth? what factions were the Corinthians

Into divided? What did Paul express in the rhetorical questions he asked?

Why was Paul thankful that he had not baptized many in Corinth?

Explain what Paul meant by ment, "For Christ sent me n not to baptize...

What did Paul emphasize he ment, "not by wisdom of words"?
What was Paul's strong re by his state-

rebuke to the spiritual Corinthians concerning their growth? What were the evidences of the Corin-

thians' carnality?
Discuss Paul's use of two of the contending parties as an illustration.
Discuss "Problems and Their Possible Solutions."

Lesson II — July 11, 1976

## WORLDLY WISDOM VAIN

## Lesson Text

1 Cor. 1:18-31

18 For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written,

I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,

And the discernment of the discerning will I bring to nought.

20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

21 For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good

pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe.

22 Seeing that Jews ask for signs, and Greeks seek after wisdom:

23 But we preach Christ crucified, Jews a stumblingblock, unto unto Gentiles foolishness;

24 But unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For behold your calling, breth-

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ren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many

noble, are called:

But 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;

And the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, yea and the

things that are not, that he might

bring to nought the things that are;
29 That no flesh should glory be-

fore God.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption:

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in

the Lord.

Devotional Reading. - 1 Cor. 2:1-10.

Golden Text. - "We have the mind of Christ." (1 Cor. 2:16.)

## Daily Bible Readings

July 5. M	God's Thoughts Not Man's (Isa. 55:1-11)
Iuly 6. T	
July 7 W	A Wise Son (Prov. 3:1-20)
July 8. T	
July 9. F	
July 10. S	Man Cannot Properly Direct His Steps (Jer. 10:19-25)
July 11. S	Having the Mind of Christ (Phil. 2:1-11) Man Cannot Properly Direct His Steps (Jer. 10:19-25) Wise Are Put to Shame (Jer. 8:8-13)

Time.—Written in the spring of either A.D. 54 or 55.

Place.—Paul wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

Persons.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

#### Foreword

The city of Corinth had a long history. It was founded, according to the best glimpses of history, about 1350 B.C. The Romans completely destroyed it in 146 B.C., and it lay in ruins until 46 B.C. at which Julius Caesar established Roman colony on the Isthmus, joins the northern which ' 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 the refounding of Corinth by Julius Caesar, merchants began to flock to the isthmus, including the city of Corinth which lay immediately at the western end of it. Thus the city experienced a hearty growth which made it the wealthiest and most impor-

tant city in Greece.

isthmus which joined southern mainland of Greece with the northern mainland was the geographical feature which made difference. At its narrowest point, the isthmus was, and is, four miles wide. This small strip of land separates the Saronic Gulf on the east and the Corinthian Gulf on west. The two gulfs open respec-

tively into the Aegean Sea on the east and the 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, Le-chaeum. 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 and Spain. harbors quite were safe and inviting; whereas, ' the Mediterranean waters Cape around Malera were treacherous and dangerous. The Corinthians, on the isthmus, built a "slipping through," a wooden tramway, in which ships were drawn for a lucrative toll the four miles distance from one sea to the other. As "all roads led to Rome," routes from the Orient and Egypt passed through Corinth en route to Rome.

Corinth was soon made the capithe Roman province Achaia and the seat of the Roman It became proconsul. prominent both politically and commercially; and people flocked to the city in quest of material prosperity and sensual pleasure. In the time of Paul, Corinth had a population of some 600,000 inhabitants.

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#### THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY S LESSON

The problem of worldly wisdom, was a pressing problem in Corinth in Paul's day; and just so, it is a pressing problem today. Like the American people of today, the peo-ple of Corinth were intellectual, worldly wise, proud, and exceedingly active. The population of Corinth, consisting of Greeks, Latins, Syrians, Asiatics, Egyptians, Jews, traded, revelled, and quarrelled throughout the city, and particularly in the ports.

Influenced by the culture that belonged to Athens, the Corinthians maintained a pretentious, though superficial, philosophy and culture. There were schools, philosophers, and politicians. The Greeks sought after wisdom, and they thought that any real problem could be solved within the bounds of their knowl-

edge and system of philosophy.

Like the Corinthians of centuries ago, multitudes who make up the present American society contend that any concept or source of infor-mation which cannot be brought within the range of natural expla-nation is untrue; and further, that any concept or source of informa-tion which violates the law of uni-formity is untrue. On the basis of the latter, the virgin birth doctrine is rejected. No other woman has ever borne a child without the agency of a man. This is the law of

uniformity, and, therefore, the doctrine of the virgin birth must be rejected, the proponents aver. On the basis of the former, the Genesis record of creation, together with the record of the Genesis flood, must be rejected, the proponents aver, be-cause they cannot be brought within the range of natural explanation.

In prior centuries, even among the cruel Assyrians, the kings conquered in the names of their gods. They believed in a power, or powers, greater than themselves, but the disciples of the doctrine of organic evolution recognize no god, no power, in fact, no logic or reasoning beyond their own theories of the of life from a mere evolution chance single cell to the develop-ment of man, himself.

The problem of "worldly wisdom" is reflected a multiplied thousand times over on the subject of and the necessity for baptism. The requirement of baptism as the consummating step in obedience to the gospel and for the remission of sins allows no place for human logic. There is no connection between the thing to be done and the end to be accomplished. Human reason is lost. Baptism is so very foolish when considered from a strictly intellectual and human standpoint!

#### The Golden Text

"We have the mind of Christ." (1 Cor. 2:16.)

Paul had not come to the Corinthians with the excellency of speech of an orator, nor had he come to them with the wisdom of a philosopher. Though he was learned, he had made no ostentatious display of his learning. The words which he and his companions had spoken were the words "which the Spirit teacheth", that is, verbal inspiration. His teaching was a combining of spiritual things with spiritual words.

"For Paul asked: who hath known the mind of the Lord, that should instruct him?" question was rhetorical. It carried its own answer. Paul then said: "But we have the mind of Christ The imperative thought is that Jesus had revealed his mind to Paul who was therefore enabled to teach and judge of things divine and humań.

## The Text Explained

## The Word of the Cross (1 Cor. 1:18-20)

"For the word of the cross for the message of the cross; the gospel of Christ] is to them that perish [that is, to them that are perishing: both Jew and Greek] foolishness." The Greek philosophers and the

Jewish rabbis and scribes regarded the gospel as being a fraudulently contrived system unworthy of the notice of intelligent men.

"But unto us who are saved it is the power of God." Here Paul begins a contrast between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of

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God. Those who were perishing were blind to the wisdom of God. To them, the gospel was foolishness; but to the saved, the gospel

was God's saving power.

"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning will I bring to naught The quotation is from Isaiah 29:14. Paul quoted it to show that the principle involved was not new. God had, centuries before, set forth a marked contrast between his way and man's ways. God reduces the worldly wise to mere nothingness. He upsets every system and the best laid plans of arrogant and disobedient men. Through the system of the gospel as the plan of salvation for mortal man, God had especially fulfilled the prophecy as had been set forth by Isaiah.

"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?" Here Paul sets forth a series of exultant rhetorical questions. The wise were the Greek philosophers; the scribe was the Jewish exponent of the law of Moses; and the disputer was a term that represented both, especially the Greeks who delighted in debate. Neither the wise nor the scribe had a solution for the state of man in his bontion for the state of man in his bon-dage of sin, nor was either long for this world. God made both foolish. Those wise and defiant ones have passed, and with their passing, their wisdom passed with them. Paul's rhetorical questions carried their own pertinent and emphatic an-swers

"Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?" This rhetorical question demanded an affirmative answer. God had "made foolish" the wisdom of the world. The worldly wise had absolutely no solution for the problem of sin and a reconciliation of sinners to God. God had, and has, the answer to both.

## "The Foolishness of God is Stronger Than Men"

(1 Cor. 1:21-25)

"For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God . . ." The thought here is that God was pleased to save men by the gospel—by way of the cross—and in no other way. The cross or gospel is power - God's

power-for the lifting of man from sin. Herein lies the wisdom of God, for no other course or means could accomplish that which the gospel has the power to accomplish; but the worldly wise, however, could see no wisdom in God's plan. To them, is was simply foolishness. Man could not know God through his self-conceited wisdom, for God had ordered from the beginning that man by his own wisdom should not and could not know him.

"It was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Through the means of that which both the Jews and Greeks would label "foolish preaching," God chose to save those that believe. No mere man or fraternity of men could man, or fraternity of men, could have ever devised such an effective and powerful scheme for the redemption of man. That scheme demption of man. That scrience meets the demands of violated justice and righteousness on the one hand, and on the other hand, it provides a means wherein God's mercy may rejoice against his righteousness. What a plan! How incomparable is the co-called "foolish comparable is the so-called "foolish preaching"! It is as far above the wisdom of man as the heavens are above the earth. Let every discouraged, dejected, and severely tried preacher take heart; for as the years pass, as the disappointments and heavy sorrows of life fall, and as old age sets in, the glamor of that which the "preacher of foolishness" has passed up will be seen for the vanity and ometic be seen for the vanity and empti-ness that it really is; whereas, the so-called "foolish preaching of the cross" will loom brighter and brighter and brighter as the end comes in view. The wisdom of the cross will be seen the more and more for what it really is—a revelation of the character and nature of God, himself.

"Seemg that Jews ask for signs .. In verse 22, Paul points up the outstanding characteristics of the two nations, the Jews and the Greeks. The Jews rarely, if ever, engaged in speculative thought. As matter-of-fact people, they demanded evidence. Their concept of God lay in their long history. For them, God had manifested himself by signs and mighty wonders in súch as the Red Sea crossing, and as the bringing forth of water from July 11, 1976

the rock, and as the crossing of the Jordan River. No wonder then that they demanded of Christ a sign from heaven! (Matt. 12:38; 16:1-4; John 6:30.) They looked forward with much anticipation to a powerful ruling monarch, to one who would come with great striking military power. A lowly man out of Nazareth who, as they thought, could not even deliver himself from the cross was absolutely incompatible with their concept of the promised ruler. The very thought that Jesus of Nazareth was their promised deliverer was for them a contradiction of everything reasonable.

"And Greeks seek after wisdom . . ." The Greeks were a speculative people. They gave great honor to the philosophers among them, and they were continually absorbed in their quest for knowledge and wisdom. With the dignified air of a smug intellectual, they looked condescendingly upon barbarians. In their proud intellectual perception, they held no place for the gospel of

"But we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness . . ." Paul and his companions preached Christ crucified, but this was a stumblingblock to the Jews. For them, the very thought of a crucified Messiah was incompatible with everything reasonable. After all, what could a crucified king do toward the restoration of their nation to its rightful prominence and power?

With the Greeks, the case for a crucified saviour was no better received among them than among the Jews. "What? A crucified saviour? What could a dead man accomplish? Perish the thought, for such is sheer unmitigated foolishness," they averred. Such was the spirit of those prideful and arrogant Centiles

"But unto them that are called [those who had heard the call of the gospel and had heeded it], both Jews and Greeks [the humble of both Jews and Greeks who had believed and obeyed the gospel], Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Those who had believed and obeyed the gospel knew that the crucified Christ was power to them in their overcoming of sin. To them then, the crucifix-

ion was the power of God and the wisdom of God.

"Because the foolishness of God [that which proud men labeled sheer foolishness] is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men [that is, stronger than anything of which proud men are capable]."

# "Let Him Glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. 1:26-31)

"For behold your calling, breth-ren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." The "calling" is the call of the gospel. Paul urges the Christians to look among themselves and reflect on how many of the wise, the noble, and the mighty have humbled themselves to believe and obey the gospel. Only a few of that class had responded affirmation. tively to the gospel; and as was the case then, so is the case today. God did not need men of worldly wisdom, or men of noble birth and position, or men of might and power. He needed, and needs, holy men of faith and humility, whether learned or unlearned, or of noble birth or ignoble, or of wealth or poverty, or of might and influence or of disgrace and of no account. Viewed strictly from a human standpoint, God worked through the most un-promising men. What promise, for instance, did the original twelve have? Why did he choose those particular men to be apostles? Why did he choose Paul, the only learned man among the apostles? Without question, God chose those particular men because they were the best qualified of all the men upon the earth for his work.

"But God chose the foolish things of the world [the things that the world counted foolish], that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world [the things that the world counted weak], that he might put to shame the things that are strong [the things that appeared to be strong]; and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised [things that are considered by those of the world to be low-born and contemptible] did God choose, yea and the things that are not [things which appear to be nothing], that he may bring to nought the things that are ..."

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"That no flesh should glory before God." Herein lies the purpose of God's choice of the "foolish and weak" things of the earth. The purpose was to confound the wise and the strong. God takes away from man any and all occasions of boasting before him.

God's positive commands hold no logical connection between thing required to be done and the end to be accomplished. To illustrate the principle, there was no logical connection between a brazen serpent on a pole in camp and an rêaction against the anti-venom poisonous bites of the serpents which plagued the Israelites in the wilderness; nor was there any logical connection of Joshua's marching his men around the city of Jericho and the falling down of the walls thereof; nor was there any logical connection between the water of the Jordan River and the curing of incurable disease of leprosy; nor was there any logical connection between the mud spittle applied by the Lord to the eyes of the man born blind, with the washing of it off in the pool of Siloam, and the bringing of sight to the man; but in each case the doing of the thing required procured the desired result. In those cases, human wisdom and logic was, and is, lost. There was, therefore, no occasion of glorying and boasting before Jehovah. (Num. 21:4-9; Josh. 6; 2 Kings 5; John 9:1-12.)

Baptism is another positive command. There is no logical connection between baptism on the one hand and the washing away of sins on the other hand. Human reason and logic is again lost. In short, a man must give up his worldly wisdom and ways in order to receive the forgiveness of his sins. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21; Rom. 6:1-5.)

"But of him [God, the source of life] are ye in Christ Jesus [they were in Christ through baptism into him], who [Christ] was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness [Christ's death met the terms of righteousness and justice] and sanctification, and redemption [Christ paid the ransom for man]: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." On another occasion, Paul wrote: "But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. 6:14.) Man must not glory in his puny accomplishments, but rather, he must glory in what God has done.

#### PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

John Doe's name has been placed before the Anyplace church for consideration as a likely appointment to the eldership. Doe is a professor at the local university. He is intelligent, kind, hospitable, and well informed in the Scriptures. He believes however, tures. He believes, however, theistic evolution-that is, that God is the supreme power, but that he set life in motion and in time, over millions of years, life has evolved to its present state. He believes that in keeping with the known facts of science, theistic evolution is the only logical and reasonable explanation for the creation of the world nation for the creation of the world and the evolvement of life. *Now, for your reactions:* (1) Doe should be confirmed as an elder. (2) He should not be confirmed. (3) The other elders, though less knowledgeable than he, should talk with him and teach him. (4) Theistic evolution even if wrong really evolution, even if wrong, really does no violence to the over-all principles of the Bible.

\* \* \*

Jim, your son, is home from the university for the summer months. He contends that one need not believe in the virgin birth of Christ to believe and obey the gospel. He constantly justifies his position on the basis of the scientifically tested and established law of uniformity. No other woman has ever, without the agency of a male, given birth to a child, he avers. This, he says, is the law of uniformity; and therefore, the concept of the virgin birth is preposterous. "Let those who believe the virgin birth doctrine continue to believe it if they so choose," he contends. Now, for your reactions: (1) Jim is right in his contention. (2) Belief in and obedience to the gospel does not in any way turn on the virgin birth doctrine. (3) A man can die and go to heaven without having heard of the virgin birth doctrine. (4) Jim is neal trouble with his faith.

(5) The elders should arrange immediately for in-depth lectures on the cardinal doctrines of Christianity. \*

Jane, your daughter, is keeping company with Tom, a bright young man who is not a member of the church of Christ. He and Jane are quite fond of each other, and they have been engaged in some heated Bible. discussions involving the Tom has strongly contended that anvone who would believe teach that instrumental music the worship is wrong, and that a person must be baptized to be saved downright foolish. preacher of the Iocal church mentions baptism once in a while by way of passing, but Jane has never heard a lesson on the use of instrumental music in the worship. She tells you frankly that she sees no harm in the use of the instrument in the worship, and that, after all, how can baptism really wash away a person's sins. Now, for your reaction: (1) There is no justification for the attitude of Tom and for the church has put too much emphasis on such matters to the exclusion of the weightier matters of faith, mercy, and love. (2) The church there has not put enough emphasis on baptism and instrumental music. (3) This state of affairs is the case with many of churches. (4) Tom and Jane the are following the course of worldly wisdom. (5) You should encourage Jane to give up Tom. (6) The eldshould take a warning from such a case as Tom and Iane.

## **Questions for Discussion**

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

Foreword

briefly the history of the city of Discuss Corinth. geographical What factors made Corinth an important city? hat commercial What factors contributed to the prominence of Corinth?

The Problem for Today's Lesson

What is the problem for today's lesson? in our American problem at Corinth society What factors problem make the verv to problems much comparable our today?

Discuss the law of uniformity and how it relates to the problem of "worldly wisdom.

The Golden Text

what way did Paul have the mind of Christ?

The Text Explained

To whom was the word of the cross fool-

ishness? Whom did this include?

What is the gospel unto those who saved?

had God prophesied concerning What the worldly wise?

Who were the wise, disputer of the world? the scribe, How had

God made foolish the wisdom of the world? Why can the world through its wisdom know not God?

What was God's good pleasure to do?

did the Jews ask for Christ? Why did the Greeks hold no place for

the gospel of Christ? ow was the crucified Christ a stum-blingblock to the Jews and foolishness

unto the Gentiles? What was Christ to them that are called?

What was the purpose of God's choice of the foolish and weak things of the earth to confound the wise and the strong?

In whom only are we to glory?
Discuss "Problems and Their Possible Solutions."

## Lesson III – July 18, 1976

## **DISCIPLINE ENIOINED**

## Lesson Text 1 Cor. 5:1-13

1 It is actually reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles, that one of you hath his father's wife.

And ye are puffed up, and did not rather mourn, that he that had done this deed might be taken away

from among you.

3 For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this thing,

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord

Jesus,

5 To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

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6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth

the whole lump?

7 Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our passover also hath been sacrificed, *even* Christ:

8 Wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

9 I wrote unto you in my epistle to have no company with fornicators;

10 Not at all *meaning* with the fornicators of this world, or with the

covetous and extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world:

11 But as it is, I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no, not to eat

12 For what have I to do with judging them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?

13 But them that are without God judgeth. Put away the wicked man from among yourselves.

Devotional Reading. - 1 Cor. 4:1-21.

Golden Text.—"Mark them that are of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine from them." (Rom. 16:17.)

them that are causing the divisions and occasions to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away

## Daily Bible Readings

July 13. T	July 12. M	
July 14 W Benefits of Chastening (Heb. 12:4-13)	July 13. T	Tell It to the Church (Matt. 18:15-20)
	July 14. W	Benefits of Chastening (Heb. 12:4-13)
July 15 T Tenderness With the Fallen (Gal. 6:1-5)	Iuly 15 T	Tenderness With the Fallen (Gal. 6:1-5)
July 16. F. Separation from the Evil (2 Cor. 6:14-17) July 17. S. Marking False Teachers (Rom. 16:17-20)	July 16. F	Separation from the Evil (2 Cor. 6:14-17)
July 17. SMarking False Teachers (Rom. 16:17-20)	July 17. S	Marking False Teacher's (Rom. 16:17-20)
July 18. S	July 18. S	

Time.—Written in the spring of either A.D. 54 or 55.

Place.—Paul wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

Persons.-Paul and the saints at Corinth.

#### Foreword

Corinth in Paul's day 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 identified by the Romans as Venus. This goddess owned more than a thousand temple "virgins" whose sandal message, "Follow me," was left in the sand as they plied their trade.

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 those "hospitable women" as being public benefactors. On account of those women, ship captains and mariners looked forward to a layover in Corinth. There they freely squandered their money.

The geographic advantage of the isthmus together with the "courtesans' trade" combined to crowd the city with people from everywhere. Those women were still plying their

ancient trade in Paul's day, as evidenced by his denouncement of them in his first epistle to the Co-

rinthians. (1 Cor. 6:15-20.)

The Jews, along with the Ro-Greeks, and Orientals, flocked in great numbers to Corinth, the Metropolis of the Peloponnesus. The city was thoroughly Roman, but the Grecian culture characteristics of Athens had colored the spirit and dominated the lives of a great number of the inhabitants. games were Panhellenic Isthmian played there every two years, and those games attracted many visitors to the city.

Into this great metropolis, the apostle Paul entered with a mission that was to be echoed around the world by means of the peoples of many nations' coming to and going from that city. Paul entered the city alone; he began his work single-handed; he was tired and discouraged; his soul within him found no

relief; he intended only a short stay, but he remained there for more than

a year and six months.

The church at Corinth came to be one of the best taught churches of the apostolic years. If one reasons, how could this be in light of all the problems in the church at Corinth, let that person reflect on the prior background of those who made up the church. Let him reflect further on what the church might have been like had it not been so taught. Let him also reflect on the fact that the greater part of the church had sufficient spiritual conscience to be brought to repentance through one letter, one sermon so to speak.

#### THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY S LESSON

The problem of church discipline is at one time or another a problem in every church within the brother-hood. The obligation for church discipline is, as a matter of fact, a continuous one, an obligation from day to day, week to week, and year

to year.

Church discipline is broader and more all-inclusive than the drastic withdrawal of fellowship from a reprobate brother. The actual withdrawal of fellowship is the kind which effects punishment or chastisement, and it certainly has its place as today's lesson will emphasize; but there is another arm of discipline which also must be employed. In short, the full meaning of the term "discipline" includes the "training which corrects, strengthens, or perfects." molds. strengthens, without doubt, should be the major role of discipline in every church. Paul, for example, wrote the Thessalonians: "We exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all. See that none render unto any one evil for evil; but always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all." (1 Thess. 5:14, 15.) The kind of discipline herein described by Paul is that corrective kind of discipline which must be continuous from day to day, week to week, and year to year.

Discipline must be maintained in the home, in the church, in the school, and in the state; otherwise, anarchy will prevail. One of the undermining evils of this age is the lack of respect for authority and good order. As parents are under heaven's imposed obligation for the maintaining of discipline over their children; just so, elders are under heaven's imposed obligation for the maintaining of discipline over the members of the church, but in order maintain discipline the elders must know the flock, supervise and instruct it. The elders must know all the flock in order to properly

supervise each member.

One lamentable problem with respect to elders and their ability to discipline the flock has to do with the present alarming, tragic divorce evil. Time and time again a couple in the church will have filed for di-vorce before the elders even know that the couple has been having domestic problems. One thing is certain: in marital cases where divorce threatens, the parties should seek the counsel of the elders. Further, there will be those in the church, parents or relatives or friends, who will know of the problem, and they are under obligation to so inform the elders.

When elders hear of such a threatened divorce, they are under heaven's imposed obligation to act. They have the prerogative and obligation to inquire into the cause of the divorce. The innocent party, if there is one. should be exonerated, and the guilty party should be exposed and disfellowshipped. In the case where one or both parties re-fuse to give explanations, the elders should move to expose and withdraw from the one, or both, as the case may be. Too often-one single case would be too often-elders learn of a divorce after the divorce papers have been filed, or have been made final, and they dismiss the problem with the words: there is nothing that we can do now." Such is an unfortunate approach to a matter that involves the lives of many.

#### The Golden Text

"Mark them that are causing the bling, contrary to the doctrine divisions and of stumwhich ye learned: and turn away occasions

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from them." (Rom. 16:17.)

Paul here had reference to professed Christians who were or would cause divisions and stumbling within the church. Who those professed Christians were, whether Judaizing teachers or evil workers, concerning whom he made reference in his letter to the Philippians, or still others, Paul did not say. He did instruct that they be marked, and that the church should turn away from them—that is, withdraw fellowship from them. These men of reference caused divisions, made occasions for others to stumble, and

all of this they did contrary to the doctrine of Christ.

The obligation to mark such evil men is just as grave and pressing today as it was when it was first dictated by the apostle Paul; and what an obligation this is! There is an imperative need for elders and brethren to take inventory of themselves. If one can properly draw conclusions from empirical observations, then the church, generally speaking, is weak, very weak in fact, in the area of upholding the true doctrine through the maintaining of discipline.

## The Text Explained

Discipline Enjoined (1 Cor. 5:1-13)

"it is actually reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as not even isamong the Gentiles, that one of you hath his father's wife." The Corinthian church was characterized by divisions, by pride, and worldly wisdom, and now by the sin of incest. The case of incest or fornication was condemned by the law of Moses (Lev. 18:8; Deut. 27:20), and it was also unlawful and condemned even by those of the Grecian heathen society. A man had his own father's wife. The father had probably married a young woman, and the son had taken her either as a wife or as a concubine. The relation was, to say the least of matters, a permanent thing, not a one-time <sup>^</sup>or momentary Further, the reading from 2 Corinthians 7:12 indicates clearly that the father was still living. "So although I wrote unto you, I wrote not for his [the fornicator's] cause that did the wrong nor feet has that did the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered the wrong ["nor from any partial regard to his who father had suffered wrong," MacKnight], but that your earnest care for us might be made manifest unto you in the sight of God."

The term "fornication" originally denoted the use of a harlot, but it came in time, to include or specify any illicit sexual intercourse or sexual deviation between a man and a woman. In the absence of any censure of the woman, the necessary inference is that she was a heathen, and thus Paul left her to the judgment of God, for neither he

nor they had anything to do with the judging of those without the church.

"And ye are puffed up [arrogant, wise in your own knowledge and conceits], and did not rather mourn [that is, you are not stricken with deep grief that such a horrible sin should blight the cause of Christ and that a brother among you is now dead in sin], that he that had done this deed might be taken away from among you." That is, publicly removed from the fellowship and recognition of the church. The Corinthians—in their defiant self-esteem and worldly wisdom, had become oblivious to the blight and stench of such a sin. When they should have been in deep mourning over the fall of a brother, and over the stigma of sin upon the church, they were all puffed up and had not mourned over those matters. They had written Paul and inquired about other spiritual matters, but they made no mention of the case of incest within their fellowship.

"For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this thing." Paul here places himself in strong opposition to the course of those Corinthians. In a kind of imaginary court procedure with the church present as jurors; with the defendant present to hear the charges and face his accusers; with the evidence presented; and with the verdict of guilt rendered; Paul as judge pronounces the sentence that they should withdraw fellowship from the man; deliver

"In the name of our Lord Jesus . . . "

him to Satan.

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This means by authority from the

Lord—by apostólic authority.

"Ye being gathered together . . ." A meeting or a disciplinary assembly of the church was here demanded. The time was already long past for the entire church to take the action which the existing notorious sin in the church demanded, a public withdrawal of fellowship from the culprit.

"And my spirit, with the power of the Lord. Jesus . . ." Paul was an apostle of Christ, and with apostolic authority and responsibility, he had already judged in the matter. Immorality in the church of the Lord was to be emphatically renounced and rejected. This was

Paul's solemn judiciál sentence.

"To deliver such a one unto Satan.. Paul's judgment was that the immoral brother should be delivered to Satan, that is, disfellow-shipped, excluded from the kingdom of God, excommunicated, and returned again to the kingdom of Satan. In short, to be excommunicated from and by the church was, and is, to be delivered publicly and formally to the tyranny of Satan. The redeemed are under the reign of Christ; the unredeemed are under the reign of Satan.

"For the destruction of the flesh..." This does not mean, as some scholars suppose, that the culprit would experience bodily suffering. Paul meant by the term "flesh" the whole man when he is committed to a life of lustful ambitions and sensual pleasures. The "destruction of the flesh" was the putting to an end or to death a sinful course of life. The action was to be taken in order that the sinful life might be put to death. Paul wrote the Colossians: "Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth..." (Col. 3:5.)

"That the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The punishment by excommunication or exclusion from the fellowship of the church was a remedial necessity. There were two imperative reasons for the church's obligation to deliver the culprit to Satan. One reason was to remove the tacit approval of the blight and stench of such a sin from off the church; and the other reason was, hopefully, to save the sinner, himself. To be expelled from the church, with the

loss of all Christian fellowship and privileges, is a serious matter indeed, and such an expulsion was, and is, calculated to bring a disfellowshipped person to his senses, to the realization of the enormity of his sin. This in turn would bring about within him a state of remorse and repentance.

Some sins are so open, glaring, and unnatural that immediate and forthright action is indicated and, for that matter, demanded. In other cases a less haste is indicated. Faithful elders will proceed with prayer and caution in all cases, but

they will proceed.

"Your glorying [your worldly pride manifested at such an inopportune time] is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole hnnp?" The question is rhetorical—an axiomatic statement which called for no answer. All were acquainted with the quality and characteristics of leaven. The Israelites, just prior to their leaving Egypt, were commanded to search diligently and remove all leaven from their houses, and this in preparation for the first passover, which passover saved the firstborn of the Israelites from death and resulted in their being permitted to flee from the land. (Ex. 12:15.) Leaven was to the Israelites, therefore, a symbol of their bondage in Egypt. Paul here uses the term "leaven" as a type of sin. Thomas Traherne wrote: "Souls to souls are like apples, one being rotten rots another." His statement is a correct one, and elders today should reflect seriously on that fact.

"Purge out the old leaven [sin in he church] that ye may be a new

lumv."

"For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ." Verses six through eight constitute an allegory on the Jewish passover. Christ was, and is, the Christian's passover, and he had already been sacrificed. They were, therefore, under an imperative obligation to search the church, including their own respective lives, for any sin. They were further under obligation to cast out, purge out, any and all sins.

"Wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven [their pagan moral judgment], neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness,

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but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

"I wrote unto you in my epistle to have no company with fornicators ..." Paul had written a prior letter to the Corinthians, and they had, in turn, written him for certain clarifications and for answers to other questions.

"Not at all meaning with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous and extortioners, or with idolaters [worshippers of gods]; for then must ye needs go out of the world." The Corinthians had taken the very opposite view and practice to that which Paul had instructed and intended. They were contending that Paul had instructed that they should have no company with the evil ones of the world, and that they, therefore, were free to associate with and have company with, the evil ones in the church. That they should so misunderstand Paul was a reflection against their prized knowledge, wisdom, and intellectual capacity; for if Paul had so said and so meant, then they would needs go out of the world. How could they ever reach the world with the gospel, if such had been Paul's instruction? How, on that basis, was Paul justified in bringing the gospel to

"But as it is, I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no, not to eat." Paul's instructions were quite clear, plain and emphatic. Christians were to have no fellowship with those in the church who led sinful and reprobate lives. The "no, not to eat" means that those Christians were to have no social and especially intercourse, friendly meal, with those who

should be expelled from the fellow-

ship of the church.

For what have I to do with refer what nave I to ao with judging them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?" The matter of judging those without the church was not a prerogative of Paul, nor of the church as a whole for that matter. There is a whole, for that matter. There is a striking difference between those within and those without the church. Those within are a charge of the church, but those without are the charge of Jehovah.

"But them that are without God judgeth. Put away the wicked man from among yourselves." without the church are left to God for judgment, but those within the church, when in sin, are to be judged, or excluded from the fellowship, by the church as a united body. Paul commanded, therefore, that the church at Corinth put away the wicked man from among them-

As a final thought, the withdrawal of fellowship from a brother in sin a fearful obligation. Under no circumstances should withdrawal be made out of malice or self-will, or upon trumped-up charges, or out of petty matters. In withdrawal procedures, the action must stem from the proper spirit and righteous motives. Except in glaring cases, such as the notorious fornicator at Corinth, all other measures to bring the person to repentance should be tried first. Under no circumstances can a church effectively withdraw fellowship from members where it has gone for years without thought for discipline and then, suddenly and overnight, rounds up a list of twenty-five or thirty names and announces that those people are excommunicated from the church. Alas! How relevant the New Testament is today, those who clamor for a relevant gospel to the contrary, notwithstanding.

#### PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The Secluded Hills church in a city of about 15,000 population is located in a subdivision of people of wealth, position, and prestige. One member of the church, a profes-sional man, told his wife that he did not love her, and, in turn, he bought a trailer and placed it on a nearby lake, and took up residence there. In time, the wife, also a member,

sued for divorce and moved to another state. This man's secretary is also a member of the same church, and there has been much suspicion and talk relative to the relations between the two, both from the members and from people throughout the city. The elders have not discussed any of these matters with either party. Now, for your reacJULY 18, 1976 199

tion: (1) No facts are really known, and in the absence of some outright evidence, the elders should continue their silence. (2) The man is one of influence, and the elders should avoid any discussion with him, lest the peace of the church be disturbed. (3) The elders should have confronted the man as soon as they learned of his attitude toward his wife and prior to proceedings. (4) The divorce have been grossly derelict throughout the whole matter.

The Anywhere church has an attendance of above five hundred. It has a sizeable collection and, what has a sizeable concens. ...., it considers to be a good program of work. The preacher encourages the young people in holding of hands and chain prayers led by both and chain prayers led by both sexes, and that with the lights turned down low. He rarely ever attends the meetings of sister churches, and particularly those known for the conservative views. A contingency in the church advocates the "new unity movement" - a for liberal fellowship with other denominational churches, particularly the Christian Church. The elders have taken no outright stand either way. Some forty or more families are disturbed. *Now,* for your reaction: (1) The aggrieved should select a representative committee to discuss the matters with the elders. (2) They should one by one talk to the elders. (3) They should put their trust in the elders and do nothing. (4) They should wake up to the fact that the preacher and others are right in their promotion of the youth and unity move-ments. (5) They should regard the case as hopeless and quietly with-draw and start a new congregation, transfer their membership to some other congregation.

The Middle-Town church has recently appointed to the eldership some younger men. They love the truth, and they believe in taking an outright stand against sin. preacher is known for his energetic manner of preaching and condemning sins of all sorts. He believes strongly in the need to discipline the wayward and unruly members. A roster was brought together of some thirty members who, at one time or another, had been baptized but do not now attend the worship. The elders, in turn, wrote each member stating that they were giving him three weeks to repent and come back to the church, or else they would withdraw from him. Three weeks later, all but four of that received letters publicly excluded from the church. Now, for your reaction: (1) The elders did just what should have been done. (2) The elders were much too hasty. (3) The elders showed by their actions that they were novices. (4) The elders, in a and God-fearing manner, humble should have visited each person involved. (5) In the absence of a glaring sin, of such import as to be shocking to the sensibilities of society, the elders should have taken considerable time before withdrawal.

#### **Questions for Discussion**

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

#### Foreword

For what three things was the city of Corinth famous in Paul's day?
That famous religious institution cated in Corinth? What lo-

In what way did this institution contribute to the gross immorality of Corinth? How was this practice regarded citizens of Corinth? the

#### The Problem for Today's Lesson

What is the problem for today's lesson? Discuss the full meaning of the kind of discipline which Paul described?

What present alarming evil has especially affected the ability of elders today in disciplining the flock?

#### The Golden Text

whom Tο does Paul have reference this text? What were his specific instructions?

#### The Text Explained

res the immoral condition prevailed in the Corinthian church? How did the Corinthian Christians this condition? which regard

In what position did Paul place himself in this mafter?

What was his verdict?

In what manner was this action to carried out? What did Paul mean by "to deliver such

a one unto Satan"?

What was the purpose of this deliverance unto Satan?

Why was the glorying of the Corinthian Christians not good?

What had Paul written to them in his prior letter?
How were they to treat those in the church who led sinful and reprobate lives?

What did Paul say concerning the judging of "them that are without"? Discuss "Problems and Their Possible Solutions."

## Lesson IV – July 25, 1976

## LITIGATION BETWEEN BRETHREN PROHIBITED

## Lesson Text 1 Cor. 6:1-11

1 Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?

2 Or know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest mat-

3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more, things that

pertain to this life?

4 If then ye have to judge things pertaining to this life, do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church?

5 I say *this* to move you to shame. What, cannot there be *found* among you one wise man who shall be able to decide between his brethren,

6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?

7 Nay, already it is altogether a defect in you, that ye have lawsuits one with another. Why not rather take wrong? why not rather be defrauded?

8 Nay, but ye yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that *your* brethren.

9 Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of

God.

11 And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.

Devotional Reading. —1 Cor. 6:12-20.

Golden Text.—"It is altogether a defect in you, that ye have lawsuits one with another." (1 Cor. 6:7.)

## Daily Bible Readings

July 19. M	Personal Relations (Matt. 5:21-26)
ľuly 20. T	Dealing With An Enemy (Rom. 12:17-21)
July 21. W	Suffering for Well-Doing (1 Pet. 3:17-21)
July 22 T	Christians Are Called to Peace (1 Cor. 7:1-15)
July 23. F	Things Which Make for Peace (Rom. 13:1-19) An Example of Peaceful Relations (Gen. 13: 5-13)
July 24. S	An Example of Peaceful Relations (Gen. 13: 5-13)
July 25. S	Seek for Peace With All (Heb. 12:1-14)

Time.—Written in the spring of either A.D. 54 or 55.

Place.—Paul wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

Persons.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

#### Foreword

When Paul left Athens and traveled 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.

Corinth, like Tyre of former centuries, was the mart of the nations the Asiatic between and Koman world. Corinth was a thriving city. 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 serious student of the Bible can afford to make a 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 left Athens and went to Corinth of his own accord. The special burden on his heart at the

time was the plight of the brethren in Macedonia, particularly at Thessalonica. When first at Corinth he wrote: "But we, brethren, being bereaved of you for a short season, in presence not in heart, endeavored the more exceedingly to see your face with great desire: because we would fain have come unto you, I Paul once again; and Satan hindered us." (1 Thess. 2:17, 18.) He intended only a short stay. In the absence of divine revelation, he could not have anticipated a stay of a year and six months, the longest stay of his ministry, except for his stay at Ephesus.

#### THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY S LESSON

The problem of litigation between brethren was another pressing problem in the church at Corinth; and while the problem seems not to be as current among brethren of the churches of Christ today as are the problems of division and immorality; yet, the problem does rise from time to time.

One very common aspect of litigation among brethren today is the matter of divorce. When a husband and wife become estranged and seek settlement of their marital problems before the court rather than before the elders of the church, they are in violation of the principle underlying this present lesson. True enough, when a divorce is bound to be effected, the participants must seek relief before a civil court. The fact remains,

however, that if the parties would first seek the judgment and counsel of God-fearing elders, the cause or desire for the divorce might be eliminated.

Another somewhat common aspect of litigation among brethren today is the matter of family inheritance. Brothers and sisters in the flesh, as well as in Christ, have been known to become embroiled over the family inheritance, upon the death of the last surviving parent, and to have sued and counter sued each other in the civil court. Other similar problems do arise from time to time—usually involving property, slander, and the like—wherein a brother in Christ sues another brother in a civil court, but such cases seem generally to be the exception rather than the rule.

#### The Golden Text

"It is altogether a defect in you that ye have lawsuits one with another." (1 Cor. 6:7.)

The word "defect" means imperfection or blemish—a want of something necessary for completeness. The very fact that the members of the Corinthian church were having lawsuits one with another was certain evidence of their spiritual immaturity. As favorable or unfavorable as a verdict might ap-

pear on the surface to have been, neither litigant had anything to gain. Each lost at the very moment one instituted a lawsuit against the other. Such lawsuits inevitably did great injury to the body of Christ. Thus Paul proposed: "Why not rather take wrong?" Why not rather take wrong?" Why not ask the questions was to answer them.

## The Text Explained

## Lawsuits Between Brethren (1 Cor. 6:1-6)

The Corinthians had written to ask Paul certain questions, but they did not raise any questions regarding their strife and divisions;

nor did they raise questions regarding their incestous brother who had his father's wife, and who yet remained in their fellowship; nor did they raise questions relative to the fact that certain brethren in their

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fellowship were suing each other at law. Paul had learned of those sins through another source, or other sources, the household of Chloe for one. He did not, therefore, enter upon a discussion of the questions which the Corinthians had submitted by letter until he had first denounced their flagrant and public

"Dare any of you, having a mat-ter against his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not be-fore the saints?" The sins of the Corinthians included litigations among the members. They were daring to go to law with one another, and that before the civil courts or the unrighteous. One maxim of the Jewish rabbis reads: "It is a statute which binds all Israelites, that if one Israelite has a cause against another, it must not be prosecuted before the Gentiles." The Corinthian Christians were not even maintaining a standard brotherly conduct which was comparable to the standard maintained by the Jews. For those Christians to go to law with each other was to belie their profession of mutual love, respect, and forbearance of each other.

"Or know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" The context here is concerned with lawsuits a deciding of who is guilty and who is innocent. The thought is that the saints will participate in the final judgment of the world, and why, therefore, were they not more competent to judge in areas of litigations among brethren than were the heathens who sat to judge be-tween litigants? How that the saints shall judge the world is not explained, but the truthfulness of the statement must be accepted, nonetheless.

"And if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" The thought is that if Christians are competent share in the great responsibility for the righteous judgment of all the intelligent beings of the world, then surely they are competent to judge and settle the matters—many of which are often petty and small—that arise among brethern in the that arise among brethren in the church.

"Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Paul's "know ye questions were fitting and stinging rebukes against those who had been so prideful of their knowledge and wisdom. Good angels seem to be contemplated when the term angel is used without qualification—with qualification is such as "angels that kept not their own principality." (Jude 6.) What then is the meaning of Paul's question? Since the matter of judgment is involved, may not Paul have meant that the saints shall judge the angels that were once good but had later fallen? In some sense Christians will, along with Christ, judge the angels that have fallen through rebellion.

"How much more things that pertain to this life?" The judgment of graver matters of this earth are not to be compared with the determinations of eternal destinies, some way or another the saints will be associated with Christ at the end of the world in the judgment and condemnation of sinners, including evil angels. Paul's point is that if saints are qualified to be so associated with Christ in that final judgment, are they not much more qualified to judge in this life be-tween brethren who have differences than are those who sit on the benches of the heathen courts?

"If then ye have to judge things pertaining to this life, do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church?" The "if" of this verse implies that the disputes brethren about among worldly matters and affairs should not arise in the first place, but if they do arise, they should be settled by the interposition of some Christian or Christians. Paul, in an ironical way says that since Christians will participate in judgment at the last great day, then those of no account in the church, that is, those counted by the wise to be lowly in knowledge and intellectual attainments, will be quite suf-ficient to judge the petty matters which were being carried before the heathen legal tribunals.

"I say this to move you to shame. What, cannot there be found among you one wise man who shall able to decide between brethren . . ." Paul had raised the questions—particularly the question of verse 4-to move those disputing Christians to shame. The sight of wise, arrogant Christians

carrying their disputes before the

civil courts was a shameful thing. In somewhat blistering irony, Paul asked: 'What, cannot there be found among you one wise man . ?" Observe, "one wise man" as if to emphasize the irony of the case, "who shall be able to decide between his brethren."

"But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?" What a shame this was! What a reproach this was upon the body of Christ. Upon observing and hearing the disputants, what respect could the heathens have for Christianity?

# "A Defect in You" (1 Cor. 6:7, 8)

"Nay, already it is altogether a defect in you, that ye have lawsuits one with another." Paul is here explicitly clear in his pronouncements against litigations of brethren before the courts. Christians today are under heaven's imposed obligation to learn and respect God's word on this matter. Litigations between brethren should be heard and settled before the church, especially before God-fearing elders, and not before the world.

"Why not rather take wrong? why not rather be defrauded?" The church would suffer if one brother prosecuted his case against another brother before the court, and in contemplation of that fact, Paul asked, "Why not take wrong?" Actually, through a Christian's choosing to take wrong rather than to prosecute a brother, he may very well receive the greater victory in the long run.

"Nay, but ye yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren." The thought here is that not only were they unwilling to suffer wrong, but they were committing wrongs against their own brethren. Now, violation of the rights of a fellow Christian is wrong, and a violation of the rights of a non-Christian is equally

wrong, except that between the Christian and his fellow Christian a close bond of love and peace should prevail at all times. Those Christians at Corinth were defrauding their fellow brethren. They were guilty of two sins—one against the ethical standard of righteousness, and the other against the principle of brotherly love.

## Unrighteousness Condemned (1 Cor. 6:9-11)

"Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" Paul appeals to the Corinthians' common knowledge. They could not inherit the kingdom of God—that is, enter into the eternal kingdom—if they persisted in their sinful course.

"Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Here Paul enumerates two classes of sins, namely: (1) the sins of a person against himself through his practice of sexual vice; and (2) the sins of a person against others. Paul gives a similar list in Galatians 5:16-21, and he concludes there, as in the above verses, that they who practice such things "shall not inherit the kingdom of God"—that is, they shall not inherit heaven.

"And such were some of you [some of the Christians had formerly walked in the sins enumerated as was characteristic of the Corinthians' way of life]: but ye were washed [baptized into Christ], but ye were sanctified [set apart to the service of God], but ye were justified [counted righteous through faith and obedience], in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ [through the power and authority of Christ], and in the Spirit of our God." The Holy Spirit led the apostles into all truth

#### PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Fannie Doe, a member of the Anywhere church has circulated from woman to woman in the congregation a report that reflects against the integrity and honesty of the preacher. The report was wholly untrue, and the members

knew that it was untrue. When the preacher confronted her, she refused to grant that she could have misunderstood or been wrong. She refused to speak to the preacher, and she kept up her agitations. The church has no elders, and the

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leaders did not take action. *Now, for your reaction:* (1) The woman should have been reprimanded and required to repent and make confession. (2) The preacher should have willingly suffered the wrong.

(3) He should have sued for defamation. (4) He should find another

John Doe had lost heavily in the contracting business. His creditors, including certain members of the church, forced him into bankruptcy, though he was pleading for time to pull his business out of the crisis. Later, he was able to start all over came to have a reasonably thriving business, but he feels that he is under no moral obligation to pay his back creditors, since they pay his back creditors, since they forced him into bankruptcy. The matter makes for trouble in the church. *Now, for your reaction:* (1) Those members who helped force him into bankruptcy were wrong and should repent. (2) The brother should pay off all his creditors. (3) The elders should have intervened prior to the bankruptcy proceedings. (4) The church as such should take

no part in the affair.

Tom Smith, a member of Anywhere church, is running for the office of mayor of the city. John Brown, another member of the Brown, church, is campaigning with all of his might for a non-Christian who is also running for mayor. Smith contends that Brown has defamed his good name and is threatening a defamation suit against him. entire church is disturbed, s taking the side of SmitQuastionsrfor Discussion

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

Foreword

Contrast the city of Athens, the city Paul left, with the city of Corinth.

How long did Paul stay at Corinth?

The Problem for Today's Lesson What is the problem for today's lesson? In what ways, generally, does this lem affect the church today? prob-

The Golden Text

Why was this condition described defect in the Corinthian Christians?

The Text Explained

what reason had the Corinthians written to Paul?

taking the side of Brown. The elders have stayed out of the discussions completely. Now, for uour Both Smith reaction: (1) and Brown should bow out of the political arena. (2) Smith should by all means stay in the race because the great need today is to get Christians in government. (3) The elders of the church should call Smith and Brown in for a confrontation and counseling. (4) The elders should hold their silence so as to have the friendship and confidence of all.

the Rav Iones of Anywhere church is heavily in debt to the Scott and Free Hardware Corporation, and Sid Jackson, an elder of the church, is manager of the local operation of that corporation. The corporation has entered suit against the said Ray Jones, and the said Sid Jackson was summoned as a witness. He gave simple testimony relative to Jones' indebtedness to the Corporation. A number of the members are quite critical of elder Jackson. They say that he violated Paul's injunction against a brother's going to law against brother. Now, for your reaction:

(1) Elder Jackson did not institute suit againsť Jones and did not, therefore, violate Paul's injunction.

Elder Jackson had no other alternative except to state the case as it was. (3) If elder Jackson erred at all, he did so by having failed to lead the elders in a counseling session with Jones relative to his in-debtedness. (4) Elder Jackson was in gross violation of Paul's injunction and should have refused to participate in any way.

What had they failed to mention?

How had the Corinthians failed to maintain a standard even as high as the Jews?

What fact, as pointed out by Paul, quali-fied Christians to judge in these small small

What principle does the use of the word "if" in verse four of the lesson text imply?

Why did Paul raise these questions?

Why was it better for the brother to take wrong rather than to prosecute another brother?

What would be the outcome if the Corinthian Christians persisted in their sinful course?

Discuss "Problems and Their Possible Solutions."

#### Lesson V-August 1, 1976

## TEACHING CONCERNING MARRIAGE

#### **Lesson Text**

1 Cor. 7:10-16, 25-28, 39, 40

10 But unto the married I give charge, *yea* not I, but the Lord, That the wife depart not from her husband

11 (But should she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband); and that the husband leave not his wife.

12 But to the rest say I, not the Lord: If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her.

13 And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not

leave her husband.

14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

15 Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart: the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such *cases*: but God hath called us in peace.

16 For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O husband?

band, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: but I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be trustworthy.

26 I think therefore that this is good by reason of the distress that is upon us, *namely*, that it is good

for a man to be as he is.

27 Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

28 But shouldest thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Yet such shall have tribulation in the flesh: and I would spare you.

39 A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

40 But she is happier if she abide as she is, after my judgment: and I think that I also have the Spirit of

God.

Devotional Reading. - 1 Cor. 7:1-9.

Golden Text.—"Let marriage be had in honor among all." (Heb. 13:4.)

## Daily Bible Readings

Iulv	26. M	Beginning of Marriage (Gen. 2:21-25) Christ Honored It (John 2:1-11) Paul Exalted It (Heb. 13:1-5) Need for Marriage (1 Cor. 7:1-9) Cause of Divorce (Matt. 19:1-9) Marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:1-8) Law of Marriage (Rom. 7:1-7)
July	27. T	
July	28. W	Paul Exalted It (Heb. 13:1-5)
July	29. T	
ľuľv	30. F	
ľuľv	31. S	
Augı	ust 1. S.,	Law of Marriage (Rom. 7:1-7)

Time.—Written in the spring of either A.D. 54 or 55.

Place.—Paul wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

Persons.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

#### Foreword

A thorough study of Paul s two epistles to the church at Corinth will necessarily include information relative to the fact that Paul wrote at least four epistles and made at least three visits to that church. The case for the four epistles follows:

1. Paul left Athens and went to Corinth, a commercial city some forty-five miles away. There he stayed for eighteen months or more. He left Corinth to sail to Antioch of Syria. After having spent some time there, he set out on his third missionary journey and "went

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through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, in order, establishing all the disciples." (Acts 18:18-23.) He came to Ephesus, the capital of the province of Asia, a province in Asia Minor. From Ephesus he wrote the letter now termed First Corinthians, but that letter reveals the fact that he had written a prior letter—a letter which occasioned a letter to him by the Corinthians, and which, in turn, was partly the basis of the letter now entitled First Corinthians.

A statement from First Corinthians supports these conclusions as follows: "I wrote unto you in my epistle to have no company with fornicators; not at all meaning the fornicators of this world. . . ." (1 Cor. 5:9.) The letter to which the passage makes reference was, therefore, Paul's first letter, and First Corinthians was his second letter.

2. As Paul was writing the epistle or letter now referred to as Second Corinthians, he made reference to a certain letter which he had written

to them. The reference

follows: "But I determined this for myself, that I would not come again to you with sorrow. For if I make you sorry, who then is he that maketh me glad but he that is made sorry by me? And I wrote this very thing, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in your 201". confidence in you all." (2 Cor. 2:1-3.) Here, as is obvious, is reference to a letter or an epistle written under trying circumstances at which time Paul severely rebuked the Corinthian church. The nature and character of First Corinthians, and the circumstances under which it was written, does not agree with the tone and severity of the letter to which Paul made reference in his "Second Corinthians" epistle. second Corintnians epistie. The severe letter could not have reference, therefore, to the first letter that Paul wrote, nor to the letter now entitled First Corinthians. That letter was, necessarily, a third letter which Paul wrote, and Second Corinthians was the fourth letter or epistle that he wrote to the ter or epistle that he wrote to the Corinthians.

#### THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY'S LESSON

reads

The problems concerning marriage are, without doubt, a continuous incurring malady both within today's social order and also within the church. In *Christianity Today*, June 20, 1975, Andre Bustanoby wrote: "The most recent figures on marriage and divorce in the 1975 *World Almanac* show that for every two new marriages in the United States there is one divorce. It has been estimated that desertions—called "the poor man's divorce"—equal the number of legal divorces, pushing the total of terminated marriages to almost two million a year. This means that divorces and desertions together almost equal the number of new marriages."

Bustanoby's information is shocking and heart rending for those who hold a deep respect and reverence for the home and home life. The inevitable result of this malignancy within the American society is that many of the children of the saints cannot, or will not, escape this dreaded moral and spiritual disease. Many innocent spouses and children will become victims of this dreaded disease. The gamut of lessons concerning marriage—that is, the subjects of courtship, marriage, the obligations of the married, and the evils and tragedy of divorce—should be taught in the home, from the pulpit, and through the news media. How long can America stand such moral decay as it is presently experiencing? How long can the church stand? The church is. or should be, the leavening influence for righteousness, but oh how it has failed!

#### The Golden Text

"Let marriage be had in honor among all." (Heb. 13:4.)

Marriage is an honorable institution. Jesus taught that it was ordained of God. In the very beginning, God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will

make him a help meet [suited] for him . . . and the rib. which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man." (Gen. 2:18-25.) Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Have ye not read, that he who made them from

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the beginning made them male and female, and said. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? So that they are no more two, but one flesh? What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. . . . Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it hath not been so." (Matt. 19:3-9.)

No normal man is really complete within himself. The same is the case with the woman. The husband and wife complement each other; they accommodate each other; and balance and counterbalance they other. God has instituted each marriage for the purpose of companionship, for the purpose of procreation, and for the purpose of the gratification of the natural and basic sex drive. Marriage, therefore, is a shield, a protection against fornication and unnatural sexual vice. (1 Cor. 7:2.)

## The Text Explained

With the seventh chapter of First Corinthians, Paul takes up the matter whereof the Corinthians had written him. The seventh chapter is given over primarily to the discussion of marriage. Judging from the context, the Corinthians had inquired as to whether marriage is to as to desired or avoided; whether or not the marriage state be dissolved when one former heathen accepts Christ and his, or her, spouse does not; as to whether or not celibacy or virginity is preferable to the marriage state; and as to whether or not widows should remarry.

While Paul sets forth in the seventh chapter the basic principles concerning marriage, his counsel regarding the desirableness of the marriage status must be understood in the light of the prevailing world affairs—that is, "by reason of the distress that was upon them." Paul described that "reason of distress" as being shortened or near at hand. He further observed that "henceforth both those that have wives may be as though they had none; and those that weep, as though they wept not; and those that rejoice, as though they rejoice not; . . . for the fashion of this world passeth away.

The honorable status of marriage stood then in contrast to the laxity of the morals among the Gentiles, to the prevalence of divorce among the Jews, and to the rejection of marriage by the ascetics among the Jewish sect of the Essenes. The honorable status of marriage came, in time, to stand in contrast to the ascetics of Christianity-those who rejected marriage for a puritan state, and thereby retired to monasteries and nunneries. The heathen Galen, a physician, wrote of how the Christians "included men and women who refrain from cohabiting all their lives." There were those who, like Origen, castrated themselves for the sake of purity, and on the same false basis of purity, the priests of the Roman Catholic church were, and are, required to live celibate lives; but as Paul wrote the Colossians: "Severity to the body is not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh." (Col. 2:23.)

But I would have you to be free from cares." (1 Cor. 7:26, 30-32.)

In the outset of his discussion of the marriage state, Paul forbade the abstinence from conjugal obligation on the part of either the husband or the wife. For one partner to so abstain might subject the other to the strong temptation of lust. Paul emphasized, "The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power over his body, but the wife." The conjugal duties of the husband and wife lie at the very base of marriage, and the principles set forth by Paul should be recognized and respected by both the husband and the wife of every marriage.

## Instructions for the Married **Believers**

(1 Cor. 7:10, 11)

"But unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord." Some commentators, like the *Inter*preters Bible, have made a case for the superiority of the words of Christ over that of the "wisest insight" of an apostle. In short, the contention is often made that Paul really did not know whether or not he was speaking from inspiration,

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but that he was absolutely certain when he quoted the words of Christ. For support of such a concommentators tention, these verse twelve which reads: "But to the rest say I, not the Lord. . . In verse ten and verse twelve the contrast is between the oral teaching of Christ concerning divorce and teaching which Paul was d doing under the power of inspiration. In another place, to illustrate, Paul wrote: "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord." In still another place, Paul wrote: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord." In short, in verse ten Paul quoted the words which actually fell from the lips of the Lord Jesus, but in verse twelve there are no actual words from the lips of the Lord Jesus to quote, and Paul thus instructed by means of his inspired apostolic authority. The Holy Spirit did not reveal by inspithat which was already known and accessible. The teaching of the Lord concerning divorce was quite well known. The Corinthians had called in question Paul's apostolic inspiration and authority and under such circumstances, Paul considerably facilitated passing beyond his own inspiration and apostolic authority to quote the very words of Christ himself. (1 Cor. 7:10, 12; 14:37; 1 Thess. 4:15; 5:31, 32; 19:3-12; Matt. Mark 10:12.)

"That the wife depart not husband . . The instruction here contemplates the matter of di-vorce between a husband and wife who are both believers. In the sermon on the mount, Christ had said: "It was said also, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you, that every one that put-teth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an and whosoever adulteress: marry her when she is put away committeth adultery." Paul here cites the teaching of Christ on the subject. Christ did not allow for divorce for any cause, except for fornication, or adultery. Paul did not here mention the exception since the question raised by the Corinthians apparently had to do with

the dislike and ill will of a wife against her husband on matters not arising out of the sin of fornication. The clear emphatic teaching of Christ is that a husband and wife are not to be divorced. The wife must not separate or depart from her husband; and conversely, the husband must not separate or depart from his wife.

"But should she depart . . Here Paul recognizes that, regardless of what Christ commanded, the woman at Corinth, as well as others, might depart, nonetheless.

"Let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband . . ." In case the woman, or a woman, depart under such circumstances, she had no alternative except to remain unmarried. If she found that she had not the continence to contain herself, and thus was aflame with passion, her only source of relief was for her to be reconciled to her husband.

"And that the husband leave not his wife." The meaning here is that the same instructions set forth for a wife, presumably an actual case at Corinth, applies equally to any Christian husband who would divorce his wife who is also a believer.

## Instructions for the Believer Who is Married to an Unbeliever

(1 Cor. 7:12-16)

"But to the rest [that is to others who do not fit into the category of a marriage wherein both partners are believers] say I [by inspired apostolic authority], not the Lord [not by quoting words spoken by the lips of the Lord]: If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him [that is, if the unbelieving wife will agree to their continuing the marriage relationship], let him not leave her [that is, divorce her]."

"And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband." Here the instruction for a wife is the same as in the case of a husband, as per verse twelve.

"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother [or husband] . The likelihood is that Paul was speaking to the point of some specific ques-

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tion that had been asked in the Corinthian letter as a result of some reasoning that had been projected by certain brethren relative to uncleanness in the case of a Christian-non-Christian marriage. question may have been raised as a result of certain Jewish converts having scruples at the thought of a Christian-heathen marriage. Moses had commanded, relative to the seven heathen nations: "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son." (Deut. 7:3.) In turn, the Jews regarded a child as being unholy who was born to Gentile parents. They regarded all Gentile children as being unclean. If a Gentile couple was proselyted to the Jewish faith before a child was conceived, the child when conceived and born was regarded as being holy.

The matter of the unbeliever's being sanctified by his, or her Christian companion must obviously turn on the calculated and anticipated benevolent influence of the believer over the unbeliever. He, or she, by the very nature of the case, will wield a stronger influence over the marriage relationship and over the home than the unbelieving partner could ever do. In many instances, therefore, the unbeliever will become truly verted to Christ, and certainly the children will be taught to know, to fear, to love, and to obey Jehovah. In a very real sense, where one spouse is a true, dedicated Christian, there is a great likelihood that the other spouse will be converted

in time.

"Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart . The believing spouse is under obligation to show good faith to the marriage vows, and to put forth all possible effort for the continuance of the marriage relationship. He, or she, is under no obligation if the unbeliever deliberately proceeds to terminate the

marriage.

"The brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases . . Does Paul mean to say that the believer is free to marry in such a case? A Christian wife has a duty to her husband, whether he is a believer or unbeliever. But should the unbelieving husband or wife

insist upon making the Christian profession a ground of separation, let them depart. The believing husband or wife will not be held responsible for the separation. This however, does not provide grounds for remarriage. Fornication or adultery is the only ground for the innocent party to marry again. (Matt. 19:9.)

"But God hath called us to peace." Whether ultimately the unbelieving partner remains or departs, the believer must maintain the spirit and humility which, under normal circumstances, will

make for peace.

"For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" Verse fifteen is one of Paul's characteristic parentheses, and thus verse sixteen logically and properly connects with verse fourteen. Paul's questions in verse sixteen are rhetorical. They carry their own answer.

#### Instructions to Virgins Concerning the Expediency of Marriage (2 Cor. 7:25-28)

"Now concerning virgins [the Corinthians had inquired as to whether or not fathers should give their virgins or unmarried daughters in marriage, or whether virginity was preferable to marriage] I have no commandment of the Lord [Christ had not, while on earth, spoken to the point of the question under consideration]: but I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be truthworthy" Paul's judgment was formed from that which had been spoken by the Lord and by that which had been revealed to him by the Spirit regarding marriage, and which judgment was, therefore, trustworthy.

"I think therefore that this is good by reason of the distress that is upon us [the likelihood is that Paul's instruction was given in light of approaching persecutions upon the Christians everywhere and also the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, which destruction was foretold by Daniel and Christ], namely, that it is good for a man to be as he is." That is, if he is unmarried then remain unmarried.

"Art thou bound unto a wife? seek

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not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife:" contemplation of the distress was upon them, he should not seek

a wife.

"Rut shouldest thou marry, thou hast not sinned [this was true bemarriage was natural honorable in spite of the distress]; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Yet such shall have tribulation in the flesh [an excessive amount of tribulation as a result of the nearing distress]: and I would spare you."

## **Instructions to Widows Concerning** the Expediency of Remarriage

(1 Cor. 7:39, 40)

"A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth [the Corinthians had inquired as to the advis-

ability of a widow remarrying, and there may have been a widow of fellowship who their desired to marry; anyway, here expressed is the vital principle of marriage-the fact that marriage was intended to indissoluble except by death]; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will: only in the Lord." Only to a faithful Christian.

"But she is happier if she abide as she is [in light of the distress that was nigh upon them], after my judgment: and I think that I also have the Spirit of God." Though Paul could quote from the lips of Christ on cortain matters relative to Christ on certain matters relative to marriage, he could not so quote him with respect to this question, but he was confident that what he had said was from the Spirit of God.

#### PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

John and Jane Smith, both Christians, had been married for seven vears. There were no children. John was shiftless, but true to his marriage vows. Jane had a good position. In time she sued for divorce. After months of trying to get Jane to return, John dropped out of church attendance and later remarried. Jane now proposes to marry again. *Now, for your reac-tion:* (1) Jane does not have the right to marry again. (2) She has the right since her previous husband has married again. (3) John had the right to remarry since Jane deserted him. (4) Neither Ĭohn nor Jane have the right to remarry.

Lucille Jones' husband, a long-time elder, died suddenly a year ago. Lucille has fallen in love with a well-to-do business man, but he is not a member of the church of Christ, and he is not especially religious. *Now, for your reaction*: (1) The elders should instruct Lucille that she has the right to marry, but only in the Lord. (2) While the man is not a member of the church.

he is not an unbeliever in the sense of unbelievers. Paul wrote (3) The expression "only in the Lord" means the same as "children obey your parents in the Lord."

Gertie is a good Christian twenty-two years. She by nature needs very much to marry, but there are really no available Christians in the town where she lives. She has really had no suitor, except for the past few months, a bachelor ten years her senior, a man of reasonable respect but not religious, has asked her to marry him. Gertie wants to do so. Now, for your reaction: (1) The word of God does prohibit Gertie's marrying non-Christian. (2) Gertie is under "marry only in the obligation to Lord." (3) Gertie should hold on to the man, but delay marriage until he has been baptized. (4) There is a difference in a young person who is marrying a non-Christian in a first marriage and in widow or widower marrying a non-Christian.

#### **Questions for Discussion**

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

Foreword

From what city did Paul write First Corinthians?

What evidence shows that he had written a letter to the Corinthians prior to his writing of this epistle?
What evidence shows there was an epistle written between the writing of First Corinthians and the writing of Second

Corinthians?

Andre

Discúss

The Problem for Today's Lesson

What are the problems concerning in today's lesson?

Bustanoby's statement this

the extent of this problem today.
What will be the result of
in our American society problem in the and church of the Lord? What kind of influence should the church

be in helping to solve this problem?

#### The Golden Text

God institute marriage? What When did reason did he give for doing so?
or what purposes did God For what purposes did riage? Against what institute maris marriage shield?

Against what conditions has marriage stood in contrast over the years?

#### The Text Explained

What two specific things concerning mar-riage had the Corinthians evidently inquired about in their letter to Paul?

what light must Paul's counsel regarding the desirability of marriage be understood?

hat did Paul specifically forbid at outset of his discussion of marri What did of marriage? For what reason?

Discuss the meaning of Paul's "I give charge, yea Lord." statement, not I, but

What was Paul's instruction conce matter of divorce of husband concerning the wife who were believers?

What were Paul's instructions to the lievers who were married to unbelievers?

Why did Paul say that he said this and "not the Lord"?

By whom and for what reason may this question have been raised in the Corinthian church?

How is a marriage sanctified by the believing partner?

What was the believer's obligation if his

anticipation of what approaching situation were Paul's instructions to virgins given?

What were his instructions?

Would one have sinned if he had married at this time?

Paul did foresee for those who married in view of the events to come?

How long is a wife bound to her husband?

To whom may a widow be married?

## Lesson VI-August 8, 1976

and

## WARNINGS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

#### Lesson Text

1 Cor. 10:1-13

For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

2 And were all baptized unto Mo-

ses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spirit-

4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ.

5 Howbeit with most of them God was not well pleased: for they were

overthrown in the wilderness.

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

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

Neither let us commit fornica-

as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

9 Neither let us make trial of the Lord, as some of them made trial,

and perished by the serpents.

10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer.

Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admoni-tion, upon whom the ends of the ages are come.

12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

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.

Devotional Reading.—1 Cor. 10:14-33.

Golden Text.—"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." (Rom. 15:4.)

## Daily Bible Readings

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W......Christ Quotes Scripture (Mark 12:18-27) August 4. August 5. T......Searching the Scriptures (John 5:37-45) F........ Warnings Drawn From the Old Testament (Heb. 3:17-19) August 6. S...... Example of Sin in the Old Testament (Ex. 32:1-6) August 7. S..... Examples of Faithfulness (Heb. 11:1-12) August 8.

Time.—Written in the spring of either A.D. 54 or 55. Place.—Paul wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

Persons.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

#### Foreword

As was pointed up in the "Fore-word" of the last lesson, a thorough study of Paul's two epistles to the church at Corinth will necessarily include information relative to the fact that Paul probably wrote four epistles and made at least three visits to that church. The case for the three visits follows:

1. Paul made his first visit to Corinth in about A.D. 52 and remained there until sometime in A. D. 53. This is one of the more certain dates in the life and travels of Paul. To illustrate, Luke that Gallio was proconsul. Gallio was a brother of Seneca, and a limestone inscription from the A.D. 1909 finding of the Hagias Elias quarries near Delphi dates Gallio's proconsulship in Achaia May 1, 52 to May 1, 53. Paul remained in Corinth for many days after having been arraigned before the judgment seat of Gallio. (Acts 18:12-16.)

2. Paul made three visits to Corinth. The first visit was when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia. When Paul wrote Second Corinthians, he recorded: "Behold, this is the third time I am ready to come to you." In another place, "This is the third time I am coming to you," and "When I was present the second

time." (2 Cor. 12:14; 13:1, 2.)

Further, when Paul wrote First Corinthians, he seemed to have made only the first visit to Corinth. To illustrate, he wrote: "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God." And again, "I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it." and still again, "Now I praise you that ye remember me in all things, and hold fast the traditions, even as I delivered them to you." (1 Cor. 3:2; 11:2.) These scriptures imply that when Paul certainly

wrote First Corinthians he had been

there only the one time.

When Paul wrote First Corinhe had planned visit. He still intended to make the visit as the following statement indicates: "Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will; and I will know, not the word of them that are puffed up, but the power." (1 Cor. 4:18, 19; 16:10, 11.)

4. At the time Paul wrote First Corinthians, what he knew about the Corinthians was derived from the household of Chloe and from a letter written to him by the Corinthian church. (1 Cor. 1:11; 5:1;

When Paul left Corinth after his first stay of a year and six months, he sailed for Syria, and after a stop-over at Ephesus, he went up to Jerusalem and saluted the church, and then went down to Antioch of Syria. After having spent some time there, he departed and set out on his third missionary journey. He "went through the region of Galatia, and Phrygia, in order, establishing all the disciples." (Acts 18:18-23.)

Paul then, "having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus," the capital of the prov-

ince of Asia in Asia Minor.

7. Paul was in Ephesus for two years and three months, and when he left Ephesus, upon the uproar aroused by Demetrius, he went to Troas, and from there to Macedonia. There he met Titus and learned that for the most part the brethren at Corinth had accepted his letter. These were the circumstances when he wrote Second Corinthians. In that letter, as already set out, he said, "This is the third time that I am coming to you." (2 Cor. 13:1, 2: 12:14.)

8. Thus, it appears sometime

after Paul left Corinth the first time and before he wrote Second Corinthians, he had made another visit to Corinth, no doubt from Ephesus.

9. Paul must necessarily have had in mind that second visit to which reference has been made when he wrote, as per Second Corinthians: "But I call God for a witness upon my soul, that to spare you I forbare to come unto Corinth. Not that we have lordship over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for in faith ye stand fast. But I determined this for myself, that I would not come again to you with sorrow." Now, the point of this reading is that Paul had visited the church at Corinth at a point and time when he had a great burden on his heart

against the church, itself; and on that visit, he also had made the church sorry. Those attendant circumstances just would not fit Paul's first visit to Corinth, a visit which extended over an eighteen months period of time or longer. The fact that Paul had made such a visit under such trying circumstances, as indicated in his Second Corinthians to which reference has just been made, is further reflected in the seventh chapter of the same epistle. He wrote: "For though I made you sorry with my epistle, I did not regret it: though I did regret it (for I see that epistle made you sorry, though but for a season)." (2 Cor. 1:24-2:1; 7:8.)

#### THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY'S LESSON

The problem concerning warnings is one that should be particularly emphasized. The true disciple of Christ must know the Old Testament as well as the New Testament.

The denominational world has not properly differentiated between the Old Testament and the New. For example, they justify the use of instrumental music in the worship on the basis that instrumental music was commanded in the Old Testament. Members of the church of the Lord have been taught that the law of Moses, as defined in the Old Testament, has been abolished, Christ nailed the law to the cross. (Col. 2:14.) On learning and being fully impressed with the fact that Christ nailed the law of Moses to the cross, many members of the church have concluded that there is little need to study the Old Testament, and thus they know very little about the great truths contained therein.

Such superficial Bible students overlook the great lessons to be learned from the study of the Old Testament, including the warnings that have been so specifically stated. Some reasons for studying the Old Testament would necessarily include the following:

- 1. The Old Testament furnishes a person with a historical background for the New.
- 2. The Old Testament interlocks with the New by means of types and shadows, thereby confirming that the God of the Old Testament is also the God of the New.
- 3. The Old Testament records Messianic prophecy, and the New Testament records the fulfillment thereof
- 4. The Old Testament furnishes the Christian with examples in righteousness and with warnings against sin.

#### The Golden Text

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." (Rom. 15:14.)

No person can come to a mature comprehension of God, his justice and his mercy, without a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament, including especially the prophetical writings. The examples of how God dealt with men during the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations

give point and compass as to how God will deal with men in this Christian dispensation. The Old Testament reflects the justice of God, the impartiality of God, and the mercy of God. It sets forth clearly and specifically, by instruction and example, the punishments for doing evil, and the blessings for doing good. Truly, the things that were written aforetime were written for the Christian's learning.

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## The Text Explained

## **Baptized unto Moses**

(1 Cor. 10:1-4)

"For": Here Paul continues his rebuke to the Corinthians for their worldliness and complacency. He had just recited for their benefit how that he buffeted his body and brought it into bondage, lest by any means that after he had preached to others, he himself would be re-

jected. (9:27.)

"I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea . . ." Here Paul turns to the significance of the deliverance of the Israelites from bondage. The Corin-Egyptian thians could learn a much needed lesson by a reflection on the history of the Israelites, for their deliverance was a type of the deliverance of the Corinthians from sin. Paul would not have the Corinthians to ignorant of that history; rather, he would not have them to be ignorant of the significance of the events associated with the Exodus. The cloud was the means of divine guidance, and the sea was the Red Sea, through which the Israelites crossed. The Exodus account reads: "And the angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud removed from before them, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud and the darkness, yet gave it light by night: and the one came not near other all the night." (Ex. 14:19, 20.)

all baptized were Moses in the cloud and in the sea . . . " When the sea had opened up to the Israelites and they were passing through it on dry ground, they were baptized in "the cloud and in the sea." There was literally a wall of water on each side of the Israelites, and there was a cloud that hovered above them. Paul called this a baptism unto Moses. The passing through of the Red Sea resulted in the people's being united with Moses and brought under his complete control and Tleadership. Until that baptism, Pharaoh was rivaling Moses for the control and leadership of the Israelites, but the control and authority

of Pharaoh was cut off by means of that baptism. Moses was a type of Christ; and in the same manner that the Israelites had put off their enemy, the Egyptians, through baptism unto Moses, the Corinthians had put off their enemy, Satan and the bondage of sin, by their being baptized into Christ. (Gal. 3:26, 27.)

"And did all eat the same spiritual food [the manna which fell in the wilderness]; and did all drink of the same spiritual drink [in keeping with Jehovah's command, Moses smote the rock, and the water gushed out]: for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them | as they drank from the smitten rock they also were drinking from a spiritual rock]: and the rock was Christ." The emphasis here is on the fact that Christ, the true rock, was the source of all the blessings that flowed out to the Israelites as they journeyed to the promised land.

## They Were Overthrown in the Wilderness

(1 Cor. 10:5-10)

"Howbeit with most of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness." Here Paul depicts the Israelites' beginning and their ultimate end. Only two men of the generation that left Egypt "from twenty years old and upward," entered into the promised land. Those two men were Joshua and Caleb. All the others, as a result of their rebellious sins, perished in the wilderness. (Num. 14:26-32.)

"Now these things were our examples [this history was recorded in order that the Corinthians and all others might profit by it], to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted." The Israelites had removed some distance from Mount Sinai, and the record reads: "And the mixed multitude [possibly the Egyptians that had amalgamated with the Israelites] that was among them lusted exceedingly: and the children of Israel also wept again and said. Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the flesh, which we did eat in Egypt for nought; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic: but

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now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all save this manna to look upon." God respected their cries, and by means of wind blew in quails from the sea. The people in lustful delight ate the quail, and in turn were smitten of a great plague. "The name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people that lusted." (Num. 11:4-6; 31-34.)

"Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them . . The reference some by them. The reference was gone up into the mountain; and the people prevailed on Aaron to make a golden calf. And the people said: "These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of

Egypt." (Ex. 32:4.)
"As it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." When the golden calf had been made, the Israelites, in revelry, sang and danced about the idol. Paul was warning the Corinthian church to shun to participate in the sacrificial feasts of the heathens at Corinth. (Num. 35:15-20.)

"Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand." The Israelites twenty thousand." The Israelites were ensnared to commit fornication with the daughters of Moab, by counsel of Balaam (Num. 31:16), and as a result a plague broke out among those Israelites. There was a total of twenty-four thousand that died. Paul gives the number that died in one single day, "three and twenty thousand." (Ex. 25:1-9.) The Corinthian Christians certainly were in grave need of this admonition.

"Neither let us make trial of the Lord, as some of them made trial, and perished by the serpents." The reference here is to the time when the Israelites had journeyed to compass the land of Edom. Under great heaviness and discouragement, they spake against God and against Moses. God became angry with them and sent fiery poisonous serpents among them. Many of the people died. On this occasion of Isrebellion, God instructed Moses to beat out a brazen serpent and put it on a pole in camp. Those who looked on the brazen serpent were healed of their poisonous snake bites. There was no connection between the thing to be

done and the end to be accomplished, but the doing of that thing desired results. procured the (Num. 21:4-9.) The Corinthian Christians certainly needed to profit

by this case of rebellion.

"Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer." This admonition to the Corinthians had reference to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, gether with certain of the children of Israel including two hundred and fifty princes, who revolted against Moses and Aaron. They called in question the authority of Moses and Aaron, just as some of the Corinthian Christians had called in question Paul's apostolic authority. "Ye take too much upon you seeing all of the congregation are holy" was the charge that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram made against Moses and The earth swallowed those three men, their families, and all that appertained to them. Fire devoured two hundred fifty men that offered the incense, and a total of 14,700 more died by a plague. What a fearful warning this was to the Corinthian Christians, as well as all Christians today. (Num. 16:1-49.)

#### Take Heed Lest You Fall (1 Cor. 10:11-13)

"Now these things happened unto them by way of example [that others, especially Christians, can profit thereby]; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages [the periods of man's history, of which the Christian dispensation is the last] are come." Since these matters are recorded in the Old Testament for the admonition of all Christians of all times and climes how can any times and climes, how can any Christian esteem lightly the earnest study of the Old Testament?

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The Christian can fall from grace, and many have fallen. The Corinthians were characterized by a pride for their learning and philos-ophy. They needed to take warning, and the case is the same for Christians today. Jehovah said: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." (Isa. 66:2.)

"There hath no temptation taken

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you [come upon you] but such as man can bear [no temptation had befallen the Corinthians except that which was common to all men]: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able [able to bear] but will with the temptation make also the way of escape [the Christian must desire that way of escape, and seek for it] that ye may be able to endure it." The assurance herewith is that regardless of the temptation—whether of trials or of fleshly lusts,

God will provide an escape for the person who desires and seeks for one. When a man through choice and conviction reacts negatively to a temptation through his own free will, God acts affirmatively by providing a providential means of escape for that tempted person.

The chart which follows is a summary overview of this lesson. It is worthy of study, and it makes for a good sermon. Christians need to hear more lessons on types and

shadows.

# The Salvation of the Hebrews a Type of the Salvation of Christians (1 Cor. 10:1-13)

Israelites became slaves in Egypt. (Gen. 37:18-20.)

God heard the groanings of the Israelites and provided a deliverer. (Ex. 2:23, 24.)

God sent Moses to deliver the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. (Ex. 3:4, 7, 8, 10.)

God preserved Moses from Pharaoh. Moses fled from Egypt. (Ex. 2:11-15.)

Moses performed miracles in confirmation of his mission. (Ex. 4:1, 8, 9.)

Moses through Aaron made known to the Israelites the plan for their delivery. (Ex. 4:10, 14-16.)

Israelites believed Moses' message. (Ex. 4:19-31.)

Israelites were required to quit serving the Egyptians. (Ex. 12:31-36.)

Israelites were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. (Ex. 14:21-22; 1 Cor. 10:1-4.)

Israelites put off their taskmaster, Pharaoh, in their baptism. (Ex. 14:23-27.)

Israelites rejoiced in their deliverance. (Ex. 15.)

Israelites were not then secure in Canaan. (1 Cor. 10:5.)

Israelites had to make the journey through the wilderness to reach Canaan.

Because the Israelites lusted after evil things, only Caleb and Joshua reached Canaan. Men became servants of sin by obedience to sin. (Rom. 6:16.)

God saw the desire of men to be released from bondage and provided a deliverer. (Gal. 4:1-7; John 3:16.)

God sent his son to deliver men from the bondage of sin. (John 3:16; Heb. 1:9,10.)

God preserved Jesus from Herod. Joseph fled with him to Egypt. (Matt. 2:13-15.)

Jesus performed miracles in confirmation of his mission. (John 20:30, 31.)

Jesus through the apostles made known to the disciples the plan for their delivery. (Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30.)

Disciples believed Christ's message. (John 1:11, 12.)

Disciples were required to repent of their sins. (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3.)

Disciples were baptized into Christ. (Acts 8:38, 39; John 3:23; Rom. 6:1-4.)

Disciples put off their taskmaster, Satan, in their baptism. (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:15, 16; 1 Pet. 3:21.)

Disciples rejoiced in their deliverance. (Acts 2:40-42; Acts 8:39.)

Disciples were not then secure in heaven. (1 Cor. 10:6, 11, 12.)

Disciples had to make the journey through the world to reach heaven.

If Christians lust after evil things as the Israelites did, they will not reach heaven.

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#### PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The adult class of the Anywhere church will complete the study of Revelation in two more lessons, and the teacher has asked for suggestions as to what study they should make next. Mary Smith proposed that they study from the Old Testament, but Bob Brown objected. He said that such a study is a waste of time, that all they needed to know is the New Testament, and that they certainly had not yet mastered Now, for your reaction: (1) Bob Brown is very much mistaken. (2) While a study of the Old Testament is desirable, Bob Brown is essentially correct. (3) The teaching program of the church must necessarily include a planned schedule of study from the Old Testament.

Steve Iones said that he certainly concurred with Bob Brown. "When preachers present a lesson from the Old Testament, I just tune them out, particularly when they preach from the kings and/or the prophets," Jones said. "Such sermons are over my head, and the elders should not permit the preachers to choose such subjects," he averred. Now, for your reaction: (1) Sermons should be relevant and based on the New Testament. (2) Usually, a sermon from the Old Testa-

ment is necessarily long, and the church should get out right on the hour. (3) If a preacher does not choose some of his sermons from the Old Testament, brethren will never realize their need for such a study and will never have a desire for such a study.

Tom Smith disagreed with all that had been said. He averred that Christians are under heaven's imposed obligation to study the Old Testament; that in the absence of such an earnest study they could never become full-grown in Christ; that a knowledge of the Old Testament will fortify Christians against creeping liberalism; and that one can never fully understand the justice and mercy of God and why the death of Christ was necessary without a thorough knowledge of the for Old Testament. Now, reaction: (1) Smith is absolutely correct in all his averments. (2) While some of the things he said are true to a point, he overdrew the case. (3) One reason why the church today tends to be weak doctrinally is the fact that they do not know the Old Testament and, therefore, cannot really understand and profit by the New Testament.

# **Questions for Discussion**

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

Foreword

ow many epistles did Paul write to the Corinthian church? Give evidence that Paul made three visits to Corinth.

The Problem for Today's Lesson

What false conclusion have many members of the church drawn concerning the Old Testament? are four reasons for studying the Old Testament?

#### The Golden Text

what is learned from the examples in the Old Testament? What is reflected in the Old Testament?

The Text Explained

Of what was the deliverance of the Israelites a type?

How were the Israelites baptized "unto Moses"?

How was the baptism of the Israelites unto Moses a type of the Corinthians' baptism unto Christ? Israelites

Discuss Paul's statement, "and the was Christ."

Who of the Israelites who left Egypt entered into the promised land? Why were these things examples to the Corinthians?

What incidents did Paul use as examples for admonition of the Corinthians?
Who, as well as the Corinthians, did Paul say would profit from these admonitions?
Discuss Paul's statement, "Let him that

thinketh he standeth take heed lest he

That is God's promise concerning a Christian's temptation? What conditions must be met in order to enjoy this promise? What

Discuss the ways in which the salvation of the Hebrews is a type of the salvation of Christ.

Discuss "Problems and Their Possible Solutions."

# Lesson VII-August 15, 1976

# DISORDER AT THE LORD'S TABLE

#### Lesson Text

1 Cor. 11:20-34

20 When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper:

21 For in your eating each one taketh before *other* his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is

drunken.

22 What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and put them to shame that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you? In this I praise you not.

23 For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which

he was betrayed took bread;

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and

drink of the cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body.

30 For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep.

31 But if we discerned ourselves,

we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

33 Wherefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait one

for another.

34 If any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your coming together be not unto judgment. And the rest will I set in order whensoever I come.

Devotional Reading. —1 Cor. 11:17-19.

Golden Text.—"This do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19.)

# **Daily Bible Readings**

August 9. M	
August 10. T	Lord's Supper in Worship (1 Cor. 11:23-34)
August 11. W	
	Authority for Worship (Acts 2:37-47)
August 13. F	Institution of the Supper (Matt. 26:26-30)
August 14. S	Supper in the Kingdom (Luke 22:14-23)
August 15. S	

Time.—Written in the spring of either A.D. 54 or 55.

Place.—Paul wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

Persons.-Paul and the saints at Corinth.

# Foreword

What mere mortal could write, more than two thousand years ago, an intimate letter or epistle that would be as relevant and up-to-date for churches today as it was for the church to whom it was initially addressed? This is the very case with Paul's epistle to the church at Corinth. Paul wrote

First Corinthians as a personal, and occasional letter. somewhat, letter is distinguished by its manysidedness. No other letter in entire New Testament is so manysided as is this one. The letter was practical very approach to the problems human common prevailed in the church at Corinth

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at that point and time, and it touched upon all areas of human

conduct and worship.

In that letter, Paul applied eternal and unimpeachable principles to the solutions of the problems at hand—the problems of lusts, rebelions, and foibles of the saints at Corinth. The applications of those principles to the problems at hand account for the relevancy of the epistle for churches today; for those principles are just as viable and relevant for churches today as they were when the letter was first written to the Corinthians.

The church at Corinth was in the world, but, more than that, the world was in the church. The case of the church's being in the world was as it should have been, but the case of the world's being in the church was not as it should have been. Sensuality prevailed throughout the Corinthian society of that

day and time, and the Corinthian Christians had broken with pagan society in a manner that was, at best, indefinite—in fact, it was barely recognizable in many instances. Those Christians had enjoyed in prior time their participation in the lusts and sensuality of the day, and they were quite reluctant to make a definite and drastic break with such participation.

When men in the church of today clamor for teaching and study that are relevant to today's world, what greater relevance can there be than a comparison of the prevailing attitude and course of life of those Christians in Corinth with the prevailing attitude and course of life of Christians in America today. The church of the Lord today, generally speaking, is materialistic and worldly, and the line that it draws between itself and the world is also barely discernible.

## THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY S LESSON

The problem of the Lord's supper—as per this lesson, "Disorder at the Lord's Table"—raises a number of recurring questions and problems. To illustrate, there are those who contend that no obligation lies for the observance of the Lord's supper on every first day of the week; there are others who contend for a first-day-of-the-week observance of the Lord's supper, but they do not eat the bread and drink the

fruit of the vine discerningly, or worthily; and there are those who contend that the Lord's supper may be observed on any week-day as scripturally as on the first day of the week.

The scriptural time and the discerning manner for the observance of the Lord's supper is mandatory upon Christians everywhere. A close study of the subject is imperative, and it is rewarding, as well.

#### The Golden Text

"This do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19.)

This was the admonition of Jesus to his disciples on the occasion of the institution of the Lord's supper observance. The admonition implies two pertinent matters: (1) It gives the specific purpose for the observance; and (2) it necessarily indicates a regularity of observance. The purpose for the observance was, and is, to call to the memory of the disciples how that Jesus sacrificed his body and his blood in their behalf. The regularity of the observance was to be upon each first day of the week, as set forth later by both example and necessary inference.

The obligation to remember Christ through the proper observance of the Lord's supper is as imperative for Christians today, as it was then for the disciples who were present when the observance was first instituted. The Lord's supper is a communion, or a joint participation; it is a proclamation, or a public and set observance that proclaims faith in Christ's second coming; it is an examination, or a time of self-inspection; and it is a commemoration, or a serious discerning.

To state the case in another form, the Lord's supper contemplates the past, the present, and the future. For the past, it is a memorial, for the present, it is a symbol, and for the future, it is a prophecy. The Christian religion is singular in that it has no rites or outward or external forms—except for the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's

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supper. These two inter-related ordinances cover, when considered together, the whole of the righteousness of God—the gospel of Christ. Baptism is a once in a life-

time ordinance; whereas, the Lord's supper is a continuous ordinance to be repeated again and again over a lifetime with definite and prescribed regularity.

# The Text Explained

# Order at the Lord's Table

(1 Cor. 11:20-22)

The Corinthians, in addition to their many problems and sins, had violated several principles pertaining to an acceptable order of worship. In chapters eleven through fourteen, Paul discusses the irregularities of worship which prevailed in the Corinthian church. One chief irregularity pertained to the

Lord's supper observance.

therefore assemble цe yourselves together [Paul is speaking of the assembly of the church on the Lord's day, the first day of the week], it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper [the Corinthians were in the lord's supper in the corinthians were in the lord's supper [the Corinthians were supper [the C inthians were in no physical and spiritual condition to reverently and discerningly eat of the Lord's supper]: for in your eating each one taketh before other his own supper [this was a customary love feast which was, at Corinth at least, eaten prior to the period of worship, which worship included the observance of the Lord's supper]; and one is hungry [these were the poor], and another is drunken [those who had wherewith to eat had eaten to gluttony and had drunk to drunkenness, and were in no physical and spiritual condition to discerningly eat of the Lord's supper]."

The love feast initially consisted of that which today would be termed a "fellowship dinner." Peter and Jude both wrote of the love

feast. (2 Pet. 2:13; Jude 12.)

The poor and the slaves could assemble only after the day's work was over, and there was no regularity of quitting time in that heathen city. Within the context of that prevailing social order, Paul admonished: "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat [the Lord's supper] wait one for another." (11:33.)

"What, have ye not houses to eat and drink in?" The very asking of the question carried its answer. Certainly the Corinthians had houses to eat and drink in, and if their coming together was merely

to feed themselves, they should have stayed at home. Paul did not by this question condemn the "love feast," or fellowship dinner, but he outright condemned the mad rush, the undignified scramble of the rich for their food, while the poor and hungry looked on. The Lord's day worship—the observance of Lord's supper—should have paramount on the minds of those Corinthians as they assembled, and they should have engaged in no activity that would deter their minds the at worship Brethren today may take a lesson at this point. Too often, the intermission between Bible study and wor-ship is characterized by jokes and jesting that turn usually on the preacher's hunting and fishing preacher's hunting and fishing and/or the past Friday and Sturday's football games between local high schools and the rival universities. As was the need of the Corinthians then. Christians need to prepare themselves both physically and spiritually to worship God in spirit and truth on each Lord's day.

"Or despise ye the church of God, and put them to shame that have not?" The behavior of those Corinthian saints brought shame upon the spiritual dignity and decorum of the church—a shame that was calto embarrass the church among the heathens of that society. Further, the behavior of those Corinthian saints with respect to the poor who had not food wherewith to bring—thereby leaving them in a state of embarrassment and humiliation—was lamentably selfish, cruel, deplorable. What a contrast! The hungry poor standing in embar-rassment at some distance and the greedy and drunken rich eating gluttonously of their food with no thought for anyone. The heathens maintained a higher standard ethical conduct than this, for they included the poor in their festival

activities.

"What shall I say to you? shall I praise you? In this I praise you

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not." The whole affair was shameful and revolting. Paul found absolutely no place for a word of praise for those Christians.

# The Design of the Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26)

"For I received of the Lord [by inspiration] that which I also delivered unto you [while in Corinth Paul had carefully taught the church in all areas of Christian conduct and worship], that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed [Matthew, Mark, Luke recorded this incident, and each stated that the Lord's supper instituted at night: Matt. was instituted at night: Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:11-23] took bread; and when he had given thanks [observe, he gave thanks, that is, thanks for that which the bread was a symbol—excluding thanks for the beautiful day and a number of other such things often included by brethren today], he brake it, and said, This is my body [a metaphor—a figure of body [a metaphor—a figure of speech that expresses similitude by a single word, or by calling the bread by another term, and thereby denoting the characteristic which was to be made prominent; namely, the bread represented the body of Christ which was to be, and now has been, sacrificed for the salvation of man], which is for you [which is given to be sacrificed for your welfare]: this do in remembrance of me [do this as a means of remembering the sacrifice that I have made for you]."

"In like manner also the cup [a figure of speech wherein the container is put for what it contained, the fruit of the vine], after supper, saying, this cup [the fruit of the vine] is the new covenant in my blood [a way of saying that the shedding of Christ's blood was the means of establishing and ratifying the new covenant]: this do, as often as ye drink of it [indicating a regular time of observance], in remembrance of me."

"For as often as ye eat the bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." The observance of the Lord's supper is a proclamation. Not every Christian is. or can be, a public proclaimer of his faith in the death, burial, resurrection, and second coming of Christ; but every Christian—

whether man, woman, or child—can proclaim his faith, and that publicly, when he regularly, and solemnly, and discerningly observes the Lord's supper on every Lord's day.

# Eating and Drinking in an Unworthy Manner

# (1 Cor. 11:27-34)

"Wherefore whosoever shall the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord." Paul here strikes at the very core of the sin of the Corinthians relative to their observance of the Lord's supper. They had physically and in reality eaten of the bread, and they had drunk of the fruit of the vine, but they had eaten and drunk in an unworthy manner. Their heart was not in their observance; and their observance was a mere form. Their sins of divisions and parties tosins of divisions and parties, to-gether with their abuse of the love feast, left them in no spiritual condition to properly and acceptably observe the Lord's supper. How often today do Christians literally eat of the bread and drink of the fruit of the vine without having a really serious and meditative thought relative to the significance thereof! Great emphasis should be thereof! Great emphasis should be put on the necessity for the proper manner that must prevail in the heart of every Christian as he eats of the bread and drinks of the fruit of the vine. The statement, "guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord," meant that any person who ate of the Lord's supper in an unworthy manner profaned the body and blood of Christ, for which the observance was intended to memo-

"But let a man prove himself [subject himself to a complete self-examination], and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup." The proper observance of the Lord's supper demands that one eat and drink in a proper manner. But there are those who aver that they have examined themselves, and they have found that they were unworthy to partake, and therefore they decline to do so. They fail to realize that Paul did not demand that anyone be worthy to partake. In fact, no Christian is really worthy. The condition involved is the

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manner of observance. He who partakes must do so discerningly and worthily, or in a worthy manner

"For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself [he comes under a judgment of condemnation], if he discern not [the Lord's supper from any other meal] the body [the Lord's body which he freely sacrificed on the cross in order that all men might have eternal life]."

"For this cause many among you are weak [deficient in spiritual stamina and vigor] and sickly [spiritually or morally unsound] and not a few sleep [spiritually dead]." Let Christians everywhere take warning! If they absent themselves from the worship for a day on the lake or for other lame reasons, or even if they are in attendance but eat of the Lord's supper in a frivolous manner, "they bring judgment unto" themselves.

"But if we discerned ourselves, we should not be judged [escape the condemnation that was so

threatening]."

#### PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Rose was expecting relatives to arrive from a distant city, and he took a seat in the back of the auditorium so as to greet them when they arrived. He explained to the other elders that he was very alarmed at what he observed. As the bread and fruit of the vine were being served, several young people were smiling, whispering, and jabbing each other. They partook of the supper in a very casual way and continued their exchange. Further, a mother and daughter were fondly playing with the grandbaby, and the song leader hummed under his breath one song and then another. Now, for your reaction: (1) The elder is unduly alarmed. (2) He is justifiably alarmed. (3) The elders should cause some strict and pertinent teaching to be done relative to the necessity of eating the Lord's supper in a worthy manner. (4) What elder Rose observed is not unusual among the churches Christ.

There is a contingency in the Anywhere church who complain if the entire worship period extends "But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world." The chastenings of the Lord are for the welfare of the saints so that they may not suffer in that final condemnation of the world. The Lord loveth those whom he chasteneth. "It is for chastening that ye endure; God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father chasteneth not? But if ye are without chastening, whereof all have been made partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. 12:7-9.)

"Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat [the Lord's supper], wait one for another." The thought is that the free and more affluent members should wait patiently until the poor could arrive; and further, each member should take full thought and consideration for the well being of all

the other members.

beyond an hour. Their attitude seems to be "hurry this up and get it over with." Now, for your reaction: (1) The likelihood is that those of the contingency do not really partake of the Lord's supper in a worthy manner. (2) There is absolutely no justification for such an indictment against the contingency. (3) There is abundant justification for the demands of the contingency. (4) To say the least of matters, the attitude of the contingency is questionable.

There is a contingency in the Downtown church who assert that Christians can partake of the Lord's supper on any day in the week. The group has been holding "cell" meetings on Tuesday night, at which time they partake of the Lord's supper. The elders know about the contingency, but they have taken no action. Now, for your reaction: (1) The elders should take no action, for this is none of their business. (2) The contingency constitutes a very grave

problem which cannot be overlooked. (3) The contingency is correct when they state that brethren can scripturally eat the Lord's supper on any day in the week. (4) The Christian has an obligation to observe the Lord's supper on, and only on, the first day of the week.

### **Questions for Discussion**

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

#### Foreword

what way did Paul write First Corinthians?

By what is the epistle distinguished?
What did Paul apply to the solution of the problems of the saints at Corinth?
What does the application of the principles account for today? Why?
What condition existed at Corinth?
What line had the Corinthian Christians

failed to draw?

#### The Problem for Today's Lesson

What was the problem at Corinth as dis-cussed in today's lesson? What recurring questions and problems are raised by the problem in today's today's lesson?

#### The Golden Text

What two pertinent matters are by the golden text? What is the Lord's supper to Christians? implied

That is the Lord's supper for the past? for the present? for the future? What What kind of ordinance is the Lord's supper?

#### The Text Explained

Why was it not possible for the Corin-thians to eat the Lord's supper?

Who was hungry?

Who was drunken?
What was the "love feast"?
What did Paul condemn by his statement,
"What, do ye not have houses to eat
and to drink in?"

lesson should brethren today take from this admonition? What had the behavior of the Corinthians

done to the church?

What shameful act hat shameful act showed they did no maintain a standard as high as the hea-

What was the violation of the Corinthians relative to their observance of the

Lord's supper? What does ' Paul mean by "an unworthy

manner"? What does the proper observance of the Lord's supper demand?

What false conception do brethren have concerning being worthy to partake?

## Lesson VIII—August 22, 1976

# REGULATION OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

#### Lesson Text

1 Cor. 14:1-9, 18, 19, 37, 38

Follow after love: vet desire earnestly spiritual *gifts*, but rather that ye may prophesy.

For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man understandeth; but

in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. 3 Bût he thất prophesieth speaketh unto men edification, and exhorta-

tion, and consolation.

4 He that speaketh in a tongue edifieth himself; but he that proph-

esieth edifieth the church.

5 Now I would have you all speak but rather that with tongues, should prophesy: and greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

But now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching?

7 Even things without life, giving a voice, whether pipe or harp, if

they give not a distinction in the sounds, how shall ft be known what is piped or harped?

8 For if the trumpet give an unvoice, who shall prepare certain himself for war?

9 So also ye, unless ye utter by the tongue speech easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye will be speaking into the air.

I thank God, I speak with 18

tongues more than you all:

19 Howbeit in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the

commandment of the Lord. But if any man is ignorant, let him be ignorant.

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DEVOTIONAL READING. —1 Cor. 14:10-40.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"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." (1 Cor. 13:8.)

# Daily Bible Readings

August 16. M A	Apostles to Be Baptized in Holy Spirit (Acts 1:1-8) Promise Fulfilled (Acts 2:1-4)
August 17. T	Promise Fulfilled (Acts 2:1-4)
August 18. W	Gifts Through Apostles' Hands (Acts 8:14-17)
August 19 T	Spirit Without Measure to Christ (John 3:31-35)
August 20. F	Gifts at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-6)
August 21. S	
August 22. S	Spiritual Gifts to Be Terminated (Eph. 4:1-16)

TIME.—Written in the spring of either A.D. 54 or 55.

PLACE.—Paul wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

Persons.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

#### Foreword

members of the Godhead may, and should be, termed persons of the Godhead. Each member— God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit-is a divine person. Each possesses the divine nature. There is one divine nature, but there are three distinct personalities. Each member of the Godhead performed his own distinct work both in the creation of the world, and also in the institution of the gospel scheme of redemption, namely:

1. In the creation of the world, God was the designer of the order and extent of that creation; and in the institution of the gospel scheme of redemption, God was also the de-

2. In the creation of the world, Christ, the Word, was the executor of God's design; and in the institution of the scheme of redemption, Christ was the executor of that design—he died on the cross.

3. In the creation of the world, the Holy Spirit was the finisher, the organizer, or the beautifier of those things that had been created; and in the institution of the scheme of redemption, the Holy Spirit was the finisher, the revealer, of that scheme.

The Holy Spirit, as a means of accomplishing his work in behalf of the scheme of redemption, operated measures or endowments through of power as he was directed by the Father to so do. Through those measures or power, the Holy Spirit communicated the will of the Father and the Son through inspired words to the apostles and others, as follows:

1. Through the Holy Spirit, the ostles received the baptismal apostles measure of the Holy Spirit. They, thereby, possessed all the gifts of the Spirit as enumerated by the apostle Paul-namely: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning spirits, divers kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues. Cor. 12:4-11.)

Through the Holy Spirit, the apostles were empowered to convey the gifts of the Holy Spirit, by the laying on of their hands on the dis-

ciples.

One irregularity of the Lord's day worship at Corinth turned on the Corinthians' abuse of their use of spiritual gifts. The peace and good decorum of the worship had been interrupted by those with the gift of "tongues" demonstrating their miraculous powers before the congregation, and that at the time. A state of chaos and confusion prevailed as a result of their abuse of their miraculous gifts.

Paul stated in the outset of his letter to the Corinthians that they came "behind in no gift." (1 Cor. 1:7.) The gift of "tongues" was an inferior gift but the Corinthians but the Corinthians inferior gift,

were very prideful of the gift.

If the gift was possessed by more members than any of the other gifts, the reason lay, no doubt, in the fact that the particular gift was a recognizable miraculous sign with which the unbeliever could see and impressed, for Paul wrote: "Wherefore tongues are for a sign,

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not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving." (1 Cor. 14:22.) Then, too, the gift of tongues, or the power to speak in other languages, facilitated those saints in their teaching when in company with the mixture of languages of that Corinthian society. The gift of healing, and the gift of miracles, were even more striking in power than was the gift of tongues, but apparently those greater gifts were reserved for the

more special occasions, and were to be performed by the apostles.

As for the Corinthians' preference for the gift of tongues, their preference may be accounted for on the basis of their false pride—their desire to make a show before men, and desire to demonstrate their miraculous power. They were more interested in distinction for themselves than they were in edification for others.

## THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY'S LESSON

The problem of miraculous or spiritual gifts—as per this lesson, "Regulation of Spiritual Gifts"—is today a problem within some churches of Christ. What preacher of twenty-five years in the ministry would have ever dreamed that brethren within the churches of Christ would one day "get the Holy Spirit," and speak in tongues, and cast out demons? Who, twenty-five years ago, could have imagined that brethren of the Restoration Movement would ever so depart from the authority of the Word so as to join in, and become a part of, the Pentecostal Movement?

One striking characteristic of a Pentecostal Movement is that of permitting or encouraging women to pray in public and to preach in public. "After all, if a person, whether male or female, gets the Spirit, he cannot remain silent; he is bound to speak," the Pentecostal's

adherents aver.

Christendom on the North American continent was in a hopeless state of confusion about the time the Restoration Movement was conceived and instituted. The masses of the people imagined that they had received the Holy Spirit in

some degree or another. Imagined experiences and communications of the Holy Spirit were the standard of authority for the rank and fixe of those who "had, or got, religion"; and as a result, each man's experience or communication was his standard of authority. Each religionist became an authority unto himself. The Word of God was, in effect, a dead letter, but the imagined feelings, signs, and communications were relied upon in full confidence.

Those who gave life to the Restoration Movement first gave up all erroneous ideas relative to the miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit for this day and age. and they put their implicit trust in the authority of the Word which had been given by the Holy Spirit through inspired men and confirmed, accordingly, by miracles, signs, and mighty works. Except for such a respect and reliance on the Word of God, there never could have been a Restoration Movement in the first place, and that movement can and will continue on the basis of the Word as the absolute standard of authority in all matters of religion.

#### The Golden Text

"Whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be knowledge. it shall be done away." (1 Cor. 13:8.)

The miraculous age of the church was by necessity temporary in nature. When and as that great gospel age began, the inspired message was in the man, but now the message is in the book. When all problems in principle, and common to man, had arisen, and inspired solutions to those problems had been

given, the miraculous age of the church was brought to a close, and that after a natural order of events. In short, the apostles, who had all the spiritual gifts, could, by the laying on of their hands, confer spiritual gifts upon others, but those who received gifts by the laying on of the apostles' hands could not confer those gifts upon still others. When the apostles had died one by one, there were left those who had received gifts through the laying on of the apostles' hands. They

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could not confer their gifts of miraculous power upon others; and thus, when they died, the exercise of miraculous power ceased. The miraculous age of the church came to a close, and that after a natural order of events.

These matters must be held in view in order to understand and appreciate this golden text. When that which was perfect was come -the complete and inspired and re-

vealed Word of God-that which was in part was done away. The "that which was in part" was the inspired revelations given from time to time—and thus in parts—as the problems and needs arose. After this natural order of events, the spiritual gifts of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge, and all others for that matter, were done away. The inspired Word had been moved from the man to the book.

# The Text Explained

Speaking in Tongues and Prophesying

(1 Cor. 14:1-9)

"Follow after love." Paul had aladmonished: "Desire earnestly the greater gifts. And a more excellent way show I unto you." (12:31.) He then proceeded to show that love was, and is, that more excellent way. He now returns to that prior admonition and urges the Corinthians that they follow after love.

desire earnestly gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. . . There was no criticism to be laid against the Corinthians for their desiring to have spiritual gifts. In fact, Paul instructed that they should desire earnestly to pos-sess spiritual gifts, that they may prophesy. The gift of prophecy en-abled the possessor to inform and edify the saints.

"For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God." The gift of tongues, or the divers kinds of tongues, was a gift which enabled the recipient speak in languages which he had not learned. The gift of tongues was not an incoherent jargon ut-tered in a state of ecstasy; but rather, it was a power to speak in languages other than their native tongue. When a person spoke in a tongue, or language, that person was then speaking only to God, if there was no person present who understood the language. In the absence of persons who understood the language, there could be no edification.

no man understandeth; in the spirit he speaketh mysteries." The gift of tongues was an inferior gift. When a Christian spoke in a tongue or language unknown to the audience at hand, no one could unhim and that which he derstand spoke was a mystery, an unknown message, to those who stood by.

"But he that prophesieth [he that teaches by inspiration edifies the saints] speaketh unto men [he speaks in such a way that those who hear can understand] edification, and exhortation, and tion." Herein lies the superiority of the gift of prophecy over the gift of speaking in tongues. The gift of prophecy provided that the recipient would edify, and exhort, and console the saints, and thus build them up in the most holy faith.

"He that speaketh in a tongue edifieth himself [only he to whom the message was revealed would profit by it]; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church."

"Now I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that ue should prophesy: and greater is hе should prophesy: and greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying [only by an interpretation of a tongue could the church be edified]."

"But now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you [if they did not know what he had said, they could not profit by it], unless I speak to you [Paul moves from another to speak of himself] either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching?" Which was the more important, but the profit of the said. Paul's miraculous utterance, or the truth which he imparted?

"Even things without life, giving voice, whether pipe or harp, if give not a distinction in they the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?" The pipe was

a wind instrument, and the harp was a stringed instrument, but neither instrument makes sense—is without tone quality or sense—if it is played upon in an aimless manner. Paul likens such aimless jangling upon an instrument to the way a barbarian language would appeal to the ear and, thereby, fail to profit the mind of a person who did not

know the language.

"For if the trumpet give an unvoice, who shall prepare himself for war?" The trumpet was an instrument that was used to convey a well defined and unmistakablě language of tone quality. Certain notes or tones were used to command the troops at a distance to charge, and other notes or tones were used to command them to retreat. The trumpet is now used as a means of reveille and of taps, that is, the trumpet call at sunrise for the first military formation for the day, and the call at evening for the lights to be put out for the night. Taps is also sounded at a military funeral and/or at memorial services. Now, the notes or tones for reveille are different from the notes and tones for taps. Paul was stressing, therefore, the obligation of the trumpeter to give a certain sound. How else would an army know to prepare to war, or in other words to charge?

"So also ye, unless ye utter by the tongue speech easy to be understood [no speech in an unknown language could be understood], how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye will be speaking into the air [heard without being un-

derstood].່"

#### PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Mrs. Sally Reed of the Upper Division church conducts a weekly sharing class. The class is more a testimony class with emphasis upon what the Lord has done than a Bible class with emphasis upon what the Lord has taught. Mrs. Reed has recounted how that in several instances the Holy Spirit has performed for her. She has affirmed that in one stressing situation the Holy Spirit caused her automobile to run without gasoline for a distance of fifty miles, that in another instance the Holy Spirit caused the automobile of another

Paul's Preference (1 Cor. 14:18, 19)

"I thank God, I speak tongues more than you all: howbeit in the church [in the assembly] I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also [Paul emphasizes again how inferior the gift of tongues was in comparison to the gift of prophecy], than ten thousand words in a tongue." words properly spoken would certainly have more meaning than ten thousand words in a tongue which the audience did not know.

# Authority of Paul's Teaching (1 Cor. 14:37, 38)

"If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord." Here Paul maintains that what he has written is the commandment of the Lord. Paul had written under the power of apostolic inspiration; and if a person were a prophet or spiritual, he would recognize and acknowledge that fact. If, in turn, he should call in question Paul's apostleship, he would demonstrate, thereby, that he was not a prophet. Under no circumstance would the Spirit inspire one man to write one thing; and in turn, direct or inspire another to reject it.

"But if any man is ignorant [if any man shows his ignorance and want of miraculous inspiration by calling in question Paul's apostolic authority], let him be ignorant [let him remain or stand in his state of ignorance for he would be incapa-

ble of a sensible response]."

person to develop engine trouble so that she could take his position in the line of automobiles and was able, thereby, to arrive on time with her daughter, though at the last moment. Now, for your reaction: (1) The elders should not permit this woman to teach a class for she will lead astray many of those who attend. (2) The woman should be left alone, for who is qualified to say that the Holy Spirit has not done these things for her. (3) The woman, and the church as well, needs to be taught fundamental lessons on the mission and work

of the Holy Spirit. (4) The docof neo-pentecostalism is trine dangerous heresv.

Certain members of the Middletown church assert that they have actually spoken in tongues. person contends that he was inspired to sing a new song in a tongue. Now, for your reaction: The gift of tongues was an inferior gift and when Christians claim to speak in tongues they are following the course of the Corin-

thians. (2) The days of inspiration passed with the apostles and early disciples, and no one receives gifts of the Spirit today. (3) The church should fake action against those who make such false claims.

contingency of the Better Known church is known for its advocacy for Christians' getting the

Holy Spirit. They call on women to lead chain prayers in their cell meetings, and they aver that if a woman receives a communication from the Holy Spirit, she has no al-ternative but to speak, and that and that even from the pûlpit. Now, your reaction: (1) If the elders call on a woman to lead a public prayer, or if they invite her to occupy the pulpit, the woman is not usurping authority over men because they gave her the authority in the first Elders cannot place. (2) give woman authority to do more than the word of God has authorized that she can do. (3) Churches of removing them-Christ are really selves from the ancient landmarks when they call on women to lead in prayers and to speak before public Elders mixed audiences. (4)need to take a second preachers look at Paul's teaching regarding

## **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Foreword

How should the members of the Godhead be termed?

was the distinct work each member of the Godhead in creation?

Through what means did the Holy operate to accomplish his work i half of the scheme of redemption? Spirit in What did the Holy Spirit reveal through

this means? What measure of the Holy Spirit did the

apostles receive? What did this measure empower them to

do? What hat was one of worship at Corinth? of the irregularities

What did Paul state concerning the spiri-

tual gifts at Corinth? the Corinthians' may the gift of tongues be accounted for?

The Problem for Today's Lesson

iscuss how the problem which prevailed in Corinth may become a problem Discuss today.

striking is a characteristic

Pentecostal movement?
hat was the condition of religionists
North America at the time of the I Restoration Movement?

concerning the hat principles concernir Spirit were relied upon Holy who gave life to the Restoration Movement?

Discuss the temporary nature of the mi-

raculous age of the church.
What was "that which was perfect"? "that which What was to happen when

was perfect" was come?

## The Text Explained

Why did Paul advise them to follow after love? Which

spiritual gift did Paul give prior-

Define the gift of tongues, and why it was an inferior gift.

Discuss Paul's comparison the gift of tongues to musical instruments.

did Paul say were personal feelings about speaking in tongues?
hat did Paul say about the

authority behind his writing these things?

Lesson IX—August 29, 1976

# PROBLEMS REGARDING THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

#### Lesson Text

1 Cor. 15:12-21, 54-58

12 Now if Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13 But if there is no resurrection

of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised:

14 And if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain.

15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we witnessed of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised.

16 For if the dead are not raised,

neither hath Christ been raised:

17 And if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

18 Then they also that are fallen

asleep in Christ have perished.

19 If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable.

<sup>2</sup> 20 But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them

that are asleep.

21 For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

Devotional Reading.—1 Cor. 15:35-49.

Golden Text.—"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:44.)

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

55 O death, where is thy victory?

O death, where is thy sting?

56 The sting of death is sin; and

the power of sin is the law:

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

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

# Daily Bible Readings

August 23. M	
August 24. T	
	Jesus Promised Resurrection of All (John 5:25-29)
August 26. T	False Doctrine Regarding Resurrection (2 Tim. 2:16-20)
August 27. F	
August 28. S	
August 29. S	Paul Preached the Resurrection (Acts 23:1-10)

Time.—Written in the spring of either A.D. 54 or 55.

Place.—Paul wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus of the province of Asia in Asia Minor.

Persons.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

#### Foreword

In the epistle style First Corinthians, Paul dealt with the manysided problems which prevailed at Corinth. He had written a prior letter to the Corinthians, and some instructions in that letter misunderstood; wherefore, were the Corinthians wrote him a letter in turn and requested certain clarifications relating to the prior letter instructions concerning certain questions that had the members. among grieved already over some and debilitating which gross sins Corinth. He prevailed at learned of those sins from the household of Chloe, and others, but the letter he received from the Corinthians, while containing questions relating certain problems, made no reference to the gross sins which prevailed within the church.

Paul, in his letter styled First Corinthians, dealt first with those sins which prevailed. took up and answered gross then questions concerning which the Co-rinthians had written him. The last problem, or question, to which he gave attention concerned the resurrection of the body. Certain of Corinthians had asserted that there could be no such thing as a resurrection. While bodily ently accepting the resurrection of the body of Christ and also holding the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, some rejected the idea that a body of flesh which had been buried and had disintegrated could ever rise again.

The Greeks, with respect to death and the human body, had been influenced by their great philosopher,

Plato. Plato, along with others,

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taught that man's troubles really began when the spirit of man came in contact with matter. He emphasized, therefore, that the human body was a prison in which the soul of man was incarcerated and from which it sought continually to escape, and that such an escape was accomplished at the time of death. The concept of a resurrection of the physical body was repugnant, therefore, to the Greeks; for to them a resurrection would be a second imprisonment of the soul.

The Jews believed confidently in the resurrection of the body—though many of them believed that when resurrected the new body would be identical with the earthly body—and the Asians had accepted the doctrine of the resurrection of the body as and when they em-

braced the gospel of Christ.

The doctrine of the resurrection of Christ necessarily implies the resurrection of all men, including especially all Christians. Everything that is implied in the term Christian, and everything that the experience of being a Christian contemplates, has its foundation in the miraculous res-

urrection of Christ. His resurrection is the crowning miracle, the very foundation of the Christian faith. No wonder then that Paul affirmed the resurrection as being the very power of the gospel. He declared that if Christ was not raised, our faith is vain, and we are yet in our sins. (1 Cor. 15:17; Eph. 4:19, 20.)

Two chapters stand out in the First Corinthian epistle and rival, or exceed, in beauty and sublimity all of the other chapters of the New Those Testament epistles. chapters are the thirteenth and the fifteenth. Chapter thirteen is perhaps the best known, and it has mellowed the lives of millions, and also it has been memorized by many; but chapter fifteen has no superior in historical significance. Further, no other chapter brought so much comfort to the grief-stricken bereaved of the centhe turies. It has been read, at one time or another, at the funerals of literally millions of deceased per-sons; and without question, it will continue to be so read; and the bereaved of the deceased will continue to take comfort.

#### THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY'S LESSON

The problem of how the body of a man, upon its complete disintegration, can be raised—as per this lesson, "Problems Regarding the Resurrection of the Body"—is one that has engaged the concern of multitudes of people from Paul's day until now. What father and mother, as they looked for the last time info the face and upon the form of a beloved daughter or son, has not asked "Where now is my

darling child? Here is the body, but where is the spirit?" Is the spirit clothed upon with a spiritual body? or must the spirit continue without a body until the general resurrection at which time the decayed physical body will come forth, and the spirit and the body will be united a second time, and death will be destroyed? What assurance is there that the body will, in reality, come forth?

# The Golden Text

"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:44)

15:44.)

The statement, "It is sown a natural body," seems to indicate that the body made of flesh will be buried at the point of death—certain commentators to the contrary, notwithstanding—and at the point and time of the general resurrection, that body will be raised in the form and order of a new body, one that is imperishable and free from the drives of the flesh, and is thereby dominated by the Spirit. Such a spiritual body will have no desire nor capacity for the lusts of the

flesh, or inclinations to evil intellectual and passionate impulses.

Relative to the "spiritual body." Paul leaves the reader to conclude that it will have everything which is essential to personal identity. It will be a resurrection to a new kind of life, and it will be identifiable in every needful respect.

Christ, in his new body after his resurrection, could walk through locked doors; he could appear momentarily, and he could disappear as quickly. At the transfiguration on the mount, Moses and Elijah appeared and conversed with Christ.

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These two prophets were recognizable to the three apostles—Peter and James and John. May not the

# The Text Explained

## If Christ Has Been Raised (1 Cor. 15:12-20)

"Now if Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead . . ." The "if" of this subordinate clause does not imply the possibility that Christ had not been preached, but instead it was a condition precbut instead it was a condition precedent for an argument by means of question which Paul was about to

"How say some among you that there is no resurrection from the dead?" Certain Christians, while granting the resurrection of the body of Christ, had denied the possibility of the bodily resurrection of the saints, as well as all others. Christ was clothed upon with a human body—a body in all respects identical with the bodies of other identical with the bodies of other men. His body had been raised from the dead, and if one human body could be raised, why could not all human bodies be raised? If Christ's body had been raised, how could anyone affirm that there could be no resurrection of the

"Bit if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised": This is a contrary-to-fact statement, and it serves to point up a consequence of such a doctrine. If there could be, as affirmed, no resurrection of the human body, then Christ had not been raised because he abode in a human body—a physical body identical to the human bodies of all other men—and if a physical body could not be raised from the dead, then Christ had not been raised. If the doctrine were true, then Christ was still dead, and his body was still in the tomb, if there were no resurrection from the

"And if Christ hath not raised, then is our preaching vain [as a consequence of the no-bodily resurrection doctrine, the gospel which Paul and the other apostles preached was without substance; the message was false; and there was no saving power in the pro-claimed gospel] your faith is also vain [if the gospel was a mere sham, then the faith that the Corinthians held was a sham also]."

"Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we witnessed of God that he raised up Christ . . " Here Paul states another consequence of the no-bod-ily-resurrection doctrine. If there could be no resurrection, then Paul and the other apostles were liars. They had given false testimony, if there was no resurrection from the dead; for they had claimed to be eye witnesses of Christ after he had been reject up from the dead by the been raised up from the dead by the

Christian contemplate for his own

body some of the same characteris-

tics after its resurrection?

power of God. Thus the apostles were dishonest men, if Christ had not been raised up from the dead.

"Whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised." Those Christians granted the resurrection of the body of Christ, and they held to the doctrine of immortality of the soul of man, but Paul here based all hope of immortality of man on the resurrection of the body of Christ; and if the body of Christ was raised from the dead, then all other bodies would be raised as well. Within this frame of reference then, Paul declared that if the dead are not raised, nei-

ther hath Christ been raised.

"For if the dead are not raised, hath Christ been raised: and if Christ hath not been raised, and if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain, and ye are yet in your sins." Here is another consequence of a no-bodily-resurrection doctrine. Paul had already emphasized that if there could be, as affirmed, no resurrection of the physical body, then the faith of those Grecian Christians was in vain. Paul repeats the fact here; and then he avers that on such a basis then he avers that on such a basis those Grecians were yet in their sins. In short, if there were no resurrection of the body, there was no resurrected saviour; and if there were no resurrected saviour, then there was no salvation from sins; and therefore, those Grecian Christians were yet in their sins. If Christ were not raised from the dead, then he was a condemned Christ—a dead Christ.

"Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ have perished." Here is still another consequence of a no-bodily-resurrection doctrine.

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"those who were fallen asleep Christ" were their loved ones that had died. Some think that the city of Corinth had been besieged by a plague and that more than the usual number of their loved ones had died. There seems to be historical evidence to support the pos-sibility. Anyway, if there were no bodily resurrection, then Christ had not been raised up from the dead; and if had not been raised up from the dead, then their loved ones had perished, that is, they died in their sins and were without hope of a life after death. There was, therefore, no hope beyond the grave for those deceased loved ones, if Christ had not been raised up from the dead. Alas! How the eternal destiny of men turns on the resurrection of Christ!

"If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable." Here is also another consequence of a no-bodily-resurrection doctrine. If all Christ has to offer is that which belongs to this life, if he is only a crucified and dead Christ, then almost anyone would have more to look forward to in this world than would a Christian. Christians, of all men, would be objects of pity if Christ has not been raised from the dead. If there is no resurrection, then Christians have been deluded and misled. They have been made the subjects of a perpetrated fraud.

"But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep." Paul here turns from his contrary-to-fact statements and from the consequences of a no-bodily-resurrection doctrine to affirm with boundless joy the certainty of the resurrection, and to speak of the wonderful consequences of it. The resurrection of Christ, he affirmed, is the firstfruits of all that have died. As Christ was raised from the dead; just so. every person who has ever lived and died will one day come forth from the dead.

# Victory over Death (1 Cor. 15:54-58)

"But when this corruptible I this mortal body] shall have put on incorruption [when the body is changed into an immortal, and spiritual body], and this mortal shall have put on immortality [never

again to die or to be separated from Christ and his righteous brethren and righteous kin], then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

#### An Excursion:

Within this frame of reference. Paul wrote the Corinthians in another letter as follows: "For we know that if the earthly house [the the physical body] of our tabernacle [the physical body] of our tabernacle [the physical body is the dwelling place of man's spirit] be dissolved [returns to the dust], we have a building from God [a dwelling place of the spirit] a house not wade with hands others in the made with hands, eternal in muue with nands, eternal in the heavens. For verily in this [the mortal body] we groan [live in fear of death], longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked [an outcast]. For indeed we that are in this tabornacle do great that arc in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed [Paul had no desire to be a disembodied spirit, but he looked beyond that period of time to the general resurrection when he would receive his spiritual body], but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life. Now he that wrought us for this very thing [designed man to this end] is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit [the Holy Spirit to guide and instruct]. Being there-fore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body [physically alive], 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 [the disembodied state will be far more desirable than the present physical state], and to be at home with the Lord [the spirit will be at home with the Lord]." (2 Cor. 5:1-8.)

Paul not only wrote of the resurrection by means of inspiration but also out of a unique experience. Fourteen years prior to his writing Second Corinthians, he had had the experience of being caught up to the third heaven, up to Paradise. (See 2 Cor. 12:1-4.) He did not know, however, whether he was in the body or out of the body, but he

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said, "God knoweth." The occasion of this experience was, some think, when he was stoned at Lystra and dragged out of the city on the supposition that he was dead. Now, certainly Paul's physical body was not caught up to the paradise of God. Paul must have meant, therefore, that his being in the presence of God made the question of whether or not he was a disembodied spirit a matter of indifference in comparison to his being in a physical body.

"Then shall come to pass [will be fulfilled] the saying that is written [in the Old Testament—Isaiah 25:8], Death is swallowed up in victory [death will be overcome]. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" The quotation is from Hosea 13:14, and it has the overtones of the redeemed

who at the general resurrection will jeer at death as they contemplate the ultimate blessings that shall have stemmed from the resurrection. "The sting of death is sin [here Paul personified death and gives it a weapon—sin]; and the power of sin is the law [sin brings about death through the violation of law]: but thanks be to God [that is, thanks be to the one who is the ultimate source of victory] who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. The thought is that through faith and obedience to Christ the Christian can have the motivation to choose and persevere in overcoming temptations and sins. "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast [grasp firmly the truth of the resurrection], unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord."

#### PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The aged father of a large family had died. At the funeral one daughter was quite emotionally overcome. As a means of comforting the bereaved woman, an older sister said: "Father would not want you to grieve like this. You must remember that he is at rest. He is asleep, and he will sleep restfully until the judgment day." Now, for your reaction: (1) The older sister has the right conception of death. (2) The soul is conscious after death. (3) The soul is without a body from the time of death until the body is raised at the general resurrection.

The Smiths are faithful Christians, and they have tried often to study with the Browns, but to no avail. Recently the Browns' eight year old son died. Now, for your reaction: (1) This will be a good time for the Smiths to visit the

Browns and speak words of comfort. (2) A very good beginning point for such comfort and encouragement would be Paul's great lesson on the resurrection. (3) Brethren would be strengthened in their faith if more attention were given to the study of the resurrection.

There are four cardinal doctrines of Christianity-the virgin birth of Christ, the vicarious death Christ, the atoning blood of Christ, and the resurrection of Christ. Now, for your reaction: (1) You have heard indepth lessons on these four cardinal doctrines. (2) You have never heard a full and definitive lesson on either subject. (3) Young people would be turned off if they were forced to hear long indepth lessons on the cardinal doc-Elders of the church (4)should certainly arrange for indepth studies of these doctrines.

### **Questions for Discussion**

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

#### Foreword

What were Paul's reasons for writing the epistle styled First Corinthians? With what situation did Paul deal first in the epistle? What was the last problem he dealt with? Discuss how the teachings of Plato had influenced the Corinthians.
What does the resurrection of Christ necessarily imply?

What qualities cause chapters thirteen and fifteen of First Corinthians to rival all other chapters of the New Testa-

### The Problem for Today's Lesson

Discuss how the problem for today's lesson is a timeless one.

#### The Golden Text

When will the physical body will raised? In what form will it be raised and what characteristics will it possess?

#### The Text Explained

What did some of the Corinthians deny?
What contrary-to-fact statement did Paul
use to point up a consequence of such a
doctrine?

Enumerate and discuss the other

quences of the no-pount, doctrine which Paul pointed up.

What did Paul affirm with joy when he turned from the consequences of a no-

What the wonderful were of this fact which he affirmed?

consequences

#### An Excursion

then the physical body is dissolved, what will be the dwelling place of the spirit?

When will the spiritual body be received? What kind of state will the disembodied state he?

#### Text Resumed

Through what two means did Paul write of the resurrection? What was the probable occasion of Paul's

experience fourteen unique years earlier?

# Lesson X—September 5, 1976

# THE CORINTHIANS' REACTION TO APOSTOLIC REBUKE

# Lesson Text 2 Cor. 7:5-16

For even when we were come unto Macedonia our flesh had no relief, but we were afflicted on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.

Nevertheless he that comforteth the lowly, even God, comforted us

by the coming of Titus;

And not by the coming only, but also by the comfort wherewith he was comforted in you, while he told us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced vet more.

8 For though I made you sorry with my epistle, I do not regret it: though I did regret it (for I see that that epistle made you sorry, though

but for a season),

9 I now rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ve made sorry unto repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothińg.

10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

11 For behold, this selfsame thing, that ve were made sorry after a

godly sort, what earnest wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what longing, yea what zeal, yea what avenging! In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter. 12 So although I wrote unto you,

wrote not for his cause that did the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered the wrong, but that your earnest care for us might be made manifest unto you in the sight of God

13 Therefore we have been comforted: and in our comfort we joyed the more exceedingly for the joy of Titus, because his spirit hath been

refreshed by you all.

14 For if in anything I have gloried to him on your behalf, I was not put to shame; but as we spake all things you in truth, so our glorying also which I made before Titus was found to be truth.

15 And his affection is more abundantly toward you, while he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him.

I rejoice that in everything I am of good courage concerning you.

DEVOTIONAL READING. - 2 Cor. 1:15-22.

GOLDEN Text.—"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears." (2 Cor. 2:4.)

## Daily Bible Readings

August 30. M	Sinful Condition in Corinth (1 Cor. 5:1-13)
August 31. T	Satan's Devices (2 Cor. 2:1-11)
September 1. W	The Devil's Tricks (2 Cor. 11:1-3)

September 2.	T Satan's Ceaseless Activity (1 Pet. 5:1-11)
September 3.	F
September 4.	SPaul's Grief Over Situation (2 Cor. 2:1-4)
September 5.	S Paul's Rebuke Effective (2 Cor. 2:5-10)

TIME.—Written in the fall of either A.D. 54 or 55. PLACE.—Paul wrote Second Corinthians from Macedonia. The letter was written to a church in Corinth of Greece or Achaia. Persons.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

#### Foreword

Paul wrote First Corinthians at about the time of Pentecost in either A.D. 56 or 57. His plan was to continue in Ephesus until Pentecost, at

and then go to Corinth. (1 Cor.

16 8, 9.) Already, Paul had sent Titus to Corinth as a follow up of the painful letter-his third letter -which may have been borne by and apparently had instructed Titus to return to Troas, the first place where Paul expected to go when he left Ephesus. Paul intended to continue at Ephesus until Pentecost, but about that time "there arose no small stir concerning the Way." The stir, precipitated by Demetrius, forced Paul to depart immediately from Ephesus. He left Ephesus to go to Macedonia. (Acts 20:1.)

Leaving Ephesus, Paul went first to Troas. There he found an open door for the preaching of the gospel —the likelihood is that the church was established at Troas at that time-but he was pressed by his anxiety for the church at Corinth, and disappointed that Titus had not made his return to Troas. Apparently weeks passed, and Titus did not return. In time, like a frantic mother over a lost child, he left the "open door" at Troas and sailed for Macedonia, but even sailed for Macedonia, but even there he did not find Titus, and his pressing anxiety continued. He wrote: "When we were come into Macedonia our flesh had found no relief, but we were afflicted on every side; without were fightings, within were fears." (2 Cor. 2:12,13; 7:5.)

time, Titus came to likely at Berea. This supposition is based on the fact that Paul wrote of the generosity of the churches of Macedonia—chief of which were Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, and in that geographical order. He could not have written of the generosity of those churches if he had not visited them, and the strong likelihood is, therefore, that Titus

came to Paul at Berea and that Second Corinthians was from there.

When Titus arrived, Paul experienced considerable relief from his anxieties: Titus had, for the most part, a good and comforting report. The majority of the church at Corinth had repented and absolved themselves from the sins of the incestuous brother. There however, two hard-core opposition parties; namely, the party of license and the party of Judaizers. These two parties represented opposite extremes; but, like Herod and Pilate, they united in their opposition to Paul.

The party of license is represented by Paul's words, per the following: "For I fear . . . lest again when I come my God should humble me before you, and I should mourn for many of them that have sinned heretofore, and repented not the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they committed." (2 Cor. 12:21.) The party of Judaizers are also mentioned by Paul. "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. . . Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? ...I more." (2 Cor. 11:13, 22.)

Unless the three distinct groups in the Corinthian church—that is, the faithful majority, the license party, and the Judaizing party—are held in mind, the student will have difficult time in understanding Second Corinthians. Without background, a person will wonder how Paul could characterize the church as being so penitent in one place and how he could be so harsh

and condemning in another.

Second Corinthians is neither doctrinal or practical. It is intensely personal, and it is the most autobiographical of all of the New

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Testament books. It is to the New Testament what Jeremiah is to the Old. Paul found himself bound by necessity to do a thing that he would never have considered doing under other normal or reasonable circumstances, and that thing was to write of himself by means of de-

fense relative to his labors, and sacrifices, and sufferings.

Except for Second Corinthians, the circumstances that vailed, the saints could never have known of the great high marks of Paul's life. What a loss that would have been!

# THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY'S LESSON

The problem of how men ought to respond to apostolic rebukes—as per this lesson, "The Corinthians' to Apostolic Rebuke"—is one that will determine the destiny of the transgressors of God's word. When a teacher or preacher sets forth God's word as a deserved rebuke in the interest of the spiritual welfare of a person or of a congregation, that rebuke should be accepted as apostolic authority. Men should tremble at the teaching of God's word. Isaiah wrote: "Thus saith Jehovah ... to this man will I leak a control to the should tremble at the saith Jehovah ... to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trem-bleth at my word." The writer of Hebrews recorded: "For the word

of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Isa. 66:2; Heb. 4:12, 13.)

Only as men respect and love and reverence God's word can they be well pleasing to him. Blessed is the man whose conscience is tender and who will, thereby, grieve over his violations and sins. Happy is the man who will receive rebuke from

the mouth of Jehovah.

#### The Golden Text

"For out of much affliction anguish of heart I wrote unto and with many tears." (2 Cor. 2:4.)

Paul's statement has reference to the painful letter which he wrote to the Corinthians. Paul wrote out of much affliction—that is, out of mental anguish brought on as a result of the sinful and rebellious spirit which had come to prevail at Corinth. Paul wrote out of much anguish of heart-that is, out of deep sorrow, and not joy which right-fully should have been his. Paul wrote with many tears, that is,

through heartbroken tears, such as a mother would shed over a wayward son.

The concern that Paul had for his converts was comparable—and more than comparable — to the concern that parents hold, or should hold, their children. Paul took no pleasure in the necessity of his administering his rebuke of the Corinthians' sins. He corrected them out of love, out of compassion, and out of a genuine and sincere desire that they might repent and be saved.

#### The Text

# Explained

# Titus Brings News from Corinth (2 Cor. 7:5-7)

"For even when we were come into Macedonia our flesh had no relief, hut we were afflicted on every side." When Paul was forced to leave Ephesus on account of the stir precipitated by Demetrius, the sil-versmith, he went to Troas and began preaching the gospel there; and very likely, the church was established at Troas at that time, for Paul found there an open door. Paul had written a painful letter to the Corinthians, and he sent Titus

to Corinth—he probably bore the letter—to observe the reaction of the church to that letter. He expected Titus to return immediately by way of Troas, and when Titus did not arrive, Paul was so pressed with anxiety for word of the Corinthians' response that he gave up the "open door" in Troas and sailed across to Macedonia, expecting to find that had at least returned distance. He was much disappointed at his not finding Titus there. In verse five above, Paul depicted his disappointment at not

finding Titus, and also how that he and his companions found no relief for their anxieties, and they came instead to be afflicted on every side. The "we," or Paul's associates, were likely Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia and Paul's compan-

ions in travel. (Acts 19:29.)

"Without were fightings, within were fears!" The occasion of Paul and his companions' affliction were the fightings without—that is, they were persecuted by those without the church, and very likely the persecutors were Jews—and the fears within. The fears within were the fears and anxieties which they, and especially Paul, felt for the difficult condition of the church at Corinth.

"Nevertheless he that comforteth the lowly, even God, comforted us by the coming of Titus; and not by his coming only, but also by the comfort wherewith he was comforted in you, while he told us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced yet more." Titus, at last, had come to Paul. The place Titus met with Paul was probably Berea, since Paul had already observed the generosity of the churches of Macedonia at the time he wrote Second Corinthians, and he wrote that letter after Titus had reached him. Paul was very much relieved and refreshed upon the arrival of Titus. He was re-freshed and comforted by the report which Titus brought; and he was even the more refreshed and comforted by the consolation, the confidence and optimism, with which Titus spoke as he delivered his report of the spirit and attitude which characterized those Corinthians. Paul thus moved from a state of deep

Titus reported to Paul how that the Corinthians, the majority, were characterized by longing, by mourning, and by zeal. Thus Paul wrote of your longing, your mourning. and your zeal; and he, thereby, gave special emphasis to that which gave special emphasis to that which Titus had reported. The word "longing" means to "yearn toward, and expressed the strong desire of the Corinthians to be reconciled to Paul. The word "mourning" means audible lamentations over the heartwhich they had brought upon Paul. The expression "zeal for me" was an indication of the Corinthians' strong desire to repudiate Paul's opponents and to absolve themselves of their past pride and dislovalty.

# **Godly Sorrow Worked Repentance**

(2 Cor. 7:8-16)

"For though I made you sorry with my epistle, I do not regret it [seeing now the favorable results which the painful epistle produced, Paul did not regret having written it, though he did not write it for the mere purpose of making them sorry; but rather to cause them to repent]: though I did regret it (for I see that that epistle made you sorry, though but for a season), I now rejoice, not that we were made sorry, but that we wade sorry water but that ye were made sorry unto repentance [Paul had written with fears and apprehensions in mind somewhat as a father might write to his wayward and rebellious sons, but now that the epistle had brought about repentance on the part of the Corinthians, he rejoiced, not that the Corinthians had been made sorry, but rather that they had been made sorry unto repent-ance]; for ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothing." The pain or sorrow was compensated for a most advantageous way.

"For godly sorrow worketh re-pentance unto salvation, a repent-ance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." There are two kinds of grief or sorrow, namely: (1) Godly sorrow, and (2) worldly sorrow, or the sorrow of the world. Godly sorrow is a sorrow that stems from a conscientious commitment to justice and a desire to please God. The sorrow of the world stems from the morbid despair and consequences of sin. Godly sorrow works, or results in true repentance, repentance results in salvation and salvation allows for no Contrariwise, the sorrow of world breeds, or results in reckless rebellion, rebellion results in damnation, and damnation allows only

for regrets.

"For behold, this same thing [the case of the Corinthians was a classic example of how that godly sor-row brought about reformation in the lives of those saints], that ye were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you, yea what clearing of your238 LESSON X

selves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what longing, what zeal, yea what avenging yea avenging! Ĭn everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter" Godly sorrow brought forth in those Christians the fruit of repentance. The "earnest care" wrought in the Co-rinthians was their diligence in closing up the breach between them and Paul—a breach for which they were directly responsible. "clearing of themselves" was their immediate move to vindicate themremove themselves from selves—to any abetting or condoning of the offense of the incestuous member them. The "indignation" was their recognition of and regret for the shame that they had allowed to be brought upon the church-the shame brought by their allowing the incestuous man a place in their fellowship. The "fear" was that Paul would come with the threat-ened rod of punishment. The "longing" was their yearning Paul's presence. The "zeal" their sfrong desire to repudiate Paul's opponents—the license party and the Judaizing party. The "avenging" was their punishment which they meted out to the of-fender—a demonstration of their good change of mind toward Paul. Thus Paul declared that those Cohad in everything approved themselves to be pure in the matter, and he meant by this statement that he had acquitted them of all responsibility in the matter. They had rid themselves of blame.

"So although I wrote unto you [the painful letter], I wrote not for his cause that did the wrong [the

incestuous man], nor for his cause that suffered the wrong [the injured father], but that your earnest care for us might me made manifest [that Paul, particularly, should be respected for what he was, an apostle who should be heard for his apostolic authority]."

"Therefore we have been comforted [comforted through the attitude of the Corinthians in their acceptance of Paul's letter]: and in our comfort we joyed the more exceedingly for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. For if in everything I have gloried to him on your behalf [Paul had assured Titus that the Corinthians, upon reading his letter, would respond affirmatively to it],

I was not put to shame; but as we spake all things to you in truth [Paul had spoken truth to the contrary, notwithstanding, and he did not allow himself, though very affectionate in his regards for the Corinthians, to go beyond the bounds of propriety], so our glorying which I made before Titus was found to be truth. And his affecis more abundantlu toward you [Titus had come to hold a very affectionate regard for the Corinthians], while he remembereth obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him. I rejoice that in everything I am of courage concerning Paul reiterates the confidence which he had in the Corinthians, and he makes that reiteration a basis for his appeal for them to fulfill their aforemade purpose of donations toward the great collection for the poor saints in Judea.

#### PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The local minister of the Anywhere church delivered the members a stinging rebuke for their not having supported the gospel meeting which had just closed. The visiting evangelist delivered some great and appropriate sermons, but the attendance of the members—or want of attendance—was shameful. On hearing the local preacher's stinging sermon, a majority of the members are stirred to anger, and the elders are being pressured to let the preacher go. Now, for your reaction: (1) The members of the Anywhere church have not learned.

nor humbled themselves, to accept rebuke. (2) The attitude of the Corinthian church was better by far than the attitude of the members of the Anywhere church. (3) The preacher was very much out of his place. (4) There was no authority involved.

The Smith family is of high moral character and integrity, but both the husband and wife become enraged, hurt, and withdraw when they are criticized. There are eight children in the family, and they re-

ject criticism very much as their parents do. *Now, for your reac*tion: (1) Children, as a general rule, follow the course of the parents, and their attitude toward criticism is to be expected. (2) Parents should study to be humble, and they should teach their children to be humble, submissive, and willing criticism. (3) Children should be taught to stand up for their rights and to bow to no man. (4) The brethren should ignore the Smith family.

Bob Brown stated to his Bible class that unless brethren are humble and willing to be shown their wrongs, and also willing to correct them, they cannot go to heaven. Now, for your reaction: (1) Bob Brown is correct in his statement.

(2) Brown's statement was considerably overdrawn. (3) The church at Corinth will stand up in the day of judgment and condemn the pre-vailing spirit of rebellion which tends to be characteristic of many churches of Christ today.

## **Questions for Discussion**

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

#### Foreword

Who had probably borne Paul's "painful letter" to Corinth?
Why did Paul become anxious?

Where did Titus likely join Paul? What was his report?

look?

What two opposing parties united in opposition to Paul?
What three distinct groups must the student hold in mind in order to understand Second Corinthians?

Of what nature is Second Corinthians?

# The Problem for Today's Lesson

What will this problem determine? How should one react when a preacher or teacher sets forth God's word as a deserved rebuke? To what man does Jehovah say he will

#### The Golden Text

what spirit did Paul write his letter to the Corinthians?

#### The Text Explained

What did Paul give up in his anxiety to hear of the Corinthians' reaction to his letter?

What is the reason for Paul's afflictions?

How was Paul comforted?

How were the majority of the Corinthian Christians characterized?

Why did Paul not regret, but rejoice, that he had written the epistle?

What are the two kinds of grief and sorrow?

What does godly sorrow work?

What was meant by the "earnest care," the "clearing of themselves," the "in-dignation," the "fear," the "longing," the "zeal," and the "avenging," of the Corinthians?

Why did Paul say he wrote unto the Corinthians?

How had Paul received double joy?

Of what had Paul gloried to Titus?

How could Paul have been put to shame? Why was Titus' affection more abundant toward the Corinthians?

# Lesson XI—September 12, 1976

# THE GREAT CONTRIBUTION

#### Lesson Text

### 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:1-11

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.

3 And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem:

4 And if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me.

1 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God given which hath been in churches of Macedonia;

- 2 How that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.
- 3 For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord,
- 4 Beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints:
- 5 And this, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God.
  - 6 Insomuch that we exhorted Ti-

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tus, that as he had made a beginning before, so he would also complete in

you this grace also.

7 But as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

I speak not by way of commandment, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincer-

ity also of your love.

9 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.

10 And herein I give my judgment: for this is expedient for you, who were the first to make a beginning a year ago, not only to do, but

also to will.

But now complete the doing also; that as there was the readiness to will so there may be the completion also out of your ability.

Devotional Reading. —1 Cor. 16:5-18. Golden Text.—"For God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9:7.)

# Daily Bible Readings

September 6. M	
September 7. T	The Example of Jesus (Matt. 20:20-28)
	Antioch's Liberality (Acts 11:27-30)
September 9. T	
September 10. F	Jehovah's Regard for the Poor (Psalm 146:1-10)
September 11. S	Laying Up Treasure in Heaven (Matt. 6:19-24)
September 12. S	

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 the church in Corinth of Greece or Achaia.

Persons.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

#### Foreword

There were three distinct groups in the church at Corinth when Paul wrote Second Corinthians: (1) the faithful majority that gave Paul so much comfort, (2) the license party whose way of life was the way of uncleanness, fornication, and lasciviousness, and (3) the Judaizing party that sought to bind circumcision and certain tenets of the law of Moses on the Gentiles. Without background knowledge, student will have a difficult time understanding how Paul could characterize brethren as being penitent in one place, and how he could be so critical and harsh of them in another.

The license party and the Judaizing party represented opposite extremes, but they united in their opposition to the apostle Paul. Their opposition was characterized taunts, jeers, and insinuations. One can ascertain the charges that opposition made against Paul observing the defenses he relucfor himself. made charges which were filed against

Paul by those opposition parties in-

cluded the following: They charged that showed cowardice in not coming to Corinth as he said he would

"And in this confidence I was minded to come first unto you, that ve might have a second benefit; and by you to pass into Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come unto you, and of you to be set forward on my journey unto Judea. When I therefore was thus minded, did I show fickleness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be the yea yea and the nay nay?"

They charged that Paul showed insincerity and was guiltu of vacillation by having changed his mind. "But as God is faithful, our word toward you is not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not yea and nay, but in him is yea." (2 Cor. 1:18, 19.)

They charged that Paul was a

tyrant. "But I call God for a wit-

(2 Cor. 1:15-17.)

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ness upon my soul, that to spare you I forbare to come unto Corinth. Not that we have lordship over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for in faith ye stand fast." Cor. 1:23, 24.)

They charged that Paul's letwere weighty and terrifying, ters but that his physical appearance was mean and uninviting. "For, His letters, they say, are weighty and strong; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no ac-

count." (2 Cor. 10:10.)
5. They charged that Paul had boldness and simplicity of speech. "But though I be rude in speech, yet am I not in knowledge; nay, in every way have we made manifest unto you in all things." (2

Cor. 11:6.)

6. They charged that Paul consciously inferior, and for was this reason he abstained from taking support from Corinth for his labors. "Or did I commit a sin in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I preached to you the gospel of God for nought? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you." (2 Cor. 11:7, 8.)

7. They charged that Paul's descent as a true Hebrew was a matter to be questioned. "Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. 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." (2 Cor.

They charged that Paul's alleged escape from Damascus was preposterous. "The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forevermore knoweth that I lie not. 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." (2 Cor. 11:31-33.)

9. They charged that Paul's claims of revelations raised a question as to his sanity. "I must needs glory, though it is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ, fourteen years (whether in the body, I know not;

or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body,

I know not; God knoweth), how that he was caught up into Parahow dise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to

utter." (2 Cor. 12:1-4.)

They charged that want of commendatory letters from Ierusalem placed him under a cloud of suspicion. "Are we beginning again to commend ourselves? or need we, as do some, epistles of commendation to you or from you?" (2 Cor. 3:1.) "For I should glory somewhat abundantly concerning our authority (which the Lord gave for building you up, and not for casting you down), I shall not be put to shame: that I may not seem as if I would terrify you by my letters." (2 Cor. 10:8, 9.) "I am become foolish: ye compelled me; for

I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing was I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I am nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works. For what is there wherein ye were made inferior to the rest of the churches, except it be that I myself was not a burden to you? forgive me this wrong." (2 Cor. 12:11-13.)

11. They charged Paul with un-

derhanded guile and fraudulent du-plicity. "Behold, this is the third I am ready to come to you; and I will not be a burden to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. And I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I loved the less? But be it so, I did not myself burden you; but, being crafty, I caught you with guile. Did Í take advantage of you by any one of them whom I have sent unto you? I exhorted Titus, and I sent the brother with him. Did Titus take any advantage of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?" (2 Cor. 12:14-18.)

They charged that threatened to do that which he would not dare to do. "This is the that third time I am coming to you. At 242 Lesson XI

the mouth of two witnesses 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." (2 Cor. 13:1, 2.)

13. They charged that Paul could not he on a par with the apostles in

Jerusalem. "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 a proof of Christ that speaketh in me; who to you-ward is not weak, but is powerful in you." (2 Cor. 13:2, 3.)

## THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY'S LESSON

The problem of liberality and concern for the poor—as per this lesson, "The Great Contribution"—is ever with the church in every age and in every clime. The spirit of liberality is a very recognizable mark of the spirit of Christ. In general, men tend to be selfish. They save and store up for themselves as if they might live forever. Jesus said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither

moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also." (Matt. 6:19-21.)

The churches of Christ in America today are, generally speaking, very affluent. There is no evangelistic program beyond the reach of the churches if all the members would only give as they have been prospered. In the words of Paul, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." (2 Cor. 9:6, 7.)

#### The Golden Text

"For God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9:7.) Cheerful giving stems from the hearts of men who are truly moved by commitment and dedication. Men who give cheerfully are those who give because they want to give. They do

not give to be seen of men or to receive the popular applause of men, nor do they give through pressure or necessity. They do not give grudgingly. Cheerful givers purpose in their hearts, and they keep their purposes, and God loves them.

# The Text Explained

# Concerning the Collection (1 Cor. 16:1-4)

concerning the collection saints." The church in "Now for the Judea had been impoverished: first, through the sharing of brethren-or their having all things in common beginning on Pentecost, when the church was established, and for a considerable time following; second, through the persecution which against the church waged wherein all the disciples were driven from Jerusalem, except the apostles; and third, through the famine which came over all the world in the days of Claudius, as predicted by Agabus. (Acts 2:44, 45; 4:36, 37; 5:1; 8:1-4; 11:28-30.)

Paul set for himself the task of raising a bounty among the churches, composed primarily of Gentiles, for the poor saints in Judea. He did this for two reasons: first, that the wants and needs of the poor saints might be met; and second, that the estrangement between the Jewish saints and the Gentile saints might be improved. There had come to exist within the church a very grave dissension or disunity between the two, and Paul was at first very confident that the collection from the Gentile churches for the poor saints in Judea, who were Jews, would do much to heal the breach. He emphasized to the Gentiles that they were debtor 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.)

"As I gave order to the churches

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of Galatia, so also do ye." On Paul's third missionary journey, he departed from Antioch of Syria and went through the region of Galatia, went through the region of Galatia, and Phrygia, establishing the disciples. In short, on this journey Paul visited the churches of Galatia and gave them orders relative to the collection for the poor saints. This was some time before the Galatian churches defected to the Judaizing teachers, as is borne out by the fact that word of the defection reached that word of the defection reached Paul on his third and last visit to Corinth.

On Paul's third missionary journey, he took up residence in Ephesus, the capital of Asia, a province in Asia Minor; and he continued there for two years and three months. He left Ephesus and went to Troas; from Troas he sailed to Macedonia; and having visited the churches in Macedonia. He went to Corinth where he stayed for three months, and during which ctay he months, and during which stay he learned of the defection of the Galatian churches and in turn, wrote the epistle to the Galatians.

"Upon the first day of the week". This reference to the first day of the week shows that the churches of Galatia had an established custom of assembling, and they assembled on the first day of the week, the day upon which Christ arose from the dead. The reference to the first day of the week shows that the Corinthians also had an established custom of assembling, and they assembled on the first day of the week. Now, the church at Corinth assembled, or came together, 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."

Observe therefore:

The Corinthians had an established custom of coming together on every first day of the week.

The Corinthians came together to eat the Lord's supper; therefore

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

"Let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." Each Christian was, and is, under heaven's imposed obligation to give

as he has been prospered. Herein lies the principle of New Testament giving. The basis for New Testament giving is not a tenth, as per the law of Moses; but instead, it is as one may prosper. The example of how the Galatians and Corinof how the Galatians and Corin-thians arranged to have their afore-made promises for the saints paid into the church treasury before Paul arrived—by laying by in store each first day of the week—serves as a precedent for Christian giving today. The first day of the week is the day upon which disciples as-semble for worship, and it is the consistent time for Christians to give of their means as they have been prospered. The regularity of giving on each first day of the week eliminates the disorder of hurried emergency collections.

"And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve [Paul took thought for things honorable in the sight of all men, Rom. 12:17], them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem [in the absence of the exchange of banks, drafts, and certified checks on a national level, there was no choice except to dispatch the bounty on the basis of Paul's arrangement]: and shall go with me." Paul had not decided definitely at that time that he would accompany the bounty to Jerusalem, but the later foreboding circumstances led him to so do.

# The Liberality of the Churches in Macedonia (2 Cor. 8:1-6)

"Moreover, brethren we known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality." As a means of encouraging the Corinthian church to complete their aforemade purpose, Paul cited the liberality which had already characterized the Macedo-nian churches—Philippi, Thessalo-nica, and Beroea. What a paradox those churches of Macedonia were! They were encompassed about by affliction, and yet they had an abundance of joy! Further, they were in deep poverty, and yet they abounded unto the riches of liberal244 LESSON XI

"For according to their power [the very limit or ability to give], I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord [without any prompting on Paul's part], beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship [partnership] in ministering to the saints: and this, not as we had hoped [Paul, knowing of their poverty, had hoped for only a meager bounty from them, but they went far beyond his expectation],but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God." Here lay the strength and liberality of the Macedonian Christians. They first gave themselves, or made themselves available, unto the Lord.

"Insomuch that we exhorted Titus, that as he had made a beginning before, so he would complete in you this grace also." Paul, having been encouraged by the Macedonians, encouraged Timothy to return to Corinth and complete the gather-

ing of the offering there.

# Exhortations to Abound in This Grace (2 Cor. 8:7-11)

"But as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness [the attitude which characterized them], and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. I speak not by way of commandment [Paul does not command them to give, for the matter of giving should be left to their own choice], but as proving through the earnestness of others [by the Corinthians comparing

themselves with the churches of Macedonia] the sincerity also of your love [through such a means, the love of the Corinthians would be tested]."

"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 nch." Liberality of giving is a test of love. Jesus demonstrated his love for man by the gift of himself as a sin offering for man. He divested himself. He laid aside his glory and took upon himself a human body. He became poor in order that man might become rich. What love, and how that love should constrain men!

"And herein I give my judgment [not a command, but counsel since giving must come from a willing heart]: for this is expedient for you [that you should complete doing of that which you purposed to do], who were the first to make a doj, who were the just to muce a beginning [a purpose to give] a year ago, not only to do, but also to will. But now complete the doing also; that as there was the readiness to will, so there may be the completion also out of your ability." The Corinthians had with readiness and willingness purposed a year before to give for the poor saints in Judea. Many of those Corinthians, apparently, unlike the Macedonians, had the wherewith to give in sizeable amounts. Paul counselled them, therefore, to complete their aforemade purpose in keeping with their ability to give.

#### PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

John Jones is a rather wealthy Christian. He and his family attend the services of the church regularly, his morals are good, and he is a man of his word. He gives twelve dollars each Lord's day, but a number of men in the church, who are not as wealthy as he give from twenty-five to fifty dollars each Sunday. Now, for your reaction:

(1) Jones needs to be taught to give by means of Bible studies, sermon and the like. (2) The elders should confront Jones and make an issue out of his not giving as he should.

(3) Jones is giving an acceptable amount and should be left alone.

(4) The preacher should teach him

and all the church from the pulpit.

David Smith, another member, has large holdings of lands and property, but his monthly salary is only a moderate amount. Smith gives ten per cent of his monthly salary, and he rather boasts of the fact that he gives ten per cent. He declares from time to time that he gives all the Lord expects or requires of him. Now, for your reaction: (1) The ten per cent is not required of Christians. (2) No Christian who is being prospered can afford to give less than ten per cent. (3) His gift should be measured by his love for the Lord.

The New Town church is composed of families of above-average financial Thĕir their means. contributions are rather large, but they do not represent the real abilof the members to give. The elders and church leaders spend considerable amounts for improving the building and in making addito it. Th church a planned mission program. Now, for your reaction: (1) Unfortunately, the New Town church is rather typical of the churches of America. in (2) churches need to study again Paul's in the eighth teaching and ninth chapter of Second Corinthians.

Something must be done to turn the tide or the church have candlestick America will its removed. (4) The church in every generation is under obligation preach the gospel to every soul in

the world in that generation.

# Questions for Discussion

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

were in Paul What three distinct groups were church at Corinth when Pau wrote Second Corinthians? How can one ascertain the charges filed against Paul? Enumerate and discuss the charges filed against Paul by the opposition parties.

The Problem for Today's Lesson What is the problem in today's lesson? Of what is the spirit of liberality a mark? t principle did Paul set forth in this matter?

The Text Explained

What is the condition of the church in Judea? Why was this so? Why did Paul set for himself the task of

bounty among Gentile churches for the poor saints in Judea? hat do we observe from Pa ment. "Upon the first day What Paul's of week"?

nder what obligation in the matter of giving? Under is each Christian

What is the basis for New Testament giving? Why do it upon the first day of the

week? How did Paul take thought for things honorable in regard to the collection? Why did Paul cite the churches of Mace-donia to the Corinthians? things

Why did fact lay the strength and liberality of the Macedonian Christians?

In what did the Corinthians abound? In what did Paul counsel them to abound also? did Paul not command the Corin-

thians to give? How did Jesus demonstrate his love?

# Lesson XII – September 19, 1976

# PAUL'S DEFENSE

# Lesson Text 2 Cor. 11:1-12

Would that ve could bear with me in a little foolishness: but indeed ye do bear with me.

2 For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I espoused you to one husband, that I might present

you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ.

4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or if ye receive a different spirit, which ye did not receive, or a different gospel, which ye did not accept, ye do well to bear with him.

5 For I reckon that I am not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

6 But though I be rude in speech, yet am I not in knowledge; nay, in every way have we made this manifest unto you in all things.

7 Or did I commit a sin in abasing myself\_that ye might be exalted, because I preached to you the gospel of God for nought?

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you;

And when I was present with you and was in want, I was not a burden on any man; for the brethren, when they came from Macedonia, supplied the measure of my want; and in everything I kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this glorying in the regions of Achaia.

Wherefore? because I love you

not? God knoweth.

12 But what I do, that I will do,

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that I may cut off occasion from wherein they glory, they may be them that desire an occasion; that found even as we.

Devotional Reading.—2 Cor. 10:1-18. Golden Text.—"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (2 Cor. 10:17.)

# Daily Bible Readings

September 13. M	Paul As a Persecutor (Acts 8:1-8)
September 14. T	
	Paul's Sacrifice of Worldly Honors (Phil. 3:17-21)
	Some Preach a Different Doctrine (1 Tim. 6:3-10)
	Some Preach a Different Gospel (Gal. 1:6-10)
	John's Warnings of False Teachers (2 John 1-10)

Time.—Written in the fall of either A.D. 54 or 55.
Place.—Paul wrote Second Corinthians from Macedonia. The letter was written to a church in Corinth of Greece or Achaia.

Persons.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

#### Foreword

Paul's epistle, entitled Second Corinthians, is strange, unusual, emotional, and paradoxical. It is neither doctrinal nor practical, neither theological nor historical, and neither pastoral nor devotional. It is autobiographical and yet documentary, obscure and yet revealing, tender and yet firm. It is charac-terized by subdued pathos but also stinging irony; bv vehement, though suppressed, indignation but also by suppressed commanding authority. The epistle is the most the most tense, the most personal, the most disorganized, the most autobiographical, the most defensive, the most threatening, the most difficult to follow of all of Paul's epistles.

Paul obviously wrote Second Corinthians against his will. The very thought of making a personal defense of himself was galling and out of character with his sensitive nature and humility, but the opposition parties, and particularly the Judaizers whose leader had brought letters of commendation from Jeru-

salem, had laid numerous and damaging charges against his character. While he, by nature, would have chosen to let the charges pass without a defense, the time had come when duty and honor and necessity demanded that he make a full and appropriate defense of himself, disthough the responsibility tasteful was. If he had failed to clear himdetestable innuendoes self of the and flagrant charges, his influence and work for the cause of Christ would have been hampered. There often come times in the lives of good men when for them to fail to come to their own personal defense is to leave themselves, for all time to come, under clouds of suspicions and doubts and, thereby to become partakers of the sins of the very ones who have done them wrong. Such circumstances prevailed when Paul wrote Second Corinthians, and those circumstances and charges must be known and understood in order to understand fully and appreciate thoroughly the study of the epistle.

# THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY'S LESSON

The problem of when should a Christian speak out in his own defense—as per this lesson, "Paul's Defense"—is one that multitudes have faced at one time or another through the centuries. The problem is often a question of when should a wronged person suffer the wrong, and when is he under obligation to defend himself publicly? Gospel preachers, particularly, have

been, like the apostle Paul, falsely accused time and time again. There really is no way for escape; for Paul said: "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.)

When a Christian's character has been unjustly attacked by a brother or brethren, or when he has been subjected to unfair and unwarSEPTEMBER 19, 1976 247

ranted treatment by brethren, that person must decide as to whether he should remain silent and suffer in silence, or whether he should speak to the point of his own defense. While the answer to this question is not always easy, there are two rather well developed, but not necessarily justified, concepts held by brethren generally, namely: (1) The philosophy of

brethren, generally speaking, is that the innocent brother should be sacrificed for the welfare of the church or institution, and (2) the concept of brethren, generally speaking, is that the brother who has been wronged should forgive the brother who has done the wrong, regardless of whether or not that brother who has done the wrong has repented of the wrong and corrected it.

#### The Golden Text

"He that glorieth, let him glory in

the Lord." (2 Cor. 10:17.)

The greatest single opponent that Paul had was a teacher who came to Corinth purporting to have letters from Jerusalem. He, of couse, was one of the Judaizing teachers, and he, with detestable innuendoes, made flagrant charges against Paul. The ring-leader was especially boastful, insolent, and violent. He roused the strong indignation of Paul.

Within this frame of reference,

# The Text Explained

# Paul's Concern for the Corinthian Church

(2 Cor. 11:1-3)

"Would that ye could bear with me in a little foolishness [foolishness of boasting]: but indeed you do bear with me [Paul recognizes the kindness and love which he received from the majority of the saints at Corinth], For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy [not with suspiciousness, but with zealous love]: for I espoused you to one husband [Christ], that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ." Paul preached the gospel, the Corinthians believed and obeyed the gospel, and were at that time betrothed to Christ, and at the general resurrection they will be presented as the pure bride to Christ.

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ." Paul entertained fears for the Corinthians. He feared the possibility that the Corinthians would be beguiled in the same way that the serpent, or Satan, had beguiled Eve. The serpent was crafty, and Satan chose the serpent as his agent for

Paul took up as a defense of himself through his "boastings," which term he used some twenty-nine times in the epistle. Paul was answering the "fool" by the folly of his own wisdom. One conclusion that Paul made with respect to boasting was that the person who glorieth, or boasteth, should glory in the Lord; for the ring-leader who commended himself was not by that fact approved; but instead, "whom the Lord commendeth" is the person who is approved.

that very reason. In light of prevailing circumstances, there was the distinct possibility that the minds of the Corinthians would be corrupted from the simplicity and purity that is in Christ. There are two pertinent points to be emphasized here: The first is the fact of the possibility of apostasy, and the second is the ever present activity of Satan himself.

# Paul Preached the Gospel at Corinth for Nought

(2 Cor. 11:4-12)

"For if he that cometh [an allusion apparently to the teacher from Jerusalem purporting to have letters of commendation] preacheth another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or if ye receive a different spirit, which ye did not receive, or a different gospel, which ye did not accept, ye do well to bear with him." There is irony in Paul's statement. The teacher had not preached another Jesus; nor had he conferred upon the Corinthians another Spirit, nor had he presented another gospel which they had not accepted. Had either been the case, there would have been some excuse for the Corinthians' having heard him out relative to his teaching, but

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such was not the case. Paul had first preached Christ to them, and from him they had received the

miraculous gifts of the Spirit.

"For I reckon that I am not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." The rival teacher was not superior to Paul, though he claimed to be. In fact, he was not an apostle at all; whereas, Paul was not a whit behind the chiefest apostles, and here he expressed his strong indignation against those false teachers. He had been disparagingly compared with the other apostles as if he did not belong in company with those men; and yet, he had not come short of a single one of them. His statement here did not infer any rivalry or resentment toward the other apostles, but he simply meant that he had been called by Christ to be an apostle, and he, therefore, spoke and wrote with apostolic authority. The Corinthians showed themselves to be simple by their having given place to that rival teacher whose only offering or course was to question and under-mine the influence and work of

"But though [as this teacher charges] I be rude in speech [wanting in oratory as the enemies had charged], yet am I not in knowledge; nay, in every way have we made this manifest unto you in all things. Or did I commit a sin in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I preached to you the gospel of Christ for nought?" Paul did not accept wages for his preaching while at Corinth, and this fact had been an occasion of criticism by his present the corrections of criticism by his present the correction of criticism by the correction of criticism by the criticism cism by his enemies. Those enemies charged that he was inferior, that he recognized the fact; and that on account of his inferior posi-tion, he did not accept support from the church at Corinth. (See Acts 18:1-3.)

After having affirmed how that his knowledge was manifest, Paul then asked: "Did I commit a sin in abasing myself?" This was strong irony, for he was asking information from them after having pointed to the certainty of his knowledge.

"I robbed other churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you." Paul received some

unto you." Paul received support from other churches while he preached for nought to the church at Corinth for a period of eighteen months. He robbed those churches only in the sense that he took support from them which jus-tifiably could have been taken from the Corinthians. Of all places, the city of Corinth was a place where the apostle Paul, or any apostle for that matter, was liable to give of-fense, even inadvertent offense, to the cause of Christ. Paul felt that he was less liable to give offense or to allow for offense to be made against the cause of Christ by his having refrained from accepting support.

you and was in want, I was not a burden on any man." Paul's needs were simple, but even then he was in want at the time he preached the gospel in Corinth. He worked at the trade of tent-making to supply his wants, and churches at a distance also supplied some of his

. for the brethren, when they ". . . for the brethren, when they came from Macedonia, supplied the measure of my want." There were three churches in Macedonia—Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. The church in Philippi had sent "once and again" to Paul's needs while he was at Thessalonica, though he was in Thessalonica for only three sabbath days (Phil 4-15, 16) sabbath days. (Phil. 4:15, 16.)

". . . and in everything, I kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself."
Two points here deserve to be emphasized: For one thing, Paul had not been a burden to the church at Corinth; and for another thing, he did not intend to recede from his position. He was determined that, under the prevailing circumstances, he would continue to take no support from the church at Corinth.

"As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me in this glory-ing in the regions of Achaia." This was Paul's solemn and determined way of saying that he would allow no man to take away his right and privilege "to boast," or to declare publicly for the benefit of all, and especially his opponents, how that he had preached the gospel in Cor-inth for nought in the regions of Achaia. Paul was determined that he would refrain from taking support not only from the church in Corinth but also throughout the province of Achaia. for that matter. Achaia was a Roman province September 19, 1976 249

which consisted of the old region of Greece and also Thessaly, of which Corinth was the capital. "Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth [he calls God to witness that he had great and abiding love for the Corinthians]. But what I do [his practice in the past with respect to his having chosen to take no support from the Corinthians for his labors], that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them that desire an occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we." Paul states that the reason why he did not take support from

Corinth and all Achaia, was in order that he would not give occasion to those who would take advantage of it to say that his cause and his interest in the Corinthians was merely a selfish way of gain. Thus, he particularly gave no occasion to the new teacher, or teachers, at Corinth who desired to be counted on an apostolic level with him and who affected a disinterest in the Corinthians' substance, but who were all the while secretly taking money from them—the very thing that they had accused Paul of doing.

## PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

In a situation a brother in charge was found to be guilty of adultery. The brother repented, and the brethren in power kept the matter to themselves lest the cause should suffer as a result of the brother's loss of influence. Now, for your reaction: (1) Those in charge were very wise in preserving the brother's good reputation. (2) A brother can lie, and his sin will be forgotten immediately on the part of brethren, but if he commits adultery and the fact of his sin becomes known, it will be remembered against him for all time to come.

The brother was accused of adultery, but was innocent. Now for

uour The brother reaction: (1) should publish his innocence to the whole brotherhood. (2) He had best think twice before a protestation of his innocence, because when breth-ren at large know that a brother has been accused of adultery, regardless of his denial, they will likely be adversely influenced and reason that where there is smoke there must be some fire. (3) The false charge of adultery is somewhat different from the false charge of dishonesty, for the former brethren tend to forget, or to make allowance for, quite easily; but the latter, the charge of dishonesty, will linger with brethren, more or less, for all times to come.

### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Foreword

What are the characteristics of Second Corinthians?
In what obvious state of mind did Paul write this epistle?
Why was it necessary for him to make a

personal defense?

The Problem for Today's Lesson

What question is involved in the problem discussed in today's lesson?
What must a Christian decide whose character has been unjustly attacked?

What are the two concepts, concerning this problem, held by brethren, generally?

#### The Golden Text

Who was Paul's greatest single opponent? How did Paul answer this opponent? What conclusion did Paul make with respect to boasting?

The Text Explained

With what term did Paul describe his boasting?

What did Paul mean by his statement, "I espoused you"? What fear for the Corinthians did Paul entertain?

What two points are emphasized in Paul's fears?

Why was there no excuse for the Corinthians to hear the other teacher?

In what ways did Paul show that the

rival teacher was not his superior?

What charge did Paul's enemies make against him because he did not accept wages for his preaching while at Corinth?

How had Paul been supported while he was at Corinth?

What did Paul mean when he said, "I robbed other churches . . . "?

What was Paul's reason for not taking support from the Corinthians or throughout the province of Achaia?

What two points did Paul especially emphasize for not taking support from Corinth?

What statement did Paul make that shows that he had no intention of ever taking support from the Corinthians or those throughout Achaia and gives his reason for not doing so?

# Lesson XIII – September 26, 1976

# PAUL'S VISIONS AND REVELATIONS

### Lesson Text

2 Cor. 12:1-10

1 I must needs glory, though it is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up even to the third heaven.

3 And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God know-

eth),

4 How that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

5 On behalf of such a one will I glory: but on mine own behalf I will not glory, save in *my* weaknesses.

6 For if I should desire to glory, I shall not be foolish; for I shall speak the truth: but I forbear, lest any man should account of me above

that which he seeth me to *be*, or heareth from me.

- 7 And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted overmuch.
- 8 Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.
- 9 And he hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for *my* power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

DEVOTIONAL READING. -2 Cor. 12:11-18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be of the same mind; live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you." (2 Cor. 13:11.)

# Daily Bible Readings

September 20. M	
	Vision of Paul (Acts 18:1-9)
September 22. W	
September 23. T	
September 24. F	Vision of Peter, James and John (Matt. 17:1-9)
September 25. S	Paul Taught by Revelation (Eph. 3:1-8)
September 26. S	Paul in Jerusalem by Revelation (Gal. 2:1-10)

TIME.—Written in the fall of either A.D. 54 or 55.

PLACE.—Paul wrote Second Corinthians from Macedonia. The letter was written to a church in Corinth of Greece or Achaia.

Persons.—Paul and the saints at Corinth.

#### Foreword

Paul was not one of the original twelve apostles. He was called to be an apostle as a child untimely born, and he was, therefore, somewhat at a disadvantage from the outset of his career as an apostle. the 15:8.) To illustrate, when (1 Cor. the question over circumcision first arose in the church at Antioch of the rank and file Syria, strait as were in a to brethren should place their whether they confidence in the teaching of Paul

who did not bind circumcision on the Gentile converts, or in the Judaizing teachers who claimed to represent the apostles in Jerusalem, and who were binding circumcision on the Gentile converts.

The new teachers that came to Corinth purported to have "epistles of commendation from Jerusalem," and those opponents of Paul raised serious doubts as to the genuineness of Paul's apostleship, and particularly since he had no letters of

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Those opponents cast a dark shadow of dark shadow of doubt upon Paul, not only to the point of questioning the genuineness of his apostleship but also to the point of questioning his descent as a true and full-blooded Hebrew. Those new teachers demanded that they be counted or considered superior in position to

the apostle Paul. Paul was in no position to appeal to his fellow apostles in Jerusalem for letters of commendation, nor would he so do. In the first place, he received his apostolate directly from the Lord, and at a time and under circumstances unknown to the other apostles, except by his own testimony. In the second place, his call was from the Lord, and from time to time after his call, the Lord had communicated directly with him. Thus, for Paul to have rushed to the original apostles for a confirmation of his apostleship would have been for him to reflect

against his Lord.

The sum and substance of those matters were that Paul had only three appeals with which to establish his apostleship, namely: (1) to his visions and revelations; (2) to his seal of approval which God had put on his evangelistic work, including the confirmation of his po-sition and teaching by means of mighty works, and wonders, and signs; (3) and to his converts upon whom he conferred miraculous gifts, and who were his epistles of commendation who were known and read of all men. These matters, when known and properly appropriated to the study of Second Corinthians, will shed much light and understanding on the content of the book.

#### THE PROBLEM FOR TODAY'S LESSON

The problem of visions and revelations—as per this lesson, "Paul's Visions and Revelations"—has been current in every generation of man. To illustrate, "God ... of old time" spoke "unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners." Further, Jesus of Nazareth was "a man approved of Nazareth was "a man approved of God ... by mighty works and wonders and signs, which God did by him." Then too, the apostles received the Holy Spirit baptism; and thereby, they possessed the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. Further, those apostles were empowered to confor those miraculous gifts upon confer those miraculous gifts upon others. (Heb. 1:1; Acts 2:22; 2:1-

There were, however, counterfeit visions and revelations, and today there continue to be counterfeit visions and revelations. In the heathen world, for example, there were the multitudes such as the Phrygians, who claimed to have received visions and revelations. The Phrygians were known for their worship of Baccus and Cybele. In their worship, both sexes partici-pated with all sorts of orgies and lewd rites, and the priests of Cybele, with devious fanaticisms while reeling and whirling and dancing to

blaring horns and clashing cymbals, claimed a maddening fellowship with the spirit world. Today, there are, even in the American society, cults too numerous to mention; and astrology—the divination of the supposed influences of the stars upon human affairs and terrestrial events by their positions and aspects—has loomed into unusually great prominence. Many people rely upon the stars for guidance like the true Christians rely upon the Bible for guidance.

Even among members of the churches of Christ, there are those who claim to have seen visions and received revelations. Sharing classes, that is, the sharing of visions, revelations, and personal exreplacing are periences, classes.

The well-grounded Christian lingers on Paul's experiences when he was caught up to the Paradise of God, and rightly so. Those Christians linger, and wonder, and try to anticipate and contemplate what being in Paradise, and thus in the presence of the Lord, will be like. Then they turn and contemplate their beloved once who have just their beloved ones who have just gone on to that wonderful home of

#### The Golden Text

"Be of the same mind; live in peace shall be with you." (2 Cor. peace: and the God of love and 13:11.)

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Paul had reached the close of his epistle. He had been forced into a course of self justification—a course that required him to indulge in what he called foolishness. His apostleship had been severely questioned, and he had reacted with the harshness of a soul filled full of righteous indignation. He had spoken out not only against the new Judizing teachers that had come to Corinth with their false claims, but

also he had spoken out against the rank and file of the church for their having posed any confidence in those false teachers.

In his conclusion and in gentler terms, Paul urged in the words of the golden text: "Be of the same mind [walk by the same rule]; live in peace [peace can prevail when brethren are of the same mind]: and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

# The Text Explained

Visions and Revelations of Paul (2 Cor. 12:1-6)

"I must needs glory, though it is expedient" Paul here continues his defense of himself, distasteful though the task was. The defense required him to compare himself with those deceitful teachers at Corinth, and for him to do this was quite revolting. He had already pointed out in his epistle that those false teachers who so commended themselves also measured themselves by themselves, and compared themselves with themselves, and that they were, therefore, without understanding for their having done so. Further, he had already urged: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (2 Cor. 10:12, 17.)

Thus, the glorying that Paul did here was forced upon him. He was under obligation to show that he, in keeping with his office as an apostle of Christ, was far superior to those

self-acclaimed apostles.

. . but I will come to visions." One aspect of Paul's defense as an apostle of Christ, since he had been called to the office as a child untimely born, was by means of his visions and revelations. One thing here is certain and a second thing is genuine blessing. The certain thing is, that by the false teachers having ridiculed Paul's visions and revelations, he was constrained to speak of his visit to Paradise; and the genuine blessing is that the saints can read of his account of the visit and take comfort, though brief as the account is. The term "visions" denotes those supernatural appearances and experiences which had been made and given to Paul from time to time. The term "revelations" denotes the truth that was being revealed for the first time, and much of that truth came directly from the Lord.

'I know a man in Christ [Paul was speaking of himself as verses six and seven will show, but his modest sensitivity precluded modest sensitivity precluded his naming himself forthrightly] four-teen years ago . . ." Fourteen years was a long time for Paul to have made no mention of this unusual and astounding vision which means that he had not made his claims for that he had not made his claims for visions to the extent that the opponents had charged; further, Paul was writing this epistle about A.D. 56-57, and fourteen years prior would have been in about A.D. 43, and while the date does not appear to correspond with the time in Lystra when Paul was stoned and dragged out of the city and was supposed to be dead, the date of the stoning would be only a short time later, which leaves one to wonder, in light of the fact that only a few are certain, absolutely whether or not the occasion of the stoning is not the instance to which Paul makes reference here. (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one was caught up even to the third heaven." This was Paul's way of answering his opponents who had ridiculed his visions and revelations and had accounted for them on the charge of his being mad, or insane. Paul affirms here that he was caught up to the third heaven, and his experience there was so overwhelming that he was not conscious of whether or not he was a disembodied spirit. What comfort Paul's experience, though only briefly related, is to the bereaved, to the incurably ill, and to the aged! Here the saints can read the writings of a man of God who was caught up to Paradise and then was returned to

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his physical body to continue his work of preaching the glorious gos-

pel of Christ!

The Jews held the concept of three heavens. The first is the atmospheric belt where the clouds gather and the birds fly; the second is nonatmospheric firmament, or belt, where the sun, moon, and stars make their calculable orbits; the third is where God's dwelling place is. Within this frame of reference, Paul affirmed that he was caught up to the third heaven.

"And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God knoweth), how that he was caught up into Paradise [Paul repeats his former statement for the sake of emphasis, except he designates the third heaven as designates the third heaven as being Paradise] and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter [Paul was not allowed to describe the bliss which he saw, heard, and experienced]. On behalf of such a one will I glory [Paul would not glory in himself as such but he would in himself as such, but he would glory in any man who had been so honored as to be caught up to Paradise]: but on mine own behalf I will not glory, save in my weak-nesses." Paul was a man beset on every side by injuries, necessities, persecutions, and distresses; then too. he had put saints to death, prior to his conversion; and further, only by the grace of the Lord Jesus could he have ever been so honored to be caught up to Paradise; he would glory, therefore in his having had his sins and weak-nesses of the flesh covered by the grace and death and blood of Christ. "For if I should desire to glory, I shall not be foolish; for I shall speak the truth . . ." If he desired to boast, which thing he did not desire to do. he would not resort to mad and imaginary experisort to mad and imaginary experi-ences as his opponents had charged; but rather, he could and would speak only the truth in relating his visions and revelations, and by speaking only the truth he would give abundant evidence of his position and power as an apostle of Christ. ". . . but I forbear [he would not relate more of his visions and experiences], lest any man should account of me above that which he seeth me to be, or heareth from me [Paul would not relate more lest any should think of him above that which he wasl."

# A Thorn In The Flesh Restrained Him

(2 Cor. 12:7-10)

"And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations [revelations which Paul received when he was caught up to Paradise were extraordinarily miraculous] that I should not be exalted overmuch [lifted up with much pride], there was given me a thorn in the flesh [the term "flesh" indicates that the thorn related to the physical body in some way, either by bodily affliction which induced considerable pain and shame, or some physical handicap which would tend to make the body repulsive], a messenger of Satan [Satan often desired to test God's servants, as in the case of Job and Peter] to buffet me [Satan, like certain of the kings of Assyria and Babylonia, has often unwittingly executed the demands of God's righteousness], that I should not be exalted overmuch."

"Concerning this thing [the thorn in the flesh] I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee [the Lord's grace would enable Paul to overcome his handicap, or thorn in the flesh]: for my power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest on me [Paul accepted the verdict from the Lord, for through his weaknesses and sufferings the power of the Lord would be stronger through him]."

"Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake." Paul would continue to glory in his weaknesses, and not in worldly and empty boastings and the commendations of men which characterized his opponents; for when he gloried in his weaknesses, he was in reality glorying in the Lord. He defined substantially his meaning of the term "weaknesses"—injuries, necessities, persecutions, and distresses. "... for when I am weak, then am I strong." When Paul was weak, that is, when he was the more heavily borne down by the weight of injuries, necessities, per-

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seditions, and distresses, he relied the more on the Lord, and when he relied the more on the Lord he was stronger. The same is true with the Christian today. If all things are going well, he relies the more on himself and the less on the Lord. He prays less and with less urgency. When his course is fraught with suffering, sorrow, and disappointments, he prays more and with more urgency; and his thoughts the more run on spiritual matters and concerns.

### PROBLEMS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Tom Hare, a brother in Christ, thought he was making considerable headway in his Bible study with Andrew Creek until they came to the subject of baptism. When Hare pointed out that a sinner must be baptized to be saved, Creek responded somewhat explosively with the statement: "This is just not the case. I know when I was saved. A feeling of peace and contentment came over me, and I know I was saved. No one can tell me otherwise, but I was not baptized until a year later." Now, for your reaction:

(1) Hare will have a difficult time teaching Creek because Creek puts his experience above the teaching of the Bible. (2) When the Bible is set aside for religious experiences, and thereby ceases to be the stan-dard of authority in religion, the matter of teaching the Bible is very difficult. (3) If Hare could persuade Creek to attend a class of the book of Acts, from beginning to end, he might, in a casual and unassuming manner, lead Creek to see the error of his way. (4) Hare would probably only intensify Creek's averment if he should, without first laying a foundation of Biblo instruction Bible instruction, deny that Creek had the experience.

In the late nineteenth century, religious experiences, visions, and revelations were the standard of authority in religion. Except for the fact that there were men and women who were willing to let the Bible be the standard of authority, there could not have been a restoration movement on the North American continent. Some churches of that restoration move-

ment, however, are holding "sharing classes" and "testimonial days," and some members claim "getting the Holy Spirit" and to be speaking in tongues, and casting out demons, and receiving visions and revelations. Now, for your reaction: (1) Such matters as are taking place are very dangerous, and will only plunge the church into a state of apostasy. (2) Brethren have gone out on a limb by contending for the word only, and the changes that are taking place in the church are healthy. (3) Who is one Christian to question what a fellow Christian has seen, or heard, or experienced in religious matters? (4) The answer to these problems is love, and the church should be broad enough to include these people in its fellowship without a state of debate and confusion.

Ira Jones does not begin his day without checking his horoscope. While he is a faithful Christian and a good student of the Bible, he has reached the point where he expects to see evidence within his own experiences of that which is indicated in his personal relation to the horoscope. Now, for your reaction: (1) A person's devotion to, and a kind of reliance, on a horoscope is quite an innocent thing. (2) The reliance on a horoscope is not so innocent, and in fact, it can be dangerous. (3) The time has come when brethren need to be warned against all such matters as horoscopes, visions, trances, experiences, and revelations. (4) All men should look to the Word only as the standard of authority in religion.

# **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

## Foreword

Why was Paul somewhat at a disadvantage from the outset of his career as an apostle? What did the new teachers who came to Corinth purport to have?

What shadows of doubt did those new teachers cast upon Paul?

Why did Paul not appeal to the apostles in Jerusalem for letters of commendation? Upon what three appeals did Paul establish his apostleship?

### The Problem for Today's Lesson

What facts illustrate the statement that the problem in today's lesson has been current in every generation of man? In what ways is this problem current today?

Upon what do well grounded Christians linger?

### The Golden Text

How did Paul react to the questioning of his apostleship?
What did Paul mean by his terms, "same mind" and "live in peace"?

### The Text Explained

What did Paul's defense of himself require him to do? Under what obligation was Paul in this matter?

questioned Paul's sanity? How had

What is the one certain thing, and what

is the genuine blessing resulting from Paul's defense of himself? is the "visions" Define the terms, tions." and "revela-

o what instance may Paul have referring as happening "fourteen To

years ago"? To what place was Paul caught up in his

unique experience?

What was the Jews' concept of heaven?

How did Paul describe the things he saw, heard, and experienced?

In what way did Paul say would glory?
What was given to Paul that he not be "exalted overmuch"?
"thorn" and "flesh"

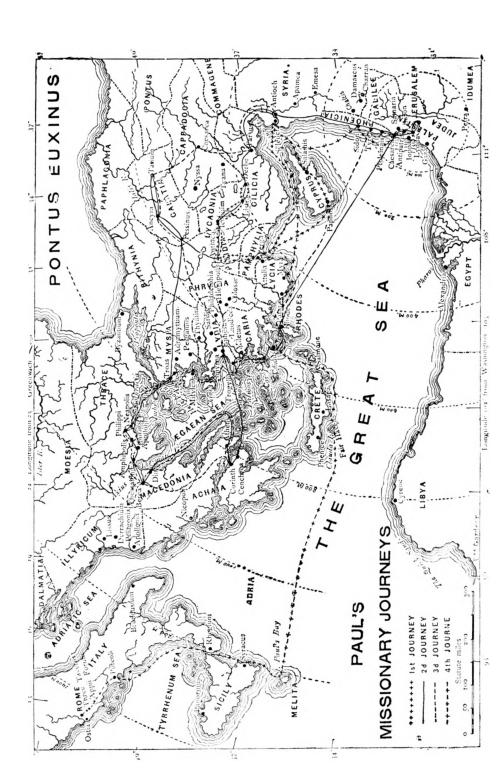
What do the terms "thorn" "flesh" indicate?

In what way did Paul describe the "thorn in the flesh"?

What did Paul beseech the Lord to do?

What was the Lord's answer, and did Paul react to the answer?

Explain Paul's statement, "I take plea-sure in weaknesses, in injuries, in dis-tresses. . . For when I am weak, then am I strong." "T



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# FOURTH QUARTER

# HOW TO DEAL WITH SOCIAL AND CIVIC PROBLEMS

AIM. - Tous a deeper sense of Christian obligation awaken in about us, and around us, and to learn how our Lord wants us to carry out the duties involved therein.

Lesson I—October 3, 1976

# BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR

Lesson Text

Luke 10:25-37

25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and made trial of him, saying, Teâcher, what shall I do to in-herit eternal life?

26 And he said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest

thou?

- 27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.
- 28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

29 But he, desiring to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my

neighbor?

30 Jesus made answer and said, A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 And by chance a certain priest was going down that way: and when

he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And in like manner a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion,

34 And came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow he took out two shillings, and gave them to the host, and said, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee.

36 Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him that

fell among the robbers?

37 And he said. He that showed mercy on him. And Jesus said unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

neighbor as thyself." (Matt.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thou shalt love thy DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 22:34-40.

# Daily Bible Readings

September 27. M	
	Duties under the Law of Moses (Lev. 19:11-18)
September 29. W	An Example of Neighborliness (Acts 4:32-37)
	ove of Our Neighbors a Basic Duty (Rom. 13:8-10)
October 1. F	Royal Law Fulfilled (James 2:1-13)
October 2. S	Serving Christ through Others (Matt. 25:31-46)
October 3. S	

TIME. - A.D. 29-30.

PLACE. - Probably Judea.

Persons.—Jesus and a certain lawyer.

### Introduction

The subjects for this quarters study deal with social and civic problems, and the aim is to awaken

in the heart of each saint a deeper sense of Christian obligation for people both in the church and out

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of the church. Today's lesson on "Being a Good Neighbor" is one of those lessons which carries very pressing obligations. No person is a

true-hearted Christian who fails to take thought and care for the welfare of his neighbor.

# PERTINENT QUOTES

"Better is a neighbor that is near than a brother far off." (Prov. 27:10.)

"Good neighbors I have had, and I have met with bad: and in trust I have found treason." (Queen Elizabeth I)

"No one is rich enough to do without a neighbor." (A Danish proverb)

"Every man's neighbor is his mirror." (Anonymous)

"Virtue is not left to stand alone. He who practices it will have good neighbors." (Confucius)

### Thy Neighbor

"Who is thy neighbor? He whom thou hast power to aid or bless;

Whose aching heart or burning brow thy soothing hand may press.

Thy neighbor? 'Tis the fainting poor whose eye with want is dim'

Oh. enter thou his humble door with aid and peace for him.

Thy neighbor? He who drinks the cup when sorrow crown the brim;

With words of high sustaining hope go thou and comfort him.

Thy neighbor? 'Tis the weary slave, fettered in mind and limb

He hath no hope this side the grave; go thou and ransom him.

Thy neighbor? Pass no mourner by; perhaps thou canst redeem a

breaking heart from misery; Go share thy lot with him."

(Christian Home)

# The Golden Text

"Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself(Matt. 22:39.)

Moses had previously commanded: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am Jehovah." (Lev. 19:18.) When Jesus came upon the scene of action, he sanctioned Moses' command. The thought is that this command is a

universal principle—a universal obligation. This obligation is imperative. It cannot be shunted or set aside without calling forth the divine wrath of the almighty God. What an obligation! Can anyone afford to study this lesson on "Being a Good Neighbor" in a flippant or light-hearted manner?

# The Text Explained

# The Lawyer's Entrapping Question (Luke 10:25)

"And behold a certain lawyer stood up and made trial of him, saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

The terms "scribe" and "lawyer" as they appeared in the gospel records were interchangeable for those who copied and expounded the law. This scribe or lawyer was very much displeased with the way and manner in which Jesus had dealt with spiritual problems. He stood, no doubt with an air of self-conceit and with the intent to attract attention to himself, to ask a question which was calculated to entrap

Jesus. "Teacher," he said, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" His question was a good one, but his design was evil. He would gladly have tangled with Jesus oyer matters of tradition and the keeping of the sabbath, which things Jesus had broken. Woe to the man who, out of pride, raises questions relative to God and his plan and laws, just for the mere sake of debate, or ridicule or wrangling!

# The Master's Enabling Question (Luke 10:26)

"And he said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?"

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"How readest thou" was a Rabbinical formula. It meant, "To what end or to what purport readest thou?" Within the context of this Rabbinical formula, Jesus replied to the entrapping question of the lawyer by asking him a question. "What is written in the law?" Jesus asked. The answer came as a surprise to the lawyer. He had expected, no doubt, some answer which would put Jesus in conflict with either the law or the traditions of the Jews. The lawyer's business was to know the law, and if he had failed to answer forthrightly, he would have embarrassed his position as a scribe or lawyer, and his scholarship of the law as well.

# The Lawyer's Correct Answer (Luke 10:27)

"And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as

thyself."

The lawyer knew the law. Moses had commanded: "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart." In another place, he com-manded: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am Jehovah." Jesus later gave substantially the same summary of the law during his passion week in Jerusalem. To another lawyer who, seeking to ensnare him, asked: "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets." (Deut. 6:4-6; Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:36-40.)

# The Proper Emphasis of the Law (Luke 10:28)

"And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live."

The lawyer had given the correct answer, and Jesus commended him for the answer. The lawyer had been caught in his own trap or snare. Instead of exposing the Master as he had hoped to do, the Master had exposed him. For him, the law was a subject for theory and debate, but for the Master, the law was something to be obeyed.

# The Lawyer's Embarrassment (Luke 10:29)

"But he, desiring to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?"

The lawyer had lost the first session of the encounter. He stood embarrassed and humiliated, and the Master had spoken with such ease and composure and with such certainty and confidence that the seconds must have seemed long to the lawyer. In an effort to regain his composure and to bolster his position, the lawyer asked, as a means of justifying himself, "Who is my neighbor?" He stated the question as if he were sure that the answer would be difficult to ascertain, and that it would definitely exclude certain people—particularly the Gentiles and the Samaritans. With his question, he sought to allay his conscience and to show the audience that he had a point.

# One Character of the Parable— The Robbed Jew (Luke 10:30)

"And Jesus made answer and said, A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead."

Jericho is located some twenty-

Jericho is located some twentyone miles from Jerusalem, and the
incline of the road is steep and
down all of the way. In Elijah's
and Elisha's days, one of the
Schools of the Prophets was located
in Jericho, and in the Master's days
upon the earth, a large concentration of priests dwelt there. The
road from Jerusalem to Jericho was
haunted by highwaymen or robbers.
Jerome recorded that in his day the
road was called "the bloody way."

To answer the lawyer's question, Jesus set forth a parable. "A certain man," presumably a Jew, but no emphasis was placed on the fact, "was going from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers." The robbers clubbed him, left him to die, or half dead as the case was.

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# Another Character of the Parable — The Dignified Priest

(Luke 10:31)

"And by chance a certain priest going down that way: when he saw him, he passed by on the other side."

The certain priest was going down that way. He was very likely on his way home from Jerusalem. The dignified priest had served his week's course at the Temple, and probably was in a hurry to get home. The matter of the priest's course can be understood only in the light of Old Testament history. the light of Old Testament history.

During David's declining years, he prepared the plans and a model for the construction of the Temple. He prescribed the offices of the Levites; he organized the courses of Aaron's sons; and he also organized the courses of the other of Levi's sons. The Levitical tribe had grown to be immensely large in numbers, and such an organization

was sorely needed.

The descendants or sons of Aaron divided into twenty-four courses, and the Hebrew year was divided into fifty-one weeks. All of the sons of Aaron served during the weeks of the special feasts-that is, the feast of the passover; the feast of the weeks, or Pentecost; the feast of Tabernacles, and the feast feast of Tabernacles, of the harvest. The This arrangement left forty-eight weeks in the year to attended by the twenty-four respective courses of the sons of Aaron. To illustrate, Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, was of the course of Abijah. In short, each priest, in keeping with his particular course, served a week in the first half of the year and another week in the second half of the year, those two weeks of service were in addition to his three weeks of service on the respective festival weeks. (Lev. 23:4-8, 15-21, 39-44;

1 Chron. 23-24; Luke 1:5.)

The certain priest of this parable "was going down that way," or down from Jerusalem to Jericho. The great likelihood is that he had just completed his course and was on his way home. When he saw his fellow-wounded Jew, he. in violation of Moses' law, passed by on the other side. He did the wounded harm, except refraining no from helping him.

# Another Character in the Parable -The Distinguished Levite

(Luke 10:32)

"And in like manner a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side."

All priests were Levites, but not all Levites were priests. The Levites, other than the priests who descended from Aaron, were divided also into twenty-four courses, and their periods of weekly services during the year corresponded to the courses of the sons of Aaron. The Levites were not as distinguished and dignified as the priests, but they were more distinguished than the members of the other tribes.

This Levite "came to the place." There is no indication that he came Jerusalem to Jericho. therefore, may have been on his way up to Jerusalem for a week of service at the temple. The chief point is the fact that the Levite also saw his fellow-wounded Jew, and he, too, passed by on the other side.

# The Last Character in the Parable -The Good Samaritan

(Luke 10:33)

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he was moved

until compassion."

The Samaritan was a half-breed —part Jew and part Gentile—and he was an object of hostility so far as the Jews were concerned. When he came upon the man who had been robbed, and left to die, he was moved with compassion-that is, he was moved with a conscious sympathy for the wounded man's distress and with a strong desire to alleviate it. One strong point of the parable was to show that one's neighbor is anyone who is in need.

# The Humanitarian Action of the Good Samaritan

(Luke 10:34, 35)

. . and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

The Samaritan, a despised man in the eyes of the Jews, stopped on his way to perform a neighborly service for a wounded Jew. What a conviction the relating of this parable must have laid on the heart of

the lawver!

The Samaritan bound the wounds of the clubbed Jew, and poured oil and wine—household remedies consisting of soothing oil and antiseptic alcohol—upon the injured Jew. Then he sat the man on his beast and carried him to an inn, and he took care of him.

"And on the morrow he took two shillings, and gave them to the host, and said, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay

thee."

The arrangement was agreeable to the innkeeper. The Samaritan doubtless was known by the innkeeper to be honorable—a man of his word. Men of compassion, of honor, and of courage stand tall in any age and in any clime. They are known for their compassion and helpfulness.

Though unorthodox in the worship of Jehovah, the Samaritan was more orthodox at heart by far than

was either the priest or the Levite.

He certainly had the spirit of the

# The Master's Further Questions to the Lawyer and the Lawyer's Reply

(Luke 10:36, 37)

"Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him

that fell among the robbers?"

Jesus thus put the question, "Who is my neighbor," squarely before the lawyer for his decision. "Which of the three"—that is, priest, Levite, or Samaritan—"proved neighbor to the wounded man?" Jesus with emphasis asked.

"And he [the lawyer] said, He that showed mercy on him. And Jesus said unto him, Go, and do

thou likewise."

There was absolutely no way for the lawyer to extricate himself from the conclusion of the parable. The answer was, "he that showed mercy," and the lawyer gave this answer. He did not, however use the term Samaritan. His race prejudice was too great for that.

### IN SUMMARY

In summary, the following observations are in order:

1. In the parable of the Good Samaritan are set forth the three basic philosophies of life common to mankind.

One philosophy is, "What is thine is mine, and I will take it by force," as per the robbers.

A second philosophy of life is, "What is thine is thine, and what is mine is mine," as per the priest and the Levite.

A third philosophy of life is, "What is mine is thine, and I will give it to you," as per the Good Samaritan.

- 2. The parable of the Good Samaritan has been responsible for great charitable works throughout the centuries. The spirit of the parable will remove race prejudice, class jealousy, and hatred of all kinds, including wars.
- 3. Only Luke, a Greek, recorded the parable of the Good Samaritan. He wrote his gospel record as if to tell the Gentiles about the great Saviour. He gave more details of the early years of Christ than any of

other writers. He began his genealogy with Christ and traced to Adam, thereby showing that Gentiles were included in plan; and just as he alone recorded the account of the Good Samaritan, he alone mentioned the widow of Zarephath and Naaman the Syrian. He alone told of the ten lepers who were healed and only one, a Samaritan, returned to praise God. He alone spoke of the "times of the Gentiles," and he alone quoted the words of Isaiah where he wrote: "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." (Luke 10:25-27; 17:11-19.)

### Priest and Levite

'The priest would never kill a man—
His calling was too high;

The dying man beside the road— He merely passed him by.

The Levite, too, would never kill; No law would he defy; The wounded man he saw that day,

He only left to die.

The priest and Levite to this day No murder would commit; But seeing someone left to die. They want no part of it.

They pass by on the other side; To worship they must go, While fellow men lie bleeding On roads to Jericho."

– John C. Slemp

### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

What kind of problems do the for this quarter deal with?
What will be the aim of this of subjects quarter's lessons?

#### The Golden Text

What is the thought about the command of the golden text?

### The Text Explained

Define the term "lawyer" as it is used in this text. what way was this lawyer displeased

with Jesus? what manner and d the lawyer ask for what did

ask his question Jesus? What hat did Jesus' thou?" mean? words, "How readest

What answer did the lawyer give to this question? ow was the lawyer caught in his trap? How own

nat question did the lawyer ask in his embarrassment? What question

How did Jesus answer this question? Describe the road from Jerusalem to JerWhat happened to the man in Jesus' parable?

Where had the priest of the parable been before going down the road likely to Jericho?

Discuss the matter of the courses of the priests.

Wĥat was the priest's reaction upon hat was the difference between a and a Levite? What priest

Levite's reaction upon

hat was the Levit seeing the wounded man? Who was the Samaritan?

What was the Samaritan's reaction upon seeing the wounded man? Why was the Samaritan's reaction toward

the Jew an unexpected one? What shows that the Samaritan

honorable man? nat question did Jesus ask the lawyer after relating the parable? What question What was the lawyer's reply?

#### In Summary

Relate the three basic philosophies of life common to mankind as set forth in this life parable.

Wĥat ills will the spirit of the parable remove?

What is the significance of Luke's relating this parable?

# Lesson II – October 10, 1976

# CHRISTIAN HELPFULNESS

#### Lesson Text

Acts 9:

32 And it came to pass, as Peter went throughout all parts, he came down also to the saints that dwelt at Lydda.

33 And there he found a certain man named Æneas, who had kept his bed eight years; for he was pal-

34 And Peter said unto him, Æneas, Jesus Christ healeth thee: arise, and make thy bed. And straightway he arose.

And all that dwelt at Lydda and in Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

And it came to pass in those days, that she fell sick, and died: and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber.

38 And as Lydda was nigh unto Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men unto him, entreating him, Delay not to come on unto us.

39 And Peter arose and went with them. And when he was come, they brought him into the upper cham-ber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats garments which Dorcas made, and while she was with them.

But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning to the body, he said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

And he gave her his hand, and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

42 And it became known throughout all Joppa: and many believed on the Lord.

Golden Text.—"A worthy woman who can find? For her price is far above rubies." (Prov. 31:10.)

Devotional Reading.—Lev. 25:25-47.

# Daily Bible Readings

October 4. M	Religion and Service Combined (James 1:26, 27)
October 5. T	Religion and Service Combined (James 1:26, 27) Proof of Dedication to Christ (Acts 2:37-47)
October 7. T	
October 8. F	
October 9. S	
October 10. S	

Time. — A.D. 39-40.

Places.—Lydda, Sharon, and Joppa, cities near and on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

Persons.—Peter, Dorcas, and certain widows.

### Introduction

The lesson for today entitled, "Christian Helpfulness," turns on a great woman whose name in the Chaldee was Tabitha, and when translated into the Greek was Dorcas, and when translated into English is Gazelle. This great woman was not known in academic and political circles. In fact until her death she was not known beyond

the limits of the town of Lydda. She was not a spokesman for the members of her sex, and she took no public part in the leadership of the small church in her town. She was quite well known, however, by the poor widows in the small town of Lydda, and she was known for her good works and almsdeeds. Her whole life was filled with them.

### PERTINENT OUOTES

"To pity distress is but human: to relieve it is God-like." (Horace Mann)

"A man there was and they called him mad; the more he gave the more he had." (John Bunyan)

"Blessed are those who can give without remembering and take without forgetting." (Elizabeth Bibesco)

"There is a loftier ambition than merely to stand high in the world. It is to stoop down and lift mankind a little higher." (Henry Van Dyke)

"He who helps in the saving of others, saves himself as well." (Harman Von Aue)

"There is no loving others without

living for others." (Anonymous)
"Grace was in all her steps, heaven
in her eye,

In every gesture dignity and love." (As Milton wrote of Eve)

"She looks as clear

As morning roses newly washed with dew." (Shakespeare)

"What is beauty? Not the show Of shapely limbs and features. No;

These are but flowers
That have their dated hours
To breathe their momentary

sweets and go.
"Tis the stainless soul within
That outshines the fairest skin."

(Anonymous)

### The Golden Text

"A worthy woman who can find? For her price is far above rubies." (Prov. 31:10.)

Dorcas was a worthy woman. The widows, who stood by weeping and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas had made, bore witness of her real and genuine worth. Her price was far above rubies.

There is no member of the human race—be that person a baby, or a youth, or of maturity—that is so wholesome and influential as is a good, spiritual, and sacrificing woman. The Dorcases cradle hu-

LESSON II

manity—whether male or female—and lift the faith and morals of so-

ciety as no other segment of mankind can do.

# The Text Explained

# Peter at Lydda and Joppa

Luke, at this point in his graphic history of the Acts of the Apostles, was done with his preliminary account of Saul. The church was enjoying a period of peace and quiet. Saul, the inquisitor-in-chief of the Great Sanhedrin, had been converted; and this fact dimmed the persecutions that had been waged by the Jews since the time of the stoning of Stephen. Then too, Em-Caligula's order that image be erected in the Temple— the time about A.D. 39-40, as per Josephus—likely caused the Jews to lose sight of their grudge against the disciples, and for an extended period of time.

The churches therefore, "throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria"—the regions where the feet of the Master had trod—enjoyed a period of peace, and spiritual growth through edification, and they also enjoyed a considerable growth in numbers. The church, "walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy

Spirit," was multiplied.

# Peter Came Down to Lydda (Acts 9:32)

"And it came to pass, as Peter went through all the parts, he came down also to the saints who dwelt at Lydda."

Luke returns at this point to an account of Peter, who at this time had left Jerusalem on an evangelistic tour. He went through all the parts as far as Lydda, a village or town of long standing located plain extending alongside the coast from Joppa to Caesarea, coast line being a distance of some thirty miles. There were saints that dwelt at Lydda, and a justifiable conjecture is that Philip the established evangelist had church there. Luke's record reads: Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more. . . . But Philip was at Azotus; and passing through he preached the gospel to all the cities, till he came to Caesarea." (Acts 8:39, 40.)

# Peter Performed a Miracle at Lydda (Acts 9:33-34)

"And there he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had kept his bed eight years; for he was palsied."

Luke did not designate the "certain man named Aeneas" as a disciple or believer; whereas, in the case of Dorcas, he designated her as being "a certain disciple." Anyway, this Aeneas had been a palsied or paralyzed man for eight years. He did not have use of his body, and he was thus compelled to lie on his pallet by day. He was so helpless that he was wholly dependent upon others for the normal care of his body.

"And Peter said unto him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ healeth thee:

arise and make thy bed."

Peter, through the power of Jesus Christ, healed the palsied man. He made the man whole instantly and that simply by means of the spoken word. This case was a parallel to Peter and John healing the man that lay daily at the Gate Beautiful in Solomon's Temple. (Acts 3:2.) Peter instructed Aeneas: "Arise and make thy bed," that is, "arise and spread thy pallet," or do that which others have been doing for you.

Luke recorded. "And straightway he arose," but he did not record more, that is, he made no mention of the man's emotional reaction as a result of his being healed. Luke's brevity may be accounted for on the basis that he was not concerned with the effect that the miracle had on the palsied man; but rather, his concern was the effect that the miracle had on the inhabitants of

Lydda.

# The Miracle had a Profound Effect on the Inhabitants of Lydda (Acts 9:35)

"And all that dwelt at Lydda and in Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord."

From Lydda to Sharon the word of the miracle spread—among the people who lived in that broad rich tract of land which lies between the mountains of the central part of the Holy land and the beautiful Medi-

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terranean Sea. Aeneas was doubt-less well known for his paralyzed state, and the miracle had a pro-found effect upon the people so that "they turned to the Lord."

## Luke Introduces a Godly Woman-Dorcas (Acts 9:36)

"Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did."

Peter was called from his happy and refreshing experiences among the saints at Joppa to Lydda where there was mourning over the death of a godly woman. The name of the woman in Chaldee was Tabitha, but when the name was translated this is the meaning of "by inter-pretation") into the Greek it was Dorcas, and when the name "Dorcas" is translated into the English it is Gazelle, thereby denoting the beauty and grace of the gazelle or antelope of Judah. The animal is "celebrated by" its slender form, its graceful motions, and its fiery and beautiful eyes. The name Dorcas, or Gazelle, was a fitting designation for a woman of such beautiful character.

This woman Tabitha, or Dorcas, was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did. What a great and godly record this saintly woman had made for herself; yet she was not really interested in making a record for herself; but instead, she was working from a benevolent and sympathetic heart for the welfare of those in need and of deprived circumstances.

# Dorcas Fell Sick and Died (Acts 9:37-39)

"And it came to pass in those days, that she fell sick, and died: and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber."

Peter was nearby and the death of the woman afforded Peter his first occasion to raise a person from the dead. The apostle Paul had a similar experience later in the rais-ing of Eutychus from the dead. (Acts 20:9.)

Normally, in that warm climate and with no means of preserving a dead body, the body of a deceased person was buried immediately, but the body of Dorcas was washed and

prepared for burial and laid in an upper chamber. Apparently, delay was effected in order to send for Peter.

"And as Lydda was nigh unto Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men unto him, entreating him, Delay not to come on unto us.

Lydda was some twelve miles from Joppa, a three hour distance. The matter of sending for Peter, and thereby awaiting his arrival, would consume some six hours, or more, of time. Luke leaves the stu-dent to conjecture the details of the message, but instead, he records the brief but urgent words: "Delay not to come on unto us." If Peter had delayed, burial would have been imperative before his arrival.

And Peter arose and went with And when he was brought him into the chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas

made, while she was with them."

Peter went to Lydda in haste. Upon his arrival he was escorted to the upper chamber where the body lay, and there stood the weeping widows with garments in hand which Dorcas had made for them. What a sight to behold—weeping widows who no longer had hustered by the standard by the standard by the standard by the standard has been also as the standard by shands to whom they could look for support, protection and comfort! She may have known the loss of a husband, and she could truly sympathize with those women whom she sewed for and cared for as her vocation in life.

Dorcas sewed for love. She made garments for the poor; and thereby, she made garments for the Lord. She was a mere woman. No single apostle had been chosen from her sex. No one of her sex served as an elder in the church, or as a public evangelist. Those of her sex did not lead the public prayers, but her name was entered into the pages of the Holy Writ in memory of her great life-a life full of good works and almsdeeds which she had done.

# Dorcas was Raised from the Dead (Acts 9:40-42)

"But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she

sat up."

There could be absolutely guestion as to the fact that this woman was dead. For more than six hours the body had been a corpse. The raising of Dorcas was the first person that Peter, by the power of Christ, had ever raised from the dead. Great men had died and the apostles had not raised them from the dead. Even men like Stephen and the apostle James, as valuable as they were to the cause of Christ, when put to death had not been brought to life, nor is there any indication that those who sent for Peter expected him to raise Dorcas to life.

The scenes at the house of Dorcas, though briefly depicted, are similar to the scenes among the saints of God today where there has been a Peter was sent very much as ministers of the gospel are called for today where there has been a death. The sorrow and loss expressed among those saints then is repeated over and over again among the saints of today.

"And he gave her his hand, and she raised up; and calling the saints

and widows, he presented her alive."

Life did not gradually return to Dorcas. It returned ' instantly. When Peter called her name, she opened her eyes. In short, the Lord made Dorcas to hear the call from Peter; the Lord returned the spirit unto the body, and the Lord knelt when Peter had prayed. There is no evidence that Peter knew what the outcome from the Lord would be at the time he out the widows from the room and knelt to pray.

Luke does not depict the reactions of those saints as they beloved Dorcas ceived their back from the dead, but there can be no question as to the great joy on that The people had occasion. moved from deep sorrow to

joy.
"And it became known throughout all Joppa: and many believed on the Lord."

Joppa was turned into a harvest of souls, for many believed on the Lord. Peter had gone to weep with those who wept, and he remained to rejoice with those who rejoiced.

### IN SUMMARY

In summary, the following observations are in order:

1. Dorcas subscribed to the "great poor law" of the church of the Lord—that is, that the strong should help the weak. (Rom. 15:1.)

2. Dorcas knew the proper sphere of the work for a woman in the church—that is, she was full of good works and almsdeeds.

3. Dorcas had a good name, and a good name is more precious than silver or gold.

Let "Self" be crucified and slain And buried deep; and all in vain May efforts be to rise again Unless to live for—others.

Help me in all the work I do

To ever be sincere and true

And know that all I'd do for you Must needs be done for—others.

And when my work on earth is done

And my new work in heaven's begun

May I forget the crown I've won While thinking still of—others.

Others, Lord. yes. others Let this may motto be Help me to live for others That I may live like Thee.

-C. D. Meigs

### Others

Lord, help me to live from day to

In such a self forgetful way That even when I kneel to pray My prayer shall be for—others.

# **Questions for Discussion**

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

Introduction

What does the name Dorcas mean when translated into English?

In what way was Dorcas known in her hometown?

The Golden Text

Who bore witness to the fact that Dorcas was a worthy woman?

### The Text Explained

ions contributed to the which the church was period What conditions peace ênjoying at this time?

Where was Lydda located?

justifiable conjecture is made concerning the church at Lydda?

What man did Peter heal at Lydda?

the this particular What was effect that had miracle upon the inhabitants Lydda? For wha what purpose was the burial of Dor-

cas delayed? Why did the men tell Peter, "Delay not to come unto us"?

What greeted Peter when he scene rived at the home of Dorcas?

What did Peter do when he saw Dorcas?

What is the unique quality of this miracle which Peter performed? What did the Lord make Dorcas to do?

What resulted from this raising of Dorcas from the dead?

#### In Summary

What great law did Dorcas subscribe to? What knowledge did Dorcas possess concerning women of the church?

### Lesson III—October 17, 1976

# RESPECT FOR ALL

# Lesson Text

# James 2:1-9

1 My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

2 For if there côme into your synagogue a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing, and there come in also a poor man in vile clothing;

3 And ye have regard to him that weareth the fine clothing, and say, Sit thou here in a good place; and ye say to the poor man, Stand thou there, or sit under my footstool;

4 Do ye not make distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

5 Hearken, my beloved brethren; did not God choose them that are

poor as to the world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to them that love him?

6 But ye have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you, and themselves drag you before the

judgment-seats?

7 Do not they blaspheme the honorable name by which ye are called? 8 Howbeit if ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well:

9 But if ye have respect of persons, ve commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors.

Golden Text.-"For respect of persons with God." there isno 2:11.)

Devotional Reading.—Rom. 12:1-21.

# Daily Bible Readings

(12-22)
19:1-7)
72:2-14)
24:1-23)
s 15:1-9)
:13-15)
3:21-23)

Time.-A.D. 45-48.

Place.-James wrote his epistle to the Dispersion from Jerusalem. The Dispersion were those Jews who had been transplanted to other countries by heathen captors, or who had, by choice and honor, or for reasons of commerce, taken up residence in other countries.

Persons.—The Jews in Palestine spoke of their brethren who dwelt in foreign countries as the Dispersion. James intended, no doubt, his epistle for all Christian Jews wherever they were, and particularly for those of

the Eastern Dispersion.

### Introduction

The Epistle of James was written by James, the brother of the Lord.

The epistle is as practical as Paul's epistle to the Romans is profound

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The epistle is one of the early New Testament books to be written. It is specifically addressed to Jewish Christians, and no single reference is made to Gentiles.

Those Christians to whom epistle was addressed had not long ceased to be Jews, and this fact must be held in mind as one studies epistle. Thus, James, unlike other of the New Testament writers, speaks of the place of the assembly as being the synagogue. The object of the epistle was to exhort those Jewish Christians to persevere with patience under the fiery trials to which they were exposed. Those persecutions and trials were inflicted, no doubt, by their own

disbelieving brethren.

James, while holding his object in view, took occasion to warn against various sins and tendencies which were common to them, and common to all Christians, even today, as a matter of fact. Today's lesson on "Respect for All" is one of the warnings of the epistle. There was a strong tendency among the Christians, as was the case before their conversion, to show respect for the rich and renowned, and at the same time to show utter disregard and disrespect for the poor and those of no repute.

# PERTINENT QUOTES

"Kings and their subjects, masters and slaves, find a common level in two places-at the foot of the cross and in the grave." (Colton)

"Your fat king, and your lean beg-gar, is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table; that is the end." (Shakespeare)

"Neither intellect, nor wealth, nor manners, nor clothes give a man a special claim or place in a Christian community." (Robert

"How iniquitous is it, then, to distinguish the rich as such, and to slight the poor as such, in a place where all are on the same level before God." (B. Jacobi)

"We must not judge of faith by persons, but of persons by faith."

(Tertullian)

"It was my custom occasionally to attend St. Mary's and the sermons of the vicar always delighted me. But as the church was always very full, I was often obliged, though not strong in health, to stand during the whole service. Now, having observed that the persons who were best dressed were always the first to be conducted to seats.

yielded to an artifice. I Ι happened to possess a large and beautiful ring. ... I put it on and repaired to church as usual. I stood for a minute or two with other people of divers classes. . . Then taking off my glove, I raised my hand with apparent carelessness to my ear, and immediately I was led to a comfortable seat."

(Autobiography of Bp. Gobat)

"Perhaps, in the modern church greatest discourworship, the agement which the poor feel is the dress which their brethren and sisters are accustomed to exhibit in the house of God." (C. F. Deems)

"Better to go to heaven in rags, than to hell in embroidery: Many whom the world regards as dirt, the Lord esteems as jewels. Judge a Christian not' by his coat, but by his character." (J. Trapp)

honored the rich Christian, not because he was a Christian, but because he was rich, i.e. because he was connected with a class, which, as such, had shown itself bitterly hostile to them." (Dean Plumptre)

### The Golden Text

"For there is no respect of persons with God." (Rom. 2:11.)

With respect to the statement and principle of this golden text. Moses, centuries before, had stated: "For

Jehovah your God, he is a God of gods, and Lord of lords, the great God, the mighty, and the terrible, who regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward." At the conversion of

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Cornelius, the apostle Peter said: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Deut. 10:17; Acts 10:34, 35.)

God is no respecter of persons; he shows no partiality. If on the surface, God seems to have shown partiality to Abraham as a family, and to Israel as a nation, the fact remains that God is absolutely just, and he has never shown partiality or respect of persons to any one at any time. To illustrate and to em-

phasize, the Gentiles were in God's plan from the beginning, and the choices that God made were the most immediate means of his reaching them, as well as the Israelites. God chose those who were the best qualified to execute his plan of righteousness, and through that plan extend salvation to all men. Within this same frame of reference, Christ chose a particular group of men to be his apostles, and he chose them because they were specifically the best qualified of all men upon the earth to do his work and to give witness of him.

# The Text Explained

### The Obligation of the Christian to Show Respect for All

There is a pressing obligation for all Christians to show the proper respect for all men, whether young or old, whether poor or rich, whether illiterate or educated, or whether of no account or presti-

gious and powerful.

There are, and always will be, spheres for proper respect. True, the child is under obligation to respect his parents; the wife is under obligation to respect her husband; and the servant is under obligation to respect his lord. Equally true, however, is the obligation of the parent to respect the child; and the obligation of the husband to respect his wife, and the obligation of the lord to respect his servant.

# The Danger of Putting Position and/or Wealth Before Character

(James 2:1-5)

"My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons." Here James strikes at the sin of hypocrisy and religious conceit. He

Here James strikes at the sin of hypocrisy and religious conceit. He is well acquainted with the faults of the Jews as a people. He is familiar with their religious arrogance, their intolerance, and their worldly pride. The Christian Jews had not risen completely above the common sins among their fellow Jews.

James warns, therefore, against Christians' holding the faith with respect of persons—or against their showing degrees of deference among the saints. The warning is against showing respect to a certain class of brethren while showing

disrespect for another class of brethren.

"For if there come into your synagogue [or assembly; this is the only place in the New Testament where the Jewish term synagogue or assembly is put for a Christian congregation] a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing, and there come in also a poor man in vile clothing [clothing that denotes poverty]; and ye have regard to him that weareth the fine clothing, and say, Sit thou here in a good place; and ye say to the poor man, Stand thou there; or sit under my footstool; do ye not make distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?"

The Jewish synagogues were seated according to rank, and the rich, the prestigious, and the educated were seated in one class while the members of each specific trade sat together as a group. The Jewish Christians, apparently, were following this seating by rank, prestige, and laboring groups, or something similar, in their worship. Such partiality for persons was un-Christian, and James here speaks

out against such favoritism.

James gave a characteristic example, or case, of how distinctions were being made and partiality was being shown, and then he asked: "Do ye not make distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?" To ask the question was to answer it. Those Jewish Christians were showing respect of persons, or favouritisms, and they were condemned by so doing.

Here lies one of the continuing sins of churches today. Respect of

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persons—particularly those who are rich and those who are politically powerful—often prevails in the churches. While some of the greatest Christians in the church today—that is, the most humble and benevolent—are quite affluent, even to the point of being rich, the fact is that, generally speaking, brethren do not judge a rich man by the same standard that they judge the ordinary members. Rich and powerful men, with but little spiritual worth, often exercise greater power and influence over a church than do the elders.

"Hearken, my beloved brethren; did not God choose them that are poor as to the world [poor in worldly goods] to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he

promised to them that love him?"

The point of emphasis is that worldly poverty is not inconsistent with true riches. James breathes here, so to speak, the words of the apostle Paul when he wrote: "For behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." (1 Cor. 1:26.) While poverty is often accompanied by true riches, such certainty is not always the case; for poverty is often attended with strong temptations.

### IN SUMMARY

In summary, the following observations seem to be pertinent:

- 1. The preference for wealth, and prestige, and success as characteristic of brethren then, and as is also characteristic of brethren today, could by symbolism be called a modern golden calf.
- 2. True Christianity does not allow for class distinctions.
- 3. Favoritism and partiality will lead a Christian to be unjust by giving to one that which is due another.
- 4. If a Christian loves God above himself, he will love his neighbor as he loves himself.
- 5. Mercy is wholly wanting when brethren glorify the rich and despise the poor.

# If I Were a Judge

If I were a Judge it seems to me, I would strive my level best to be The Oppression of the Rich (James 2:6-8)

"But ye have dishonored [heaped strong contempt upon] the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you, and themselves drag you before the

judgment seats?"

James lays a specific charge against the Jewish Christians. They had dishonored the poor man. They had not only shown the rich unwarranted respect or partiality, but also they had shown disrespect to the poor.

The question, "Do not the rich oppress you?" carries its own answer. Those Jewish Christians knew that their rich over-lords were oppressing them for their failure to pay their debts at high usurious rates, and James knew this. The rich were actually dragging violently the poor before the judgment seats, or civil courts.

"Do not they blaspheme [speak with irreverence] the honorable name by which ye are called? Howbeit if ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scriptures, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect of persons [which would be contrary to the royal law], ye commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors."

Humane, but upright—just, but kind.

Meeting all problems with open mind;

Hearing with patience from day to day,

Trials of humans who passed my way.

I would grant no favors to rich or great,

That were not the due of their just estate;

Nor would I withhold from the humblest slave

The fullest justice—that I might

Or keep, or hold my place of power, For a single day, or a single hour.

If I were Judge, I'd remember, too, That when life is over, my labors through,

I, too, must stand at the Judgment seat,

And the 'God of Justice' be forced to meet;

And I'd want to feel on that great

That none of us know, it is so far away.

That the Lord of Heaven could say to me:

'Your work is done in sincerity; Tho' you've made mistakes, yet I know you've tried

To be always and ever on Justice

And because of that, all else is forgiven

And we welcome you to the Court of Heaven!

If I were a Judge. I would keep in mind.

That the purest justice is always blind.

And that no distinctions 'twixt high or low,

Does the 'God of Justice' note or know

No mortal man be he serf or king, Would cause me to swerve, nor to grant a thing

That I should withhold—if I knew I should

Because I thought they were bad or good,

For no man is so bad, and none is so pure,

That we can be always and ever

That there isn't some virtue, or taint of sin

Mixed up with the other side of him.

-Hugh R. Porter

# **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

Who was the author of the book of James, and to whom was it written?
What was James' object in writing this epistle?

Whât occasion did James take in his epistle?

What strong tendency was present among the Jewish Christians at the time James among wrote the epistle?

### The Golden Text

What had Moses stated with respect the principle of the golden text?
hat New Testament e example shows

clearly this principle? Discuss the fact that no partiality was shown on the part of God in his choice

of the Israelites.

The Text Explained What pressing obligation do all Christians have in regard to respect?

What common sins of the Jews were present in the Christian Jews?

Discuss the characteristic example of tiality which James gave.

were the Jews How accustomed he

seated in the synagogues?
What question did James ask of the ish Christians after giving this cl Iewcharacteristic example?

In what way is this problem a continuing sin in the church today?

Discuss the fact that world not inconsistent with true riches. worldly poverty is

What is the specific charge which James lays against the Jewish Christians? What rhetorical question did James ask

of them in this connection? How did James say the Jewish Christians could fall under condemnation of sin?

### In Summary

What are the five things which could be observed in this lesson?

# Lesson IV—October 24, 1976

# GUARDING OUR SPEECH

# Lesson Text

## James 3:1-10

Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment.

2 For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also.

Now if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths that they may obey us, we turn about their whole body also.

Behold, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by

rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small rudder, whither the impulse of the steersman willeth.

So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire!

And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell.

7 For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; *it is* a restless evil, *it is* full of deadly

poison.

9 Therewith bless we the Lord

DEVOTIONAL READING. - James 3:11-18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Keep thy tongue from evil." (Psalm 34:13.)

and Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the likeness of God:

10 Out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

# **Daily Bible Readings**

October 18. M. Power of the Tongue (Prov. 18:4-21)
October 19. T. Evils of the Tongue (Psalm 52:1-4)
October 20. W. Anger from Words (Prov. 15:1-28)
October 21. T. Rash Words (Eccles. 5:1-9)
October 22. F. Effect of a Whisperer (Prov. 16:10-28)
October 23. S. Words of a Talebearer (Prov. 26:20-28)
October 24. S. Foolish Talking Unprofitable (Eph. 5:3-14)

TIME. - A.D. 45-48.

PLACE.—James wrote his epistle to the Dispersion from Jerusalem. The Dispersion were those Jews who had been transplanted to other countries by heathen captors, or who had, by choice and honor, or for reasons of commerce, taken up residence in other countries.

PERSONS.—The Jews in Palestine spoke of their brethren who dwelt in foreign countries as the Dispersion. James intended, no doubt, his epistle for all Christian Jews wherever they were, and particularly for those of the Eastern Dispersion.

### Introduction

The text for today's lesson, James 3:1-10. warns against would-be teachers and also against the ill use and abuse of the tongue. The warnings have immediate applications and implications for Christians today.

The office of a teacher entails enormous responsibility, and it is attended with many trials and difficulties. The Christian teacher must be sincerely religious; he must be thoroughly sound in the faith; he must be well informed and of studious habits: he must be of good judgment and gentle and sympathetic in manner; and he

must be active, both physically and spiritually.

The teacher, as well as all Christians, must be able to control his tongue. The proper control of the tongue is not easy, as James so well pointed up in his epistle when he wrote: "If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man" — that is, a full grown Christian. The control of the tongue, or the lack of control, constitutes the crucial test, the outcome of which determines whether or not the individual Christian has attained unto full-grown manhood in Christ.

# PERTINENT QUOTES

"We cannot avoid despising the man who is ignorant in his own profession, whatever his knowledge may be of other matters." (J. Erskine)

"Gracious hearts are always looking inward; they that inquire most into themselves are most severe against their own corruptions." (T. Manton) "The true teacher feels how much he has to learn; the would-be teacher feels how much he knows." (Robert Tuck)

"Humility is the pervading spirit of the true teacher; self confidence the spirit of the man who thinks he can teach." (Robert Tuck)

"Vessels never give so great a

sound as when they are empty." (Bishop John Jewell)

"The language of power is man's dignity and man's peril." (Robert Tuck)

"If your lips would keep from slips Of five things have a care To whom you speak, of whom you speak,

And how, and when, and where."

" 'Careful with fire' is good advice we know

'Careful with words' is ten times doubly so." (Anonymous)

## The Power of Words

A careless word may kindle strife, A cruel word may wreck a life, A bitter word may hate instill; A brutal word may smite and kill A gracious word may smooth the way;

A joyous word may light the day. A timely word may lessen stress; A loving word may heal and bless.

(Author Unknown)

"A man who lives right, and is right, has more power in his silence than another has by his words." (Phillips Brooks)

"When you talk you only say something you already know—when you listen you learn what someone else knows." (Anonymous)

"There is so much good in the worst of us, and so much bad in the best of us, that it behooves all of us not to talk about the rest of us." (Robert Louis Stevenson)

"A great many people, like cats, lick themselves with their tongues." (Anonymous) "Gossip: a person who will never tell a lie if the truth will do as much damage." (Anonymous) "Gossipping and lying go hand in hand." (Anonymous)

"The Shady Dozen: I heard . .
They say . . .; Everybody says . . .; Have you heard . . .; Did you hear . . .; Isn't it awful . .
People say . . .; Did you ever . . .; Somebody said . . .; Don't say I told you . . .; Would you think . . .; Oh, I think it is terrible . . .

"Better to be quiet and be thought a fool than to speak and remove all doubt." (Anonymous)

"What is in the well of your heart will show up in the bucket of your speech." (Anonymous)

"I have never been hurt by anything I didn't say." (Calvin Coolidge) "The best rule for talking is the one carpenters use: measure twice, saw once." (Anonymous)

"A sharp tongue is the only edge tool that grows sharper with constant use." (Washington Irving)

"From Hebrew with the maxim sprung; 'Though feet may slip, ne'er let the tongue,' The sacred writer crowns the whole; 'Who keeps his tongue, doth keep his soul.'" (Anonymous)

"The heart of the fool is in his mouth, but the mouth of the wise man is in his heart." (Benjamin Franklin)

"A slip of the foot you may soon recover, but a slip of the tongue you may never get over." (Benjamin Franklin)

### The Golden Text

"Keep thy tongue from evil" (Psalm 34:13.)

admonition is from the Psalm of David after he had left the court of Abimelech, to whom he had fled in his flight from Saul. In the second division of this psalm, David gave a special exhortation to the young to trust in the Lord and pursue a life of righteousness. frame this of reference, David wrote the admonition as per the words of the golden text.

The admonition to "keep thy tongue from evil" meant to give ut-

terance to truth and to the truth alone. To paraphrase the statement, it could well read: "Love the truth and speak the truth."

Sins of the tongue are too numerous to relate. The case of three great men will suffice: Moses spoke unadvisedly with his lips; Job darkened counsel by words without knowledge, and Peter once spoke with the words of Satan. How imperative, therefore, is the counsel, "Keep thy tongue from evil." (Psalm 107:33; Job 38:1; Matt. 16:23.)

# The Text Explained

# Warnings to the Would-be Teachers (James 3:1-2)

"Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that you receive the heavier judgment."

The thought here is, "do not set yourselves up as Jewish Rabbis held teachers. Jewish Rabbis held a position of high distinction, and those teachers coveted the title of "Doctor of the Law." There were those of the Jewish Christians who, like those of the old Jewish religion, desired, and even clamored to be teachers. They were actuated by their envy of the eminence of those who were teach-Those would-be teachers were not, therefore, to be encouraged. In the first place, they were not quali-fied; and in the second place, their aspirations to teach did not stem from proper and spiritual motives.

James emphasizes here also that teachers—and he includes himself in the number—receive the heavier judgment. Those who taught then, and those who teach today, are subjected to stricter and more critical and/or harsh judgments. A necessary consequence of this fact is that when a teacher fails through carelessness. or through incompetency, his condemnation will be great.

"For in many things we all stum-e [James includes himself]. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man [a mature Chrisable to bridle [keep under tian],

control] *the whole body also.*"

# Warnings Against the 111 Use of the Tongue

(James 3:3-10)

"Now if we put the horses' es into their mouths that britheu obey us, we turn may about whole body also. Behold, the ship also, though they are so great and are driven by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small rudthe impulse whither willeth. So also is a little member, and boasteth things. Behold, how is kindled by how small a wood fire!"

James is saying here that as the bit in the horse's mouth enables the owner to turn about the whole body of the horse, just so the man who can govern his tongue has mastery of his whole body. Then too, as the

rudder, when directed by a skilled steersman, is of immeasurable value in controlling the ship, just so the tongue is a powerful instrument for good when it is properly directed by the skilled steersman, that is, by the sincere mind of the consecrated Christian.

"The tongue is a little member and boasteth great things"-that is, though little, the tongue is a powerful member for either good or bad. The damage of which the tongue is capable is reflected by the figure of wild-fire. "Behold, how much "Behold, wood is kindled [what great forests are destroyed by uncontrollable fire] by how small a fire [set by a small spark]." The horses and ships are controlled by a small instrûment, but the tongue can be like the spark that ignites a great forest in a windy season. Once ignited, there is no means of controlling a wild fire in a large forest; and just so, the tongue can set off spark's that will ignite and burn to the point of no control.

"And the tongue is a fire [the tongue is as capable of setting off uncontrollable injury as a small spark is capable of igniting an uncontrollable fire in a large forest]: of iniquity among world members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body [is capable of defiling the whole body], and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell." The tongue, when not controlled, is capable of all of this.

"For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed [capable of being tamed or subdued by man] by mankind [God gave man dominover all lower and/or creation—Gen. 1:26]: tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly poi-

James is not to be understood to say that no man can tame or subdue his own tongue. If such were his instruction meaning, his on tongue would be ridiculous and confusing. James is to be understood to say that no man can tame or subdue the other man's tongue. He can subdue wild beasts, but he cannot subdue the tongues of other men—that is, except through the power of the Word when men are

brought to repentance.

The tongue of an evil man is in reality a restless thing. It is a deadly poison. It often calls forth actual

physical death.

"Therewith bless we the Lord and and therewith curse Father: men, who are made in the likeness of God: out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. brethren, these things not so to be."

James may have had in mind his own Jewish brethren who blessed Jehovah and at the same time cursed and persecuted the Christian Jews. To say the least of matters,

the statement from James would apply to the Jews who worshipped God and cursed the Christians. today bless Jehovah in one Men breath and curse men in another yet those very men have been made in the likeness of God, for all men are of the same Father and have been made of one blood.

James likens the mouth of man as a fountain or spring, and out of it cometh forth blessings and cursing. This is analogous to a spring that gives forth water, both bitter and sweet. James rightly concludes his with the admonition: statement "My brethren, these things ought

not so to be."

### IN SUMMARY

In summary, certain observations in this lesson seem to be pertinent:

- 1. The tongue is a powerful agent, and it is capable of many things both good and bad, and whether the individual Christian's tongue be used to bless God and man or to curse God and man will depend on the heart and mind of that Christian. He can control his tongue, if he will.
- The tongue is often used as an agent for boasting: and as an agent for inciting moral evil, and also as an agent for outright wickedness death; but conversely, tongue is used to preach the gospel to the lost, to tenderly teach the young the way of the Lord, to bring cheer from parents to children and from children to parents, to express love between a husband and wife, and to express love, sympathy, and condolence to the downhearted, the sick, and the bereaved.
  - Each Christian must learn to

control his tongue. When this he does, he will have his body under control; and when he controls his tongue, he can and will use it to the glory of God.

### Words

Words that are softly spoken. Can build a world of charm. Words of tender passion, Can rescue a soul from harm.

Words of wondrous beauty, Like silver imbedded in gold. Can lift the brokenhearted To heavenly joys untold.

Words of love and comfort, Can calm a stormy sea. Words of courage and wisdom. Bring wonderful peace to me.

Words of hope like sunshine Fill the heart and soul. Wonderful words—how precious, Are worth a future of gold.

—Claude Cox

## Questions for Discussion

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

### Introduction

What does the text for warn against? today's lesson What are some of the qualities of Christian teachers?

What constitutes the crucial which determines maturity in Christians?

### The Golden Text

Within what frame of reference did David write this admonition? What does this admonition mean?

What three examples show sins the

The Text Explained Discuss the position the Jewish teachers

and how this affected the Jewish Christians' desire to be teachers.
Discuss the reason for James' not many of you teachers."
Discuss James' comparisons of saying. "Be

of the tongue as a little member.

How can the tongue be like a fire?

Is James to be understood to say that no man can subdue his own tongue? How does James liken the tongue to a fountain or spring?

### In Summary

Upon what does the use of the individual Christian's tongue depend? Discuss the contrasts cited in the use of the tongue. What will be the result if each Christian

learns to control his tongue?

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# Lesson V-October 31, 1976

# CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

# Lesson Text Matt. 22:15-22

15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might en-

snare him in his talk.

16 And they send to him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, Teacher, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, and carest not for any one: for thou regardest not the person of men.

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

18 But Jesus perceived their wick-

edness, and said, Why make ye trial of me, ye hypocrites?

19 Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a denarius.

20 And he saith unto them, Whose

is this image and superscription?

21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

22 And when they heard it, they marvelled, and left him, and went

away.

Golden Text.—"Righteousness exalteth a nation." (Prov. 14:34.) Devotional Reading.—Mark 12:13-17.

# Daily Bible Readings

October 25. M	Duties Owed to God and Government (Mark 12:13-17)
October 26. T	Obligations to Civil Government (Rom. 13:1-10)
October 27. W	Duty to God above Government (Acts 4:13-22)
October 28. T	
October 29. F	
October 30. S	Jesus Paid Taxes (Matt. 17:24-27)
October 31. S	

Time.—Probably Tuesday, A.D. 30. Place.—The Temple in Jerusalem.

Persons.—Jesus and his disciples; the Pharisees and their disciples, and the Herodians.

### Introduction

The present lesson has to do with the Christian's civic responsibilities. Civil governments are a necessity for the welfare of men, both good and bad. The purpose of civil government is to protect the good people and to punish the evil. Thus, the powers that be are ministers of good for the Christian, and they are a terror only to the evil—to those

who take advantage of and wreak violence upon their fellow men.

The Christian should be cognizant of his relationship and obligation to the civil government. The text for this lesson sets forth concisely, but in a somewhat incidental way. that relationship and obligation which the Christian sustains and owes to his government.

# PERTINENT QUOTES

"The highways of history are strewn with the wreckage of nations that forgot God." (Anonymous)

"There is no solid basis for civilization but in the Word of God." (Daniel Webster)

"Government is impossible where moral character is wanting." (Anonymous) "The humblest citizen of all the land, when clad in the armor of a righteous cause, is stronger than all the hosts of error." (William Jennings Bryan)

"A good citizen is one who behaves as if there were no laws." (Anonymous)

"All political power is a trust." (Charles James Fox)

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"Government is a trust, and the officers of the government are trustees; and both the trust and the trustees are created for the benefit of the people." (Henry Clay)

"Government is not a substitute for people, but simply the instrument through which they act. In the last analysis, our only freedom is the freedom to discipline ourselves." (Bernard M. Baruch)

"The religion of Christ has made a Republic like ours possible; and the more we have of this religion the better the Republic." (H. M. Field)

"The task and triumph of Christianity is to make men and nations true and just and upright in all their dealings, and to bring all law, as well as all conduct, into subjection and conformity to the law of God." (H. J. Van Dyke)

### The Golden Text

"Righteousness exalteth a nation." (Prov. 14:34.)

While righteousness will exalt a nation, sin will bring dishonor upon it, for "sin is a reproach to any people." Every government is charged, therefore, with the obligation to preserve order, restrain evil doers,

and demand respect for those of honor, integrity, and virtue. Such can be accomplished only if the officials of the government are men of honor and integrity themselves. They must be men of justice who will apply the law in an impartial way—that is, to all men alike, whether great or small.

# The Text Explained

# The Pharisees' Encounter With Christ (Matt. 22:15-17)

"Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might ensare him in their talk."

This lesson has its setting during the passion week of Christ. The sect of the Pharisees was the most pretentious religionist sect of Christ's day, and those of that sect hated Christ with a passion. Time and again they had made trial of the Master, but he had answered each time in a logical manner which exposed their sophistry and left them in a state of humiliation and embarrassment. Thus, they counselled together as to how they could embarrass him.

"And they send to him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, Teacher, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, and carest not for any one: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, what thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not?"

Involved here was a base design. While the Pharisees and Herodians were radical enemies, they took counsel, or made common cause, in their efforts to ensnare the Master. Those Pharisees did not go them-

selves; but instead, they sent their disciples, together with the Herodians—the adherents of the house of the Herods.

With a base design of hypocrisy and sophistry, the approach of those Pharisees was unlike any that they had previously made. "Teacher, we know that thou art true," they said with treacherous and lying flattery. Professing honest doubt, in an effort to hang Christ on the horns of a dilemma, they asked: "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar?" Now, on the one hand, the multitudes of the Jews were bitterly opposed to their paying tribute to Caesar; and on the other hand, the paying of tribute was a requirement of the law—a requirement stemming from both the Roman government and the Herodian government. The Pharisees reasoned **Jesus** that would be compelled to say either that the Jews should pay tribute to Caesar, in which event he would lose the support and loyalty of the multitudes, or that the Jews should not pay tribute to Caesar, in which event the Herodians would be present to arrest him on a charge of sedition, and further, those Herodians were present in numbers so as to give first hand testimony to support the charge.

# The Outcome of the Encounter (Matt. 22:18-22)

"But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why make ye trial of me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money. And they brought him a denarius."

Jesus, in keeping with his past encounters with his enemies, first exposed their sham and hypocrisy, and that to their great humiliation. This was his way of also saying that under no circumstances had he

dodged their questions.

Acceding to the Master's request, the interrogators brought him a denarius—a small silver coin with the head of the emperor stamped upon it, together with the words "Tiberias Caesar, the August son of the Divine Augustus." In that act. they lost their case; for that very coin bore testimony that the Jews were under the Roman sovereignty and the tribute was, therefore, justly due.

"And he saith unto them, Whose is the image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

The Pharisees had played completely into the hands of the Master. His statement, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," satisfied the Herodians, and his further statement, "and unto God the things that are God's" satisfied

the multitude of the Jews, for it contemplated the fact that an enforced tribute by a foreign govern-ment did not embarrass the people's complete loyalty of God. This state-ment by Christ is without ques-tion one of the most profound max-ims ever to be stated in such simple and easy to be understood language. In the answer that the Master gave -that is, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's"—lies the answer to the question of the Christian's civic responsibility. The Christian must render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's-such as obeying the laws of the land, and praying for the powers that be, and paying all just and due taxes. While performing that civic responsibility, the Christian must give full and complete allegiance Christ, and if or when Caesar's law, requirements, conflict Christ's laws, or service, the Christian must choose Christ over Cae-

"And when they heard it, they marvelled, and left him, and went away."

"The Pharisees marvelled," and rightly so, for their seemingly irresistible plot had been completely exposed and demolished. They "left him," and that sullenly, because they had nothing with which to counter. They were keenly conscious of the fact that they could not match the wisdom with which Christ spoke.

# IN SUMMARY

In summary, the following observations are worthy of careful consideration and contemplation:

- 1. The state and church are separate and distinct entities. The dominion of the state pertains to this life and is involved in purely temporal matters. Its ideal is justice, and it operates for the welfare of the citizen; whereas, the dominion of the church pertains to the person himself—to his conscience—and is concerned, therefore, with heavenly and eternal matters.
- 2. While the state may control the citizen, it must not possess the person. Its sphere of operation must end at the threshold of a person's religious conscience and conviction.
  - 3. The arm of the state is police

power, but the arm of the church is the Word of God. (2 Cor. 10:4.) The state controls the actions of its citizens, but the church controls the consciences of men.

- 4. In a democracy, many people come to feel that the church, like the state, should be controlled by the rule of the majority; but Christianity is of divine revelation and does not, and must not, depend upon the desires and decisions of the majority.
- 5. The church should not be aligned or associated with any kind of political party. Whenever the church speaks in the name of party, rather than in the name of conscience, it becomes only another clamor among the clamors of the day.

When brethren equate the church with a political party, or with a particular form of government—whether a monarchy, or oligarchy, or a democracy-they commit a fatal mistake.

### Recessional

God of our fathers, known of old— Lord of our far-flung battle line— Beneath whose lawful hand we hold

Dominion over palm and pine-Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet. Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and shouting dies— The Captains and the Kings de-

part -

Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice. An humble and a contrite heart. Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away — On dune and headland sinks the

fire –

Lo, all our pomp of yesterday

'with Ňineveh and Tyre! Is one Judge of the Nations, spare us yet, Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose

Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe-

Such boasting as the Gentiles use,

Or lesser breeds without the Law-Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Rudyard Kipling

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### **Questions for Discussion**

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

Introduction

What is the purpose of civil government?

The Golden Text

What will sin bring upon any nation? With what obligation is every government charged?

How only can this obligation be met?

The Text Explained

During what time does this lesson have its setting?

Who took counsel to ensnare Jesus? What new approach did they use in their base design?

outcome of Jesus' the Pharisees' hat was the cerning the to their question?

What very act caused the Herodians lose their case in making trial of Jesus? How did Jesus' statement, "Render unto

ow and jesus statement, Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's," satisfy both the Herodians and the multitude of the Jews?

What answer lies in this statement?
In what ways and to what extent must a Christian "render unto Caesar"?

In Summary

Discuss the dominions of the state as contrasted with the dominions of the church.

What is the arm of the church?

by the rule of the majority? be controlled

### Lesson VI—November 7, 1976

# SIN OF FAULT-FINDING

### Lesson Text

### Matt. 7:1-12

1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.

For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you.

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is

in thine own eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me cast out the mote out of thine eye; and lo, the beam

is in thine own eye?

5 Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the swine, lest haply they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you.

7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and

it shall be opened unto you;

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone;

10 Or if he shall ask for a fish,

will give him a serpent?

If ye then, being evil, know

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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?

12 All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Golden Text.—"Speak not one against another, brethren." (James 4:11.)

Devotional Reading.—Luke 6:37-49.

# Daily Bible Readings

November 1. M	
November 3. W	
November 4. T	
November 5. F	Christian Responsibility (Rom. 12:9-18)
November 6. S	Golden Rule (Luke 6:27-35)
	Judge Not, and Be Not Judged (Luke 6:36-38)

Time. - A.D. 27.

Place.—On a mountain near Capernaum.

Persons.—Jesus, his disciples, and the multitude.

# Introduction

The sin of fault-finding is quite common, even among brethren, and the saint who is completely free of it is rare, indeed. A person can easily allow himself to drift into a habit and life of fault-finding. Let every Christian examine himself, therefore. lest the sin shall overcome him!

Christians should consciously cul-

tivate the spirit of empathy in their lives. Empathy is the capacity for experiencing as one's own, the feelings of another, and every Christian should evaluate himself first, and then he should evaluate all others with charity in light of their backgrounds, including their limitations as well as their opportunities.

### PERTINENT OUOTES

. . . .

"Faults are thick when love is thin." (Anonymous)

"I see no fault that I might not have committed myself." (Goethe)

"Unless you bear with the faults of a friend, you betray your own." (Publilius Syrus, Maxims)

"Self-love is often rather arrogant than blind; it does not hide our faults from ourselves, but persuades us that they escape the notice of others." (Samuel Johnson)

"The person who always sweeps before his neighbor's door has never seriously examined his own doorstep." (Anonymous)

"Throwing mud at a good man only soils your own hands." (Anonymous)

"Analyze yourself first—before you criticize another." (Anonymous)

# Think Twice

Should you feel inclined to censure

Faults you may in others view,
Ask your own heart, ere you venture,

If that has not failings, too.

Let not friendly vows be broken; Rather strive a friend to gain; Many a word in anger spoken Finds its passage home again.

Do not, then, in idle pleasure. Trifle with a brother's fame; Guard it as a valued treasure. Sacred as your own good name.

Do not form opinions blindly. Hastiness to trouble tends; Those of whom we thought unkindly

Oft become our warmest friends.

(Anonymous)

"Better to be a strong man with a weak point, than to be a weak man without a strong point. A diamond with a flaw is more valuable than a brick without a flaw." (William H. H. Boetcker) NOVEMBER 7, 1976 281

### Saints and Sinners

When some fellow yields to tempta-

And breaks a conventional law.

We look for no good in his make-up But oh! how we look for a flaw! No one will ask, "How tempted?"

Nor allow for the battles he's sought;

His name becomes food for the jackals;

For us who have never been caught.

"He has sinned!" we shout from the house-tops,

We forget the good he has done, We center on one lost battle,

And forget the times he has won. "Come, gaze on the sinner!" we thunder.

"And his by example be taught,

That his footsteps lead to destruction."

Cry we who have never been caught.

I'm a sinner, O Lord, and I know it, I'm weak, I blunder, I fail.

I'm tossed on life's stormy ocean, Like ships embroiled in a gale.

I'm willing to trust in Thy mercy; the commandments keep Thou'st taught,

But deliver me, Lord, from the judgment

Of saints who have never been caught.

(Anonymous)

## The Golden Text

"Speak not one against another, brethren." (James 4:11.)

lesson entitled, "Guarding our Speech" and the present lesson entitled, "Sin of Fault-Finding," are in reality counter-parts of the same great principle and the same great obligations that incur between man and man. The obligations set forth in the two lessons are summed up by the Master in his Golden Rule, as follows: "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets." (Matt. 7:12.)

The implication is that the sin of "speaking against another" was rife among the churches—that is, the Jewish converts to whom James wrote. The sin was in actuality, as expression of per the common today, the sin of "running each other down." This prohibition joins with the foregoing verses of the same chapter relative to the brethren's turning away from God and/or refusing to subject themren's to God. When men turn selves from God they always commence speaking harshly against their brethrēn.

# The Text Explained

# Censorious Judgment Condemned (Matt. 7:1-5)

"Judge not, that ye be judged."

The prohibition herein set forth is not intended to cover all forms of judgment. There are certain judgments which must be made. The church must judge those who walk and individuals disorderly, make private judgments as to those who do wrong. To illustrate the former, Paul, concerning the incestuous brother at Corinth, wrote: "For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this thing, and in the name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of the Lord

Jesus, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. 5:3-5.) To illustrate the latter, Jesus said: "And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. And if he refuses to hear them, tell it unto the church: and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican." (Matt. 18:15-17.)

> The prohibition herein set forth is intended to cover censorious judg

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ing—or judgments that are unjust, uncharitable, rash, and harsh. The prohibition contemplates the thinking of evil when no evil exists, the propagandizing of evil surmises, and the rendering of violent decisions. It strikes at the faultfinding spirit which tends to be quite common among brethren.

The prohibition expresses in actuality a universal principle. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." God will judge a man of a censorious fault-finding spirit. "That ye be not judged" has reference to the kind of judgment that his fellow men will, in turn,

pass upon him.

"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye meet, it shall be

measured unto you."

In short, the person who is censorious, and bitter, and severe in his judgment of others will, in turn, receive the same kind of judgment from others. If he reacts in a harsh and bitter and unmerciful manner against a brother who has been overtaken in a humiliating public sin, and has repented, he will receive the same kind of treatment if and when he shall also be overtaken in a humiliating public sin. Conversely. If a man is kind, sympathetic, forebearing and forgiving, he will receive kindness of treatment when he experiences sorrow and disappointments, or even if he is overtaken in a public sin.

"And why [when so contrary to principle] beholdest thou the mote | a small speck] in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam [this was a Jewish proverbial exaggeration] that is in thine own eye? Or how [with any good conscience] wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me cast out the mote of thine eye: and lo, the beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite [a forthright indictment], cast out first the beam out of thine own eye [attend to your own spiritual infirmities]; and then thou shalt see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

The case here is that of two persons who have the same spiritual infirmity, but the one whose infirmity is the further advanced is applying a cure for the one who is only slightly ill. It is like the case of the bald-headed barber who

seeks to sell his slightly balding customer a product that is certain to restore the hair as in the years of youth.

# Dog and Swine Doctrine Enjoined (Matt. 7:6)

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest haply they trample them under their feet, and turn

and rend you."

While the true Christian must not be a censorious fault-finder, but rather of a magnanimous spirit, yet there are judgments that he must make. There are men who can best be represented by the animal natures of dogs and of swine. They are men unworthy of the dignity of human nature, and they are characterized by gross impunity and stubbornness. They snarl at truth as dogs snarl at people and they root and trample truth under their feet and in the ground, as hogs do the corn that is fed to them. The instruction here expresses and contemplates the personal enmity and attitude of men who willfully reject the gospel of Christ.

the gospel of Christ.

The "dog and swine" doctrine is one of reverence and discretion. It strikes down such ridiculous things as leading a prayer at the opening of a barroom, or at the inauguration of a lottery, or in a meeting where the men and women are sipping their alcoholic beverages. It also strikes out against such practices as a preacher who brazenly enters a house of prostitution with his Bible under his arm. and with the avowed and announced purpose of preaching to the women there, though in their semi-nude dress, and as they

ply their trade.

# Prayer Enjoined (Matt. 7:7-12)

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth: and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Jesus prohibited censorious judging, but he emphasized, nonetheless, that there are certain judgments that the man of a magnanimous spirit must make—that is, the judgment of the "dog and swine" segment of humanity. Such judgments

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require knowledge and wisdom and should be attended, therefore, with prayer. For him to follow his prior instruction with a lesson on prayer

was quite fitting and in order.

There are three words that stand out in the Master's lesson on prayer –namely, ask, seek, and knock. Those three words suggest degrees of urgency and also degrees of ac-

While Jesus stated to the multitude "that every one that asketh receiveth," he necessarily meant everyone that God recognizes as being a son, as the next verse indicates. This one verse could not be used or understood to cancel out the conditions of an acceptable prayer as set forth in the Scriptures. The conditions of an acceptable prayer are:

1. There must be on the part of the person praying, a desire of the heart, ând 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

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 for-give others as he asks the Lord to

forgive him. (Matt. 6:15.)

Those whose prayers meet these conditions may be sure that their prayers will be heard and answered, though not necessarily in the manner that the petitioner might expect. 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 answer their prayers. Without doubt, God providentially cares for his children.

"Or what man is there of yon, who, if his son ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone; or if he shall ask for a fish, will give him a serpent?''

These verses imply that the natural feelings of a father toward a son are of the same kind, or at least similar to those feelings that characterize God. What a comfort this is! The comparison cannot, how-ever, be pushed too far. After all, God is a God of justice as well as a

God of love and mercy!

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your dren, how much more shall Father who is iii heaven give good

things to them that ask him."

A parallel passage to the above verse from Luke's gospel reads as follows: "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13.) Now, certain brethren have quoted this statement from Luke to point out and to emphasize how that Christians today should pray to receive the Holy Spirit, bût as any reasonable person cân see, the passage from Matthew is parallel to the passage from Luke. Thus, "how much more shall Luke. Thus, "how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask," as per Luke's statement, is equivalent to the "how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him." as per Matthew's statement. The "gift of good things" by Matthew is the equivalent to the "gift of the Holy Spirit" by Luke Spirit" by Luke.

Jesus' statement, "how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" is a metonomy of speech for "how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him." Webster's dictionary states that "metonomy is a figure of speech consisting of the name of one thing for that of another of which it is an attribute or with which it is accorded. In chort with which it is associated. In short, the Holy Spirit to be given in answer to prayer is put for the "good tilings" that will accrete to Chris-tians in answer to their prayers. Christians are not anywhere in the New Testament authorized to pray for the Holy Spirit, nor should they so pray. They are authorized and should so pray for the good things which the Father has promised that will come as a result of their prayers.

"All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the proph-

This verse is rightly called the Golden Rule. It is a precept that is most sublime, and it could have emanated only from Deity.

This Golden Rule is the sum of the law and the prophets; the exact rule which is required between man and man; and the actual equality of

all men by nature and creation. The rule is stringent, exacting, revolutionary, and evangelical. a rule that embraces, in a few simple words, the principle of all morality. It requires the Christian put himself in the other man place.

### IN SUMMARY

summary, some principles stand out in this lesson, namely:

1. The universal principle of sowing and reaping applies to censofault-finding brethren pass harsh judgments upon others.

2. There is, and has always been, "dog-swine" segment of society, the man of a magnanimous spirit is obligated to differentiate between them and the more worthy ones of society.

Such decisions and/or differentiations must be attended by prayer.

4. Prayers must be urgent-moving in degree from ask to seek, and from seek to knock.

The Golden Rule is the sum, the exactness, the equity, and the equality between man and man.

Take a Walk Around Yourself When you're criticizing others. And are finding here and there

A fault or two to speak of, Or a weakness you can tear; When you're blaming someone's meanness

Or accusing some of self, It's time you went out To take a walk around yourself.

There's a lot of human failures In the average of us all, And lots of grave shortcomings In the short ones and the tall; But when we think of evils Men should lay upon the shelves It's time that we all went out To take a walk around ourselves.

We need so oft in this life This balancing set of scales Thus seeing how much in us wins And how much in us fails; But before you judge another. Just to lay him on the shelf. It would be a splendid plan To take a walk around yourself.

Cincinnati Bulletin

### **Ouestions for Discussion**

down?

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

#### Introduction

What hat spirit cultivate? should Christians consciously How should we evaluate others?

### The Golden Text

the golden text summed up by Christ? How were implication is left by James' giving this prohibition?

### The Text Explained

What some judgments which this prohibition does not cover? What is the prohibition of verse one in-

tended to cover?

What universal principle does this prohi-

bition express?
What will the person who is censorious, bitter, and severe in his judgment of others receive?

"one who Discuss the case here of heholdest the mote in his brother's eye."

In what ways can men be like dogs and wine in regard to the gospel?

What kind of things does the enjoining the "dog and swine" doctrine str

What lesson did Jesus use to follow dog and swine lesson? hat three words stand out in son? What this les-

What conditions must be met for ac-

ceptable prayer to God? When those conditions are met, what the petitioner be sure of? What natural feelings are compared

What natural feelings are God's feelings for his children?
Discuss the metonomy of sin the parallel verse to verse 11. compared to speech which is

Discuss verse twelve, and why is it called the Golden Rule?

does Golden Rule require Christians to be?

# In Summary

What four principles stand out in this lesson?

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## Lesson VII - November 14, 1976

# AVOIDING HYPOCRISY

# Lesson Text

Matt. 6:1-8, 16-18

1 Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

2 When therefore thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy

right hand doeth:

4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father who seeth in

secret shall recompense thee.

- 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.

16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may be seen of men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face;

18 That thou be not seen of men to fast, but of thy Father who is in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret, shall recompense thee.

Golden Text.—"Let love be without hypocrisy." (Rom. 12:9.) Devotional Reading.—Matt. 6:19-34.

# Daily Bible Readings

November 8. M	Serve with Sincerity (Josh. 24:1-14)
	Sincerity Commanded (Phil. 1:3-11)
November 10. W	
November 11. T	
November 12. F	Warning of Hypocritical Teachers (2 Tim. 3:1-5)
November 13. S	Hypocrites Condemned (Matt. 23:13-37)
November 14. S	

Time. — A.D. 27.

Place.—On a mountain near Capernaum.

Persons.—Jesus, his disciples, and the multitude.

### Introduction

As was pointed up in the first lesson for this quarter, the thirteen lessons turn on the Christian's social and civic problems and responsibilities. While the majority of the lessons deal with the incumbent obligations and actions of Christians with respect to their brethren and fellow men, the past lesson and today's lesson deal with the Christian himself—with stress particularly his manners and motives for the performance responsibilof those ities and, obligations.

When men operate from a spirit rebellion and/or from purely selfish motives, two kinds of sin will be inevitably outstanding their lives, namely: (1) the sin of fault-finding, and (2) the sin hypocrisy. These sins are, by their very nature, devastating and deadly. The Christian who feels that he does not need lessons on these subjects is one of the number who need the lessons most. All men need very much to make an introspection, or a

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close examination, of their motives tian whose chief motive is to be How foolish is the case of the Chris-heard and seen of men!

### PERTINENT OUOTES

"Hypocrite: a man who sets good examples when he has an audience." (Anonymous)

"The proud hate pride-in others."

(Benjamin Franklin)

"He that gives good advice builds with one hand; he that gives good counsel and example builds with both; but he that gives good admonition and bad exam-ple builds with one hand and pulls down with the (Francis Bacon)

"There is nothing quite as empty as a stuffed shirt." (Anonymous)

"When you see a man with a great deal of religion displayed in his shop window, you may depend upon it, he keeps a very small stock of it within." (Charles H. Spurgeon)

### No Sense in Pretense

You tell what you are by the friends you seek,

By the manner in which you speak. By the way you employ your lei-

sure time,

By the use you make of dollar and dime.

You tell what you are by the things you wear,

By the spirit in which you burdens

By the kind of thing at which you laugh,

By records you play on the phonograph.

You tell what you are by the way vou walk,

By the things of which you delight to talk.

the manner in which you bear

defeat, By so simple a thing as how you

eat. By the books you choose from the well-filled shelf,

In these ways and more you tell on yourself.

So there's really no particle of sense

pretense. any effort at (Anonymous)

"Children are quick to detect pretense and to shun the pretender. Only the genuine, the frue man woman, can hope to them long." (Anonymous)

# The Golden Text

"Let love be without hypocrisy

(Rom. 12:9.)

Golden Text belongs to Paul's exhortations to the Romans. The exhortations begin with concept of self-sacrifice which is the root of all goodness and faithful stewardship, and they continue series of sacrifices. Throughout the chapter, there are three sets of precepts, namely: (1) love without hypocrisy, (2) a vehemence against evil and a defense of good, and (3) a brotherly affection and mutual respect.

In the Golden Text, Paul is de-

scribing love—the kind of love which is genuine. Love with hypocrisy is a simulation or pretending to be what one is not. Honest love enjoins one of the greatest but most difficult precepts to be enjoined upon mortal man. This kind of love does not come from the mental acceptance of principle involved, but it comes through growth—through the daily renewing of one's mind in Christ. Self is a monstrous tyrant. Christian must first free himself of that monster before he can really have "love without hypocrisy."

# The Text Explained

In his immortal Sermon on "Except Mount, Jesus had said: your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven."

(Matt. 5:20.) In the lesson for this study, Jesus returns to that particular point of emphasis. In the fifth chapter of Matthew, Jesus with the incumbent actions of man; but in the sixth chapter, he deals

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with the matter of manners and motives of performing those incumbent actions.

# A Warning Against Ostentatious Almsgiving

(Matt. 6:1-4)

"Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven."

The term "righteousness" as it appears in this verse, seems to contemplate good works in general, including prayer and fasting, as well as almsdeeds. The Master was here calling attention to the manner and nature of the multitude's actions. They should not do their righteousness before men—that is, they should not make a public or ostentatious show of their righteousness; and further, they should not do righteousness to be seen of men, else they would receive no reward from the heavenly Father.

Man is obligated to give alms. The poor have from the Lord a just claim on the abundance of the affluent and the rich, but there are evils to be avoided in the discharge of this obligation: All such giving must be attended with utmost modesty, with sincere compassion for the poor, and with respect for the honor of God.

"When therefore thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward."

Jesus uses the term "trumpet" in a symbolic sense. The use of the trumpet to sound warnings and/or to set forth messages was so general that it took on a symbolic meaning. The expression, "He certainly blows his own trumpet," is a case in point. While the Pharisees did not literally sound trumpets when they gave their alms, they probably employed every means possible to direct attention to themselves as they gave. Thus, in this figurative sense, they sounded their trumpets.

Jesus said with irony regarding those trumpeting Pharisees, "They have received their reward." They had it altogether, though transient and worthless as it was. Their reward was in their pride from their having received the enthusiastic

praise of men.

"But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee."

Here the Master speaks of the left and right hands metaphorically. The concept is that of such a secret and noiseless means of giving that only the Father is conscious of it. In such a modest and secret manner of giving, motivated only by sympathy and compassion, the heavenly Father takes much delight, and he recompenses every man who is characterized thereby.

# A Warning Against Ostentatious Prayers

(Matt. 6:5-8)

"And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites [those who feign to be that which they are not]: for they love to stand and pray [they could be seen of men when they stood] in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets] [they were window-dressed with outward piety], that they may be seen of men [one variety of the Pharisees was dubbed the "hump-backed Pharisees," the result of their having gone about so long in a stooped and affected position of prayer]. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward." The reward they sought was to be seen of men; this was their sole motive—they had, therefore, received their full and only 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

recompense thee."

The instruction here has to do with personal or private prayers. It does not contravene the need for and the place for public prayers. The private chamber with a closed door as a proper place for prayer is the very opposite of the place, or places, that the Pharisees chose for their private prayers. Here the Master has set forth the obligation for prayer, the motive for prayer, the object for prayer, the place for prayer, and the profit or reward for prayer.

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"And in praying use not repas the Gentiles do; for they think that they shall be heard Ве much špeaking. their not them: your therefore like unto for what things knoweth yе have need of, before ye ask him."

In addition to the Master's warning against making an ostentatious display of prayer, he also warned against vain repetitions and much speaking in their prayers. Those who prayed would not be heard for their vain repetitions and much speaking. The Gentiles made long prayers coupled with vain repetitions. The point is that long elaborate prayers should not be the source or foundation of trust; but rather, their trust should be in God, himself. Prayers should be sincere, direct, pertinent, and to the point.

In connection with his discouraging long prayers filled with vain repetition, Jesus said: "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." The point is that God does not need long elaborations or explanations relative to the petition. He knows the need of the petitioner already. Does someone ask: "Why pray?" The answer is that by means of prayer, an earnest humble soul is brought into a state of communion with God, wherein God hears and answers the petitioner's prayer.

IN SUMMARY

In summary, the following conclusions are in order:

1. The most scathing epithets that Jesus ever spoke were not against the cities wherein he did most of his mighty works—Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum—or of the woman taken in adultery, or against Peter who denied him thrice but they were hurled at the scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites.

2. Hypocrisy is so common in the lives of Christians that the condi-

tion is appalling!

3. Christians should examine themselves at the end of each day. They should ask themselves some trying questions, such as: "Did I tell the truth today? Did I affect an attitude simply as matter of policy? Did I tell some person that I was glad to see him, though I really was not glad? Did I go to worship out of political and prestigious considerations?

A Warning Against Ostentatious Fasts

(Matt. 6:16-18)

over when ye fast, hypocrites, of a sad 'Moreover be not. as the countenance [Jesus does not here abolish fasting; rather, he regulates it and forbids the affectation of a sad for countenance]: they disfigure their faces, that they may be. of men to fast. Verily I sau unto Theu have received their уои. ward [they sought to be seen of men, and when they were so seen, they received the only reward that would be in store for them.] But when thou fastest, anoint and wash thy face; head, that thou be not seen of men to fast [make no external display; avoid the course which might cause them to desire to be seen of men], but of thy Father thy is i?i secret: and seeth in secret, shall pense thee.'

The chief lesson to learn here is that fasting can be a wholesome practice, providing that it is not done for public praise, which thing would be, within itself, an abomination to God. The fast should be concealed, lest the publicity lead to an ostentatious display to be seen of men. Jesus did not lend his endorsement to any stated and set fasts.

iasis

4. Christ warned against osten tious almsgiving, against ostentatious prayers, and against ostentatious fasts.

It is all in vain to preach of the truth,

To the eager ears of a trusting youth,

If, whenever a lad is standing by, He sees you cheat and he hears you lie.

Fine words may grace the advice you give.

But youth will learn from the way you live.

Honor's a word that a thief may use.

High-sounding language the base may choose.

Speech is empty and preaching vain,

Though the truth shines clear and the lesson's plain;

If you play false, he will turn away. For your life must square with the things you say.

He won't tread the path of your righteous talk,

But will follow the path which you

daily walk. "Not as I do, but do as I say,"

Won't win him to follow the better wav:

Through the thin veneer of your speech he'll see,

Unless you're the man you would have him be.

The longer you live you will find this true:

As you would teach you must also do.

Rounded sentences, smooth and

Were better not said if your deeds aren't square.

If you'd teach him to live to his very best,

You must live your life by the self-same test.

Edgar A. Guest

### **Questions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

hat is particularly stressed and dealt with in this lesson as well as in last What dealt week's lesson?

What two kinds of sin will be outstand-ing in the life of men who operate from a spirit of rebellion or from selfish motives?

#### The Golden Text

That three sets of precepts are found in Romans 12? What three

What does love with hypocrisy mean? at does honest love enjoin What does enjoin, and through what process does it come?

## The Text Explained

term, "righteousness," What the does contemplate in Matthew's statement:
"Take heed that you do not your righteousness before men..."?
How does Jesus use the term "trumpet" Matthew's statement:

"trumpet" in giving instructions for almsgiving? What was the Pharisees' reward recting attention to themselves?

what way was Jesus sy statement, "let not thy le what thy right hand doeth . . . "? speaking in his left hand know

What concept is involved in this ment?

Where did Jesus say the hypocrites loved to pray?

what reason did they do this, what was their reward for it? did Jesus instruct Where Christians

pray? What other warning did Jesus give after giving these instructions for prayer?

iscuss Jesus' knoweth..." "Your Discuss statement, father

Discuss Jesus' regulation of fasting.

What is the chief lesson to be learned here concerning fasting?

#### In Summary

Against whom were Jesus' most epithets delivered?

What condition is common in the lives of Christians today with respect this lesson?

What should each Christian do at the end day? What questions should each they ask?

# Lesson VIII – November 21, 1976

# SYMPATHY FOR THE GRIEF-STRICKEN

#### Lesson Text

John 11: -5, 38-44

1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, of the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 And it was that Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

3 The sisters therefore sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

But when Jesus heard it, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and

Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against

her sister, and Lazarus.

39 Jesus saith, Take ye away the one. Martha, the sister of him Martha, of stone. that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time the body decayeth; for

he hath been *dead* four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou believedst, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the multitude that standeth around I said it, that they may believe that thou didst send me.

43 And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

Golden Text.—"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live." (John 11:25.)
Devotional Reading.—Isa. 35:3-10.

# **Daily Bible Readings**

November 15. M	Promise of a Resurrection (1 Thess. 4:13-18)
November 16. T	Christ's Resurrection (Matt. 28:1-10)
November 17. W	Prophecy of the Resurrection (Dan. 12:1-13)
November 18. T	
November 19. F	Life from the Son (John 5:19-29)
November 20. S	Jesus the Source of Life (John 1:1-18)
November 21. S	

Time.-A.D. 29-30.

Places.—Bethabara and Bethany, cities very near Jerusalem.

Persons. - Lazarus, Jesus, Mary, and Martha.

### Introduction

This lesson on the matter of sympathy that Christians must hold for the grief-stricken is one of very deep proportions. When a Christian fails to show the proper respect and sympathy for the deceased and the bereaved, he reveals his true inward colors; and further, he wounds the hearts of the bereaved. If ever there is a time when a Christian is under heaven's obligation to react with compassion and sympathy and love, that time is when there has been a death. Death has its sting, as those quite

well know who have experienced the loss of their loved ones.

A sympathy card—or better still a letter-from brethren at a distance can be of great comfort, but a sympathy card or a brief, hastily worded letter from someone close at hand in lieu of his presence can be rather cold and cutting than of comfort. Usually, source of self-centered haste and action feel that death is something that comes to the other person. Death in time will come to everyone!

# PERTINENT QUOTES

"Next to love, sympathy is the divinest passion of the human heart." (Burke)

"The dew of compassion is a tear."

(Byron)

"It is by sympathy we enter into the concerns of others, that we are moved as they are moved, and are never suffered to be indifferent spectators of almost anything which men can do or suffer. For sympathy may be considered as a sort of substitution, by which we are put into the place of another man, and affected in many respects as he is affected." (Edmund Burke) "When death, the great Reconciler, has come, it is never our tenderness that we repent of, but our severity." (George Eliot)

"To rejoice in another's prosperity is to give content to your lot; to mitigate another's grief is to alleviate or dispel your own." (Tryon Edwards)

"We understand death for the first time when he puts his hand upon one whom we love." (Madame De Stael)

"I walked a mile with pleasure, She chattered all the way; But left me none the wiser, For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with sorrow

Not a word, said she; But oh! the things I learned When sorrow walked with me." (Robert Browning Hamilton)

### The Golden Text

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live."

(John 11:25.)

Jesus spoke these words to Martha, the sister of Lazarus, on the occasion of their first meeting after the death of Lazarus. Jesus, as a means of comfort to Martha, said: "Thy brother shall rise again," and Martha replied: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." In turn, Jesus said in the words of the Golden Text: "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die."

Jesus knew then, of course, the design or purpose for Lazarus' sick-

ness and death, and that design or purpose was that Jesus could be glorified by calling Lazarus back from the dead, not that Jesus was intent on attracting attention to himself, as the liberals would say, but rather, that the faith of Martha and all the other disciples might be strengthened, and further, that the enemies might be led to believe.

Jesus gave abundant evidence that he is "the resurrection and the life" by his calling Lazarus forth from the grave after he had been dead for four days. The assurance of the resurrection of every one in the raising of Lazarus is exceeded only by the resurrection of Christ himself. What hope this is! How fitting the song, "Up from the grave

he arose!"

# The Text Explained

# The Relationship Between Christ and Lazarus, Mary, and Martha

(John 11:1-2)

"Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, of the village of Mary and her sister Martha. And it was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick."

John wrote his gospel long after the three synoptic gospels. Matthew, Luke, and Mark, had been in circulation. He recorded, in the main, accounts of Christ which had not been recorded by those synoptic writers. In fact, some eighty percent of the things recorded in John's gospel is not to be found in that of the other three.

Each gospel writer wrote for a specific audience and to meet a particular need. The Gospel of Matthew, the earliest to be written in about A.D. 45, met the needs of the persecuted Hebrew converts who were regarded by their fellow Hebrews. or Jews, as being traitors to the Hebrew religion. They needed a gospel to show that Christ was the fulfillment of their Old Testament scriptures. The Gospel of

Luke, the second gospel to be written in about A.D. 54, was written for the Greek world. Luke, as a Greek physician and historian, wrote so as to inform the Greeks about the wonderful Christ. The Gospel of Mark, the fourth gospel to be written in about A.D. 67, was written for the benefit of the zealots among the Jews and the stoics among the Romans, in which case each thrilled with excitement and admiration for those who courageously conquered through suffering and death. The Gospel of John, the fourth to be written in about A.D. 85, was written to give a broader indepth concept of Christ, and to give a record of certain specific matters which had not been recorded in the other three gospel recordes.

John is the only writer who recorded the miracle of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Writing as he did at a later period of point and time, John identified Lazarus as being of Bethany, as having two sisters, Mary and Martha, and as Mary's being the one who anointed the Lord with oil and wiped his feet with her hair. Actually, at the time Lazarus was raised from the dead,

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the anointing had not taken place (John 12:1-8) but, of course, it had place when John wrote his gospel.

Jesus had no home of his own. He said of himself: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lav his head." (Luke 9:58.) The home of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha was open to him, and he often resided there. The three were the closest among his private associates, and he was refreshed by the peace and love and contentment of that home.

At the point and time of Lazarus' illness, Jesus was in Perea, beyond the Jordan, a day's journey from Bethany. The locating of Jesus 10:40-42) herewith (John leads. naturally, to the verse that follows.

## The Message Concerning Lazarus' Illness

(John 11:3-5)

"The sisters therefore sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lověst is sick."

was the simple message which Mary and Martha sent to Christ. The message carried no request, but it implied that the intimacy of Jesus with the members of that home was so close that they were sure that he would, upon receiving the distressing word of Lazarus' grave illness, come to them at once. Jesus had healed the sick over and again, and the two sisters thought, no doubt, that Jesus would come to them in haste and heal Laz-

arus of his illness.

"But when Jesus heard it [the message from Mary and Martha], he said [to the disciples with him], This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of thereby." God may be glorified Jesus was in communication with the Father, and he knew that Lazarus was ill for a specific design or purpose—the purpose being that he might die, and that in dying, he might be raised from the dead, and that in the resurrection both the disciples and the enemies would be given amazing testimony of how that both the Father and Son have power over death.

"Now Jesus loved Martha,

her sister, and Lazarus."

Here John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," bears record of the

endearing close love and relation-ship which Jesus had with Martha, Mary, and Lazarus; and he bears this record for the benefit of those at a distance from Judea, the Gentiles of Asia Minor especially, who would not have knowledge of that relationship as the people of Judea would havê knowledgê of it.

# The Delay of Jesus to go to Bethany

(John 11:6)

"When therefore he heard that he was sick, he abode at that time two days in the place where he was." He did not go in haste to the bed-side of Lazarus, as Mary and Mar-tha had expected him to do, for had he done so the great purpose and design of the Father for the glorification of the Son—and that to the end that the disciples might be strengthened in their faith and that the enemies be led to believewould have been thwarted.

"Then after this he saith to the disciples. Let us go into Judea again. The disciples say unto him. Rabbi, the Jews were but now [a short time ago] seeking to stone thee . . ." Jesus had gone to Jerusalem at the time of the feast of dedication, and while there, the Iews took up stones to stone him, and an effort was made to arrest him; but he escaped out of their hand and went away beyond the Jordan. (John 10:22, 31, 39. 40.) . . . and goest thou thither again?" The disciples thought that a return to Jerusalem would mean certain death for their Lord, and Thomas said: "Let us also go, may that we die with him."

# Christ in Bethany

(John 11:38-42)

"Iesus therefore again groaning in himself [John had already corded how that when Jesus saw Mary weeping, he groaned in the spirit and he wept: now John records that Jesus, the second time, groaned in himself, which is a means of expressing how that with a deep feeling of compassion he shared the anguish and grief of the human heart] cometh to the tomb. Now it urns a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus saith, Take away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time the body

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decayeth; for he hath been dead jour days."

Jesus had tarried where he was for two days after receiving the message that Lazarus was sick. He tarried the longer that his blessings might be the greater. Assuming that Lazarus died the day the message was sent, that would count for one day, and the two days that Jesus tarried would bring the total to three days. A day was required for the journey from beyond the Jordan to Bethany, and this would bring the number of days to a total of four. Jesus probably arrived in Bethany in the early or mid-afternoon.

"Jesus saith unto her. Said I not unto thee, that, if thou believedst, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"

Martha, on first going out to meet Jesus when he arrived in Bethany, had said: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." and Jesus had replied: "Thy brother shall rise again. ... I am the resurrection and the life." This then is the reference contained in the verse at hand.

"So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me. And I knew that thou heardest me always: but because of the multitude that standeth around I said it, that they may believe that thou didst send me."

The Jews refused to believe that Jesus was God's Son. They believed on the Father, but they did not believe on the Son. Jesus was about to perform a miracle of tremendous proportions. He was about to raise Lazarus from the dead, which would be one of the greatest single miracles of his entire ministry. He prayed publicly in the words of this verse in order to show to the unbelievers that he was, and had always been, in communication and concord with the Father; and further, he prayed publicly to show that he knew in advance from the Father that Lazarus was to be raised from the dead.

# The Resurrection of Lazarus (John 11:43-44)

"And when he had thus spoken [his public prayer which was especially for the benefit of those who heard the terms and/or petitions of the prayer], he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth." The call for Lazarus to come forth is reminiscent of how that Jesus will one day descend from heaven with a great shout and all the dead will rise. Thus, with the voice of one having authority, Jesus called in this simple and direct way for Lazarus to come forth. Those present were thereby put on notice that if Lazarus did come forth, his doing so would be, necessarily, on the basis of the power and authority of Jesus, himself; and what power that was! (John 5:28, 29; 1 Thess. 4:16-18.)

"He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound with a napkin. Jesus said unto them. Loose him, and let him go."

Jesus had previously raised two persons from the dead, namely: (1) Jairus' daughter, and (2) the widow's son of the city of Nain. In the case of Jairus' daughter, she had just died. In the case of the widow's son, he had not long been dead. That climate required that burial be made immediately after a person's death, and the body of the deceased was being borne by bier to the place of burial. (Matt. 5:21-43; Luke 8:40-56; Luke 7:11-16.)

When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, he thus performed one of the greatest single miracles of his ministry up to that time. Lazarus had been dead for four days. His body had begun to putrefy. His resurrection was, therefore, without a parallel. While the people could, and no doubt some did, rationalize that Jairus' daughter and the widow's son had not really been dead, but were only in a coma or trance, there was no rationalization which could be applied to the raising of Lazarus from the dead.

The raising of Lazarus filled Bethany with wonder and awe, and word of the miracle swept the countryside. The fame of Jesus had mounted to an unprecedented height. The feast of the passover was at hand, and many went up early that year and inquired: "What think ye? Will he come to the feast?"

The men on the court of the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem were frantic. They anticipated that the multitude might rally around Jesus

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and acclaim him their king. Such a thing would never do, they rea-They therefore, soned. concluded, that expediency demanded that one man should die than the whole nation should perish at the hands of Romans - a decision that based on the doctrine that the man should be sacrificed, even unjustly, for the institution or for the church.

That decision brought about crucifixion of Christ, and the point that begs to be emphasized is that the raising of Lazarus gave rise to decision. determined eleventh chapter of John, therefore, can be read with greater understanding as to the depth of some of the Master's statements when these matters are held in view.

### IN SUMMARY

summary, everv student should be impressed with the following:

 Jesus is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He experienced, personally, the anguish of the human heart in the presence of death. (Isa. 53:3.)

2. Jesus raised Lazarus from the tomb, thereby demonstrating

he has power over death.

lesus was a man as well as God, and his love for and association with Lazarus, Mary, and Martha, together with his attachment to and for the peace and quiet and delightful atmosphere of their home, is evidence of his very great and good social qualities.

4. Jesus knew that in his raising of Lazarus from the dead he would trigger the Sanhedrin into mäking a new and determined death-plot against him, a death-plot which would succeed in committing him to the penalty of crucifixion on

a Roman cross.

Not until each loom is silent And the shuttles cease to fly, Will God unroll the pattern

And explain the reason why The dark threads are as needful In the Weaver's skillful hand As the threads of gold and silver For the pattern which he planned.

(Anonymous)

Low in the Grave He Lay Low in the grave he lay—Jesus, my savior! Waiting the coming day—Jesus my

Lord!

Vainly they watch his bed—Jesus, mv Sávior! Vainly they seal the dead—Iesus

my Lord! Death cannot keep his prey—Jesus,

my Savior! He tore the bars away—Jesus, my Lord!

Up from the grave he arose With a mighty triumph o'er his

He arose a victor from the dark do-

And he lives forever with his saints to reign:

He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Robert Lowry

# **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

What is revealed when a to show proper respect for the deceased and bereaved? Christian and sympathy hat effect does this action have upon the bereaved? What

#### The Golden Text

To whom were these words spoken on what occasion? and evi-

what did Jesus give abundant dence by his calling Lazarus forth the dead?

### The Text Explained

Discuss the gospel in time when John wrote his relation to three the other gospel writers.

In the main, what did John record in his gospel?

For what audience did Matthew write? For what audience did Luke write? For what audience did Mark write?

... and Mark wri ow does John identify and Martha? How Lazarus. Mary

the relationship between was **Iesus** and these three persons?

Where was Jesus at the time he heard of Lazarus' illness?

What was the message that Marv Martha sent to Christ?

What implication was in the message?

What did Jesus show by his reply to the message?

What was the purpose and design in Lazarus' death?

Why were the disciples reluctant turn to Judea?

How did Jesus react as he came tomb of Lazarus?

Why did Martha protest Jesus' tions at the tomb of her brother?

Why did Jesus pray publicly at the tomb of Lazarus?

What would this prove to the Jews?

Of what is Jesus' call to Lazarus to come forth from the grave reminiscent?

How many people had Jesus raised from the dead prior to this miracle concerning Lazarus?

Of what proportion was the miracle or raising Lazarus?

Why was this miracle different from the

other incidents of Jesus' raising those from the dead?

What effect did the raising of Lazarus have on the people of the country?
What did the men on the Sanhedrin an-

ticipate upon hearing of the miracle? What conclusion did they reach after hearing about the raising of Lazarus?

In Summary

What are four things one is impressed with in this lesson?

### Lesson IX—November 28, 1976

# BEARING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS

# **Lesson Text**

Gal. 6:1-10

- 1 Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted.
- 2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.
- 3 For if a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.
- 4 But let each man prove his own work, and then shall he have his glorying in regard of himself alone, and not of his neighbor.
- 5 For each man shall bear his own burden.
  - 6 But let him that is taught in the

word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.

9 And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall

reap, if we faint not.

10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith.

Golden Text.—"But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." (Matt. 23:11.)

Devotional Reading.—Gal. 6:11-18.

# Daily Bible Readings

November 22. M	
	Some without Compassion (Luke 11:37-44)
November 24. W	Fulfill the Law by Burden Bearing (Gal. 6:1-10)
November 25. T	Genuine Religion (James 1:26, 27; 1 Tim. 5:16)
November 26. F	
November 27. S	Jesus Helps the Weary (Matt. 11:25-30)
November 28. S	Living for Others (Acts 9:36-43)

Time. – About A.D. 55-56.

Places.—Paul wrote from Macedonia his epistle to the churches of Galatia—Antioch of Pisidia; Iconium of Phrygia; Lystra and Derbe of Lycaonia; and Perga of Pamphylia.

Persons.—Paul and the saints of the churches of Galatia.

## Introduction

Christ bore the sins of many; and in light of his supreme sacrifice, the requirement of his law that men shall unselfishly bear the burdens of his fellow man is wholly reasonable in every respect. Christ with joy bore those burdens—with joy he suffered the ignominious death on

the cross. That joy which he experienced was not, however, in contemplation of the physical excruciating suffering of the Roman cross; for in contemplation of that suffering, he prayed: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: nevertheless, not as

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I wilt, but as thou wilt." The joy that Christ experienced was in contemplation of, and also for the actuality of, the great redemption sacrifice that he would make for the souls of men. (Heb. 12:1, 2; Matt. 26:39.)

Christians must be unselfish and burden bearing. Their sympathy and concern must go out to all men in distress, in sickness, in sorrow, and in death. They must be willing to share their material possessions with others.

# PERTINENT QUOTES

"To pity distress is but human; to relieve it is Godlike." (Horace Mann)

"Grief is a stone that bears one down, but two bear it lightly."
(W. Hauff)

"Be more prompt to go to a friend in adversity than in prosperity." (Chilo)

"Light is the task when many share the toil." (Homer)

" 'Tis not enough' to help the feeble up, but to support him after." (Shakespeare)

"To live is not to live for one's self alone; let us help one another." (Menander)

"When a person is down in the world, an ounce of help is better than a pound of preaching." (Bulwer)

"God has so ordered that men, being in need of each other, should learn to love each other, and bear each other's burdens." (Sala)

"Christians and camels receive their burdens kneeling." (Ambrose Bierce)

"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself." (Anonymous)

"Christianity requires two things from every man who believes in it: first, to acquire property by just and righteous means, and second, to look not only on his own things, but also on the things of others. (Henry Van Dyke)

"Christianity works while infidelity talks. She feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, visits and cheers the sick, and seeks the lost, while infidelity abuses her and babbles nonsense and profanity. "By their fruits ye shall know them." " (Henry Ward Beecher)

"The race of mankind would perish did they cease to aid each other —We cannot exist without mutual help. All therefore that need aid have a right to ask it from their fellow-men; and no one who has the power of granting can refuse it without guilt." (Walter Scott)

"If we could hear as we pass along.

The minor chords of our brother's song;

If we could read

The blotted lines in his once-fair creed,

Would we not try to lift him up, ere we passed by?

In our busy haste, if we could see

The heart that bleeds for our sympathy;

If we could guess

How utter our brother's loneliness,

Would we not stay

To cheer him a little on his way?"

(Anonymous)

## The Golden Text

"But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." (Matt. 23:11.)

Centuries before Christ came upon the scene of action, Jehovah said: "The elder shall serve the younger," and the apostle Paul quoted that very statement when writing of his sorrow for the rebellious state of Israel. (Gen. 25:23; Rom. 9:12.) A cardinal principle of

the system of Christianity is that the "elder shall serve the younger." Within this frame of reference, Christ stated the principle in the words of the Golden Text—"he that is greatest among you shall be your servant."

The elders of the church are to serve—not to be served. The same is the case with the evangelist, the

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teacher, and for that matter, all Christians. The "elder" in this sense may be at times the one who has been a Christian longer and by reason of that fact is the more firmly established in the faith. The essence of the principle stated in the Golden Text is that the way up is down, and the way down is up. Thus, humility and sacrifice are two of the keynotes of Christianity.

# The Text Explained

# The Christian's Obligation for a Person Overtaken in Sin

(Gal. 6:1)

"Brethren, even if a man [any person] be overtaken [caught; surprised; seized upon] in any trespass [a trespass in doctrine or in manner of life], ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness: . The antithesis of pride and haughtiness; this requirement certainly gives point and compass as to how that elders, as well as all others, should proceed in disciplinary cases, and in all relationships, for that matter. ". . . looking to thyself [or looking out for thyself], lest thou also be tempted."

Paul had argued the case for the doctrine of Christ versus the doctrine of the law of circumcision, and he had concluded with the point that "every man that receiveth circumcision ... is a debtor to do the whole law"; and then he wrote emphatically: "Ye are sevwrote emphatically: "Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace." He proceeded therefrom to urge the Galatians to walk by the Spirit and, thereby, to avoid the lust of the flesh. He gave a partial itemized list of the works of the flesh; and in turn, he described the fruit of the Spirit He scribed the fruit of the Spirit. He was thus done with his epistle to except for certain Galatians, practical (Gal. exhortations. 3.)

Paul begins with the man who has lapsed into sin. He is to be restored, and that by men who have the age, the wisdom, the humility, and the spiritual strength for such a restoration. Too often, men, including elders, reach the point in their Christian vocation or profession where they feel that they have arrived at a point of secure manhood in Christ. They then become censorious and harsh in their dealing with the frailties of others. In many instances such men learn moderation, sympathy, and mercy

by a sudden fall whereby they learn with considerable humiliation and embarrassment of their own frailties. Paul warns against these dangers.

# The Christian's Obligation To Bear the Burdens of Others

(Gal. 6:2-5)

"Bear [not tolerate] ye one another's burdens [which means to jointly bear], and so fulfill the law of Christ." Paul meant by this admonition that Christians should should have a closeness of feeling for each other—a feeling of sympathy, especially for those in distress, or in sickness, or in death. The law of Christ relative to man's dealings with man is summed up in the Golden Rule, namely: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets." (Matt. 7:12.) Christ promulgated this law, and he exemplified it. He dealt tenderly with the sinful woman in the city of Nain, with the woman taken in adultery, and with Simon Peter. His parable on the prodigal son was intended to teach that same lesson. 7:36-50; John 8:11: 22:61; John 21:15-17.)

"For if a man thinketh himself to be something [if he thinks that he has arrived or has excelled in the Christian virtues of piety, charity, sympathy, and understanding] when he is nothing [when, contrary to the estimate that he has of himself, he is censorious, harsh, unsympathetic, and overbearing, he is in reality nothing], he deceiveth himself." He deludes himself; he amounts to nothing. Let the man who has great confidence in himself beware! Paul warned the Corinthians: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10:12.)

"But let each man prove [test] his own work [instead of harshly and critically comparing himself with others, let him test or judge his work by the righteous standard,

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the Word, and not by comparing his work with the work of others, for such a comparison is both senseless and fatal], and then shall he have his own glorying in regard of himself alone." His glorying will then be the result of his own true merit, and not by his having compared himself with others.

each shall bear his own burden."

In verse two Paul urges the Galatians to bear one another's burdens, but here he writes that each man shall bear his own burdens. Paul here contradict himself? for in the latter verse Paul places emphasis on the accountability the individual Christian. With respect to this principle of accountability, each Christian must stand alone before the judgment bar of God and give an account of his own deeds. The fact that other brethren have done worse than he will not affect his case in the least, but then he will not be called upon to answer swer for his brethren's sins, unless, perchance, he is responsible for their sins, or has neglected to warn them of their sins. Paul wrote the Corinthians: "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." (2 Cor. 5:10.)

#### The Christian's Obligation to Support Financially the Evangelists of the Gospel

(Gal. 6:6)

"But let him that is taught in the word [he that receives instruction by the public teachers of the word] communicate unto him that teacheth [contribute to the support of the teacher who has dedicated himself to the ministry] in all good

Though Paul, for a special reason, did not accept support from the church at Corinth, he did teach the Corinthians that they had the obli-gation to support their teachers were worthy. He wrote: "Know ye not that they that minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they that wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the

gospel." (1 Cor. 9:13, 14.) Across the years, brethren have been, in the main, quite niggardly toward those who give their lives to the proclamation of the gospel. In this day of general affluency, churches have improved in their appreciation for and support of their preachers, but even today the majority of the churches do not take thought for the "cost of living index or rise" and increase the support of the preachers. preachers accordingly. In fact. many churches increase the support only when their preachers moved elsewhere, and they find that they cannot call in other preachers for the amount of support that they

were giving the former ones.

The most distressing factor relative to the support of preachers is in the area of the young men when they first launch out into the ministry. Usually, they are called to the smaller churches where the support is a mere bare existence. In a few months, the elders and/or members of a particular church tire of the preacher, or they disagree with him violently for his stand on such matters as long hair, immodest dress, social drinking, dancing, and like; and they, with summary tion, fire the preacher. The preacher's wife is often heavy with a child, and he is seized with fear. Where can he move? What church will even consider him since he has been fired? How will he earn a livelihood? There is really no wonder that so few young men, relatively speaking, choose to dedicate themselves to the ministry! Then too, there is really no wonder that so many men, even of a decade or so of experience, are leaving the full time ministry with the determination to earn their support by other means; and, of course, when they do they will not have as much time to study and to preach.

# The Principle of Sowing and Reaping

(Gal. 6:7-10)

"Be not deceived; God not is mocked [deceived by your pretentions]: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap [here is the universal principle of sowing and reaping, for a man reaps the kind of seed that he sows, and he reaps more than he sows]. For he that soweth to the flesh [he who gives NOVEMBER 28, 1976 299

his life over to sensual pleasures and appetites, he who lies for worldly honors, prestige, power, and wealth] shall of the flesh reap corruption. . . . And let us not be weary in well-doing [not become discouraged and give up in well-doing]: for in due season [in God's own time] we shall reap [receive rewards], if we faint not."

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the house-

hold of the faith."

Paul follows his negatives—"let us not be weary in well-doing," and "in due season we shall reap if we faint not"—with the positive, "let

us work that which is good toward all men." This the true-hearted Christian will endeavor to do, not occasionally, but at every opportunity. The grand purpose and work of the Christian embraces all areas of helpfulness and burden bearing.

Charity begins at home. The parents do for their children, and years later the children do for the parents. Christians do for all men, but they begin by doing first for their own brethren, and this is what Paul meant when he said: "As we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of faith."

**IN SUMMARY** 

In summary, from this lesson on bearing one another's burdens, these principles stand out clearly and forcibly:

1. Christians should always be keenly cognizant of the obligation to restore brethren overtaken in a trespass.

2. Christians are to bear one an-

other's burdens.

3. Christians should support financially those who dedicate their lives to the ministry.

4. Christians should be alert to the universal principle of sowing

and reaping.

5. Christians are to do good to all men, and especially to the household of faith.

It is in loving—not in being loved— The heart is blest;

It is in giving—not in seeking gifts— We find our quest.

If thou art hungry, lacking heavenly food,

Give hope and cheer.

If thou art sad and wouldst be comforted,

Stay sorrow's tear.

Whatever be thy longing and thy need,

That do thou give;

So shall thy soul be fed, and thou, indeed,

Shall truly live.

-Anonymous

The tears we shed are not in vain;

Nor worthless is the heavy strife; If, like the buried seed of grain, They rise to renovated

Ĭife.

It is through tears our spirits grow; 'Tis in the tempest souls expand, If it but teaches us to go

To him who holds it in his hand.

Oh, welcome then, the stormy blast!

Oh, welcome, then, the ocean's roar!

Ye only drive more sure and fast Our trembling bark to heaven's bright shore.

-T. C. Upham

Lord, should my path through suffering lie,

Forbid it I should e'er repine; Still let me turn to Calvary,

Nor heed my griefs, remembering thine."

—W. Jones

### He Bore It All

My precious Savior suffered pain and agony,

He bore it all that I might live;

He broke the bonds of sin and set the captive free,

He bore it all that I might live.

They placed a crown of thorns upon my Savior's head,

He bore it all that I might live;

By cruel man with spear his side was pierced and bled,

He bore it all that I might live.

Up Calvary's hill in shame the blessed Savior trod,
He bore it all that I might live;

Between two thieves they crucified the Son of God, He bore it all that I might live.

He bore it all that I might see his shining face,

He bore it all that I with him might live.

I stood condemned to die, but Jesus took my place.

He bore it all that I might live. — J. R. Baxter, Jr.

### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

Why is the requirement to bear the burdens of our fellow men a reasonable one?

With what attitude did Christ bear the sins of many?

For what did Christ pray in contemplation of the physical suffering of the cross?

#### The Golden Text

In what frame of reference is the principle of the golden text stated?

What is the essence of the principle?
Discuss the cardinal principle of Christianity, "the elder shall serve the younger."

In what way is the term "elder" used in this sense?

#### The Text Explained

Who is commanded to restore the one who has lapsed into sin?
What dangers does Paul warn against in regard to restoring others?

What did Paul mean by his admonition to "bear ye one another's burdens"?

What is the condition of the man who thinks himself to be something that he is not in the matter of virtues?

How should each man prove his own work?

Discuss Paul's instruction to bear one another's burdens as compared to his later admonition to each man to "bear his own burden." Is this a contradiction? If not, what is Paul stressing?

What were Paul's instructions concerning

What were Paul's instructions concerning the financial support of those who teach publicly?

Discuss the principle of sowing and reaping.

What is embraced by the grand purpose and work of the Christian?

What did Paul mean by his statement,
"Let us work that which is good toward
all men, and especially them that are of
the household of the faith"?

#### In Summary

What are the five principles which stand out in this lesson on bearing one another's burdens?

## Lesson X—December 5, 1976

# LIVING WITH PEOPLE OF OTHER RACES

#### Lesson Text

Eph. 2:11-18; Gal. 2:11-14; 3:28, 29

11 Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands:

made by hands;

12 That ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ.

14 For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition,

15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace;

16 And might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the

cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17 And he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh:

18 For through him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father.

ratilei.

11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned.

12 For before that certain came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision.

13 And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation.

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles,

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and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

28 There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond

nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one *man* in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

Golden Text.—"And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." (Acts 17:26.)
Devotional Reading.—Matt. 28:18-20.

# **Daily Bible Readings**

November 29. M
December 1. WLove for All Required (Matt. 5:43-48)
December 2. TOne God Created All (Mal. 2:10-16)
December 3. F
December 4. SJesus and the Samaritan Woman (John 4:5-14)
December 5. S Eve, Mother of All (Gen. 3:9-21)

Time.—For Ephesians, about A.D. 60; for Galatians, about A.D. 55-56. Places.—For Ephesians, Rome in Italy, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor; for Galatians, the churches of Galatia—Antioch of Pisidia; Iconium of Phrygia; Lystra and Derbe of Lycaonia; and Perga of Pamphylia.

Persons.-For Ephesians, Paul and the saints at Ephesus; for Galatians,

Paul and the saints in the churches of Galatia.

### Introduction

This lesson entitled, "Living with People of Other Races," devolves upon Christians some grave responsibilities. Those responsibilities do not include, however, concentrated efforts to amalgamate the races by blotting out family customs, social differences, and/or national characteristics. The responsibilities turn primarily on respect for others, the desire to be of assistance to a neighbor regardless of the color of his skin, and the desire to help save the soul of every man everywhere.

Out of Christ, or without Christ, man is separated from man; nation is separated from nation; the Jew is separated from the Gentile: and the underprivileged class is separated from the privileged class. Without Christ, the spirit of animosity, hostility, and race hatred prevails among men. Without Christ man is estranged from man, and man is estranged from God.

In Christ, the natural hostilities between races and nations are removed, barriers and fences of strange customs are broken, and misunderstandings are adjusted. Thus, unity among all races and

classes of men come to prevail.

### PERTINENT OUOTES

"It takes a wise man to know when he is fighting for a principle or merely defending a prejudice." (Newhall Gazette)

"When man is treated as a person and not a thing, he is never the object of his brother's hatred but the center of his charity and love." (W. Ralph Ward)

"Have, as the children say, a heart for your brother." (Faith Baldwin)

"The brotherhood of man is an integral part of Christianity no less than the Fatherhood of God; and to deny the one is no less infidel than to deny the other." (Lyman Abbott)

"If God is thy father; man is thy

brother." (Lamartine)

"By the law of God, given by him to humanity, all men are free, are brothers, and are equals." (Mazzini)

"God divided man into men that they might help each other." (Seneca) 'The true civilization is where every man gives to every other

every right that he claims for himself." (Robert Ingersoll)

### The Golden Text

"And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." (Acts 17:26.)

The King James Version reads: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell upon all the face of the earth," and the "one blood" is the necessary implication of the statement, "made of one every nation of men to dwell on all

the face of the earth."

Paul's statement was pre-scientific for that day and age, for then very little was known regarding the properties of blood. In this scientific age almost any laboratory technician can demonstrate the fact or truthfulness of Paul's statement. To illustrate, a person can take four—or more, the number is limitless only to the different kinds of animals—vials of blood to the laboratory, say for example, the blood of a horse, a cow, a dog, and a cat, and the technician can label accurately which vial is the blood of the horse,

and which vial is the blood of the cow, and which vial is the blood of a dog, and which vial is the blood of a cat. On the other hand, though, if a person should take four vials of blood from men of different races, say for example, the blood of a white man, the blood of a black man, the blood of a yellow man, and the blood of a red man, the technician can label each vial "man's blood" in contrast to the blood of any animal, but this is the only label that he can give the vials of human blood with respect to race.

In short, the technician cannot tell which vial is from a white man, or which is from a black man, or which is from a yellow man, or which is from a red man. Truly then, God has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell upon all of the face of the earth. All races of men stem, therefore, from Adam,

and they are all blood kin.

### The Text Explained

# The Reconciliation of Jew and Gentile

(Eph. 2:11-18)

Paul was in prison, and had been for some three years, when he wrote the Ephesian epistle. Prior to his imprisonment he had preached Christ in many cities and had made converts from both the Jews and Gentiles, and in those years there had arisen some very grave dissensions or disunity between the Jews and the Gentiles.

Paul had for some time been engaged in an effort to raise money from the predominantly Gentile churches so as to send relief to the poor saints in Judea. He had been confident that such a collection would do much to heal the breach. He emphasized to the Gentiles that they were debtors to the Jews—that they had been made partakers of spiritual things which had come wholly from the Jews, and that, therefore, they were obligated to pay their debt to the Jews by ministering unto them with carnal things. In the meantime, the rift

the two races between before the gift could be delivered. The rebellious attitude of the Jews became so heated and pronounced that Paul came to fear lest the saints in Judea should reject collection. When writing to Romans just prior to the delivery of the collection, he requested that they strive in their prayers with him that his ministration which he had, for Jerusalem might be acceptthe saints. (Rom. 15:30, to 31.) In keeping with the growing bitter rebellion of the Jewish Christians, Paul concluded to accompany the collection to Jerusalem, which thing he at first had not planned to

The Jewish Christians did accept the collection or bounty. In the meantime, Paul was arrested and was a prisoner for a period of two years before he appealed to Caesar. On reaching Rome, he was held as a prisoner. He had been in Rome for a year when he had an occasion to dispatch an epistle to the Ephesians. During that three year period conditions between the Jews and the

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Gentiles had improved. Paul's work in behalf of unity had borne fruit, and conditions were good in light of prior troublesome days, and particularly at Ephesus. These briefly stated matters have bearing on the present lesson text.

"Wherefore [because you that were once dead are now alive, you should contemplate your high estate] remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision in the flesh who are called the contemplate of the contemplat called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands [the Jews had received circumcision, but they had not received the inward circumcision of the heart]; that ye were at that time [before their conversion Christ] separate from Christ [groping in darkness and sin], alienated from the commonwealth of Is-[without citizenship among God's chosen people], and strangers from the covenants of the promise [they were strangers, foreigners, from the covenants which included the atonement of Christ for the sins of all mankind], having no hope and without God in the world." While they were in God's eternal were without thév knowledge of him.

"But now [the case with them was in sharp contrast with their former days] in Christ Jesus [having been baptized into Christ] ye that were once far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ." They had come in contact with the cleansing power of the blood; their sins had been covered by that blood, for they had believed, pented, confessed, and been bapfized into Christ and thus into his death where his blood was shed. (John 19:33, 34.) "For he [Christ] is our peace [reconciliation to God], who made both one [he made Jew and Gentile into one], and brake down the middle wall of partition [the law of Moses], having abolished in his flesh [by the death of his fleshly body] the enmity, [the occasion of the enmity], even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; . . Such was the law of Moses, and Jesus blotted out that "bond written in ordinances was against them, which was con-trary to them, and he took it out of the way, "nailing it to the cross." (Col. 2:14.) ". . that he might create in himself of the two [Jew

and Gentile] one new man thurch], so making peace [between the two]; and might reconcile them both in one body . . ." Christ is the head of the body, the church. "For in one Spirit were we all baptized unto one body whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit." (Col. 1:18; Eph. 4.4; 1 Cor. 13.) . . unto God through the cross [the great work of redemption could be acwork of redemption could be accomplished only through the cross of Christ], having slain the enmity thereby [having put to death the enmity between Jew and Gentile]: and he came [to earth] and preached to you that were far off [the Gentiles, for Peter said on Pentercet to the Jews: "For to you is tecost to the Jews: "For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are far off," or the Gentiles—Acts 2:391 and a continuous Gentiles-Acts 2:39], and peace to them that were nigh [the Jews were nigh in that they had the oracles of God, and those oracles were calculated to lead the Jews to Christ]: for through him [Christ] we [Paul, a Jew, includes himself] have our access in one Spirit unto the Father."

# The Dissimulation of the Apostle Peter

(Gal. 2:11-14)

In order for a proper understanding of the ethnic relations—or want of relations—between the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians which led to the dissimulation of Peter, and thus to Paul's rebuke of him, the following observations are in order:

In the beginning of the gospel on Pentecost, some of the proselyte Gentiles embraced the gospel, but this was no problem to the Jewish Christians because those Gentiles had already embraced both the Jews' religion and the Jews' customs.

The Jewish Christians seemed to regard Christianity as an extension of the Jews' religion, and they contemplated, therefore, that only the Gentiles who were first proselyted into the Jewish religion and customs would be subjects for membership in the church.

The conversion of Cornelius and his household, without the males' first being circumcised, forced the Jewish Christians to recognize that 304 Lesson X

Christianity was not to be a mere extension of the Jews' religion.

When the Gentiles were thus baptized into Christ, and thus into the church, without having been compelled to be circumcised, a segment of the Jewish teachers began teaching the Gentile converts that though they had been baptized, they needed also to be circumcised. This fact called forth the Jerusalem Conference (Acts 15) at which time a document was drawn which established by apostolic authority the fact that circumcision and the Jewish customs were not to be bound upon the Gentiles. The document was to be read among all of the Gentile churches.

After the publication of this document. Peter went down to Antioch of Syria, where the largest Gentile church of that day was located, and further, where the document was first read, and there under the pressure of certain Jewish Christians who came down from Jerusalem, he withdrew from eating with the Gentiles and ate exclusively with the Jews. This was his dissimula-

tion or hypocrisy.

"But when Cephas came to Antioch. I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned. For before that certain came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision."

Peter had been in Antioch for some time, how much time is not known, and he had eaten with the Gentiles. The "eating" was not the eating of the Lord's supper; but rather, it was a love feast, or fellowship dinner, which apparently was eaten prior to the eating of the Lord's supper, as was the case at Corinth. (1 Cor. 11:17-34.)

When certain of the circumcision, or the Jewish Christians, came down from James (they actually came down from Jerusalem with the false claim that they had come from James), Peter drew back and separated himself from the Gentiles and ate with the Jews only.

Paul, upon realizing what was taking place, rebuked Peter face to face and that publicly before them all. True, Peter was only one of those who withdrew from their eating with the Gentiles, but Paul's rebuke of Peter turned on the fact

that Peter was an apostle, a leader, and his actions carried much influence. Peter had sinned publicly, and he deserved to be denounced publicly. These facts relating to Peter certainly embarrass the "primacy of Peter" doctrine. Paul rebuked Peter because he stood condemned, and the fact of his condemnation certainly stands forth when considered in the light of his prior knowledge and circumstances, as follows:

1. Peter, a close disciple of the Master, had heard him declare that all meats are clean. (Mark 7:17-23.)

2. Peter had seen a vision on the housetop in Joppa, not just one time but three, together with the announcement that "what God hath cleansed," he was not to make common, or call common and unclean. (Acts 10:9-16.)

3. Peter, acting upon the implications of the vision, went to Caesarea, entered into the home of the centurion Cornelius, and ate with

them. (Acts 11:1-3.)

4. Peter, when at the Jerusalem conference, rehearsed: "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. And God, who knoweth the heart, bear them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us; and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith." (Acts 15:7-11.)

Peter, therefore, did stand condemned. No apostle had occasion to know the will of Christ respecting the Gentiles as did Peter, but the weak strain of his character, impulsive, with daring courage but coupled with momentary fear, had again bled through. Peter had acted the part of a hypocrite. To dissimulate is to hide under a false appearance. He knew in his heart that his actions were contrary to the will of Christ. He had been shown and instructed that "God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34.)

"And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him [when the rest of the Jewish Christians saw that Peter had withdrawn and was not eating with the Gentiles at the fellowship meal, they quite natu-

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rally were led to withdraw also]; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimula-

carriea away with their assimulation [or hypocrisy]."

Now, Barnabas, described by the historian Luke as being "a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith," had accompanied Paul on the first missionary journey, and he had thus assisted Paul in the establishment of a number of predominantly Contile churches. nantly Gentile churches. The fact that he was carried away with the dissimulation is an indication how strong the matter of race prejudice can be. The sharp contention which arose later between Paul and Barnabas, and which effected their separation, may have had its rise out of the dissimulation of Peter and Barnabas coupled with Paul's stern rebuke of Peter, which re-buke, by implication at least, would have been passed upon Barnabas as

A warning for brethren today is in order just here. Brethren of all races, whether of the majority or of a minority segment of society, need to recognize the fact of social differences and racial prejudices be-tween the various ethnic groups: and they must in sincere humility demonstrate in quiet ways their abiding love and wholesome desires and prayers for each other. In all instances, regardless of aggravating circumstances, Christians must refrain from creating unnecessary confusion. excitement, and prejudice and hatred.

when I saw that walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before them all. If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews (Peter had eaten with the Gentiles at the household of Cornelius and also with the Gentiles at Antioch prior to the arrival of the party from Jerusalem], how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"

The inconsistency of Peter was very apparent. He had ignored the Jewish traditions at the times that he had eaten with the Gentiles, but his actions at that point and time implied that the Gentiles should be rid of their customs and the kind of food which they ate and adopt outright the customs of the Jews and the kind of food which they ate.

Another word of warning for brethren today is in order just here: Brethren of all races should respect each other's family customs, respect each other's family customs, national characteristics, and social differences. Such differences, to a greater or lesser degree, will always exist. Unity is not achieved through force and effort to amalgamate the various races; but rather, unity is achieved by leading all more of all nations to become two in men of all nations to become one in Christ, or to hold and maintain the spirit of Christ.

A man may become a Christian without becoming an American. He may become a Christian without giving up his social customs, his naposition. Only if a native custom should be contrary to the principles of Christianity would a Christian be under obligation to give it up. Paul became all things to all men. He associated with the different races of men and respected them and lived by their customs, that he might by all means save some. (1 Cor. 9:20, 22.)

# The Oneness of God's People

(Gal. 3:28, 29)

"There can be neither Jew nor Greek . . ." The Jews made a sharp separation between themselves the hordes of heathens and called them dogs; whereas, the philosophi-cal Gentiles were characterized by a similar snobbishness ". . . there can be neither bond nor free . . . The bondsmen were in many instances regarded as mere chattel; Aristotle had called a slave "an animated implement." ". . . there can be no male or female . . ." No sex distinction, which was so current in that day; for example, Josephus wrote: "The woman, so says the law, is inferior in all things to man." ". . . for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, . . ." The Jews had gloried in the fact that they had descended from Abraham, but the promise made to Abraham and reckoned upon his faith, was made while he was in uncircumcision, and therefore, all who believed were spiritual descendants of Abraham, "heirs according to the promise"

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### **IN SUMMARY**

In su,mmary, on the basis of the texts examined in this lesson several conclusions should be drawn, namely:

1. The gospel is for all races of men. Christ died for all men, both Jews and Gentiles, who because of their own sins deserved to die. He "Go commanded: teach all "go preach the gospel to creature." (Heb. every creature." (Heb 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16.) 2:9;

2. Men of all races are summed up, or gathered together, in Christ. In Christ, men of all races unite, and Christ is the bond that unites them. Through faith in Christ and obedience to the gospel, men of all races and nations come into Christ and come to have the Spirit of therefore, Christ. In Christ, there cannot be Jew or Greek, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman: male or female," but Christ is all and in all. (Eph. 1:10; Col. 3:11; Gal. 3:28.)

3. Any Christian who is so raceminded that he feels himself too good to work with or worship with those of another race is lacking in humility, and is, thus, unworthy of

the name of Christ.

4. Any church that refuses on the basis of race prejudice to assist in preaching the gospel to all races within its normal reach is unworthy of the name of Christ.

5. Any Christian who participates in a race demonstration or riot, and thereby gives impetus to lawlessness, is far astray from the inspired

teaching of the apostle Paul.

The true Christian will be humble and demonstrate a benevolent attitude regardless of aggravating circumstances and race hostili-

Prayer for Brotherhood

Heavenly Father,

Who did create all men As one species—Man; And who did give This man Power to perceive Help us to use this perception To realize The basic oneness Which we share.

May we know That we differ In outward appearance only; That in mind, And in spirit We are as one;

That we love alike, Laugh alike. Mourn alike. And that alike We are created, Loved, Saved, By the same Father By which token We are all brothers.

Ruth Steffy

## "The "Our" of "Our Father."

"In the Lord's prayer, we have the confidence that we are among the "our" of "our Father." But the confidence requires that exclude no one from our own "our." That same conclusion follows inevitably from the Christian idea of God. We are made, we say confidently, in God's image; something about us is like God. Does mean that our whiteness is Godlike? or is it our blackness? or our yellowness? or is it not our human-Godlikeness Must not something to do with our souls rather than the color of our hair or eyes or skin? If any of us is in God's image, we would all seem to be. How can any of us draw lines of favor if God himself has not drawn them? (Robert Root)

### **Ouestions for Discussion**

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

#### Introduction

Upon what do the responsibilities of Christians turn in regard to living with people of other races?

What is the condition of men and nations without Christ?

What barriers are removed in Christ?

The Golden Text

What is the necessary implication in the statement, "made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth?"

Discuss the fact that Paul's statement was pre-scientific for his day and age.

The Text Explained

At what time in the ministry of Paul had the estrangement between the Gentiles reached its height? the Jews and What had Paul hoped would help to heal this breach?

What did Paul fear would result from the rebellious attitude of the Jews?

What kind of circumcision the had Gentiles received?

How does Paul describe the spiritual dition of the Gentiles before their conversion to Christ?

How does Paul ow does Paul describe them after had been baptized into Christ? thev

For what reason did Christ breathe middle wall of partition" "down break between Jews and Gentiles?

Why had there been no problem Jewish Christians when the Gentiles em-braced the gospel on the day of Pente-

In what way did the Iewish Christians seem to regard Christianity?

What forced the Jewish Christians to recthe fact that their assumption was not true?

What fact called forth the Ierusalem conference?

What resulted from the conference? the occasion of Peter's dissimula-Discuss

what fact did Paul's rebuke of Peter Upon

made #1 What knowledge and circumstances fact of Peter's the condemnation stand forth clearly?

led to What others were follow ample of Peter in his dissimulation? What warning to brethren toda

today der concerning this instance?

What warning to brethren today is apparent in Peter's inconsistency in regard to food and customs?

What distinctions must be abandoned in Christ?

the fact that those in Christ constitute the true seed of Abraham.

## In Summary

What conclusions should be drawn from this lesson?

## Lesson XI – December 12, 1976

# MEETING HUMAN NEEDS

# Lesson Text

James 1:26, 27; 2:14-18; 1 Tim. 5:16, 6:17-19

26 If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain.

27 Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

14 What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but have not works? can that faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister be naked

and in lack of daily food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body; what doth it profit?

Even so faith, if it have not

works, is dead in itself.

18 Yea, a man will say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my works will show thee my faith.

- 16 If any woman that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.
- 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 com-

municate;

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.

Golden Text.—"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto Jehovah, and his good deed will he pay him again." (Prov. 19:17.)

Devotional Reading.—Gal. 2:1-10.

### Daily Bible Readings

	j	
December 6.	M Christ Helped Others (John 6:1-14)	
December 7.	T Non-doers Condemned (James 1:23-25	
December 8.	W Blessedness of the Doer (Luke 11:27, 28	
December 9.		
December 10.	F Ministering to the Needy (2 Cor. 9:1-15	)
December 11.	SHelpers of the Poor Blessed (Prov. 14:20-31)	ĺ
December 12.	S Gifts of Poor Noted (Mark 12:41-44)	
December 11.		() )

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Time.—For James, A.D. 45-48; 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, about A.D. 64-65.

Places.—James wrote his epistle to the Dispersion from Jerusalem. The Dispersion were those Jews who had been transplanted to other countries by heathen captors, or who had, by choice and honor, or reasons of commerce, taken up residence in other countries. For First Timothy, probably Spain and Ephesus.

Persons.—James and the Jews of the Dispersion; Paul and Timothy.

### Introduction

meeting human This lesson on vital aspect of needs is a very Christianity. True enough, there are those compassionate souls who take great thought for the welfare of others but never pay reverence and homage to their maker. There are others, however, who honor and reverence God in a certain sense or but they take very thought for their fellow Christians, and they, of course, take even less thought for the masses of humanity.

Christians should live to be of service to others. Paul wrote the Ephesians: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good [Paul dignifies labor,

including what is termed common labor], that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need." The point here that begs for emphasis is that all Christians, rich or poor, are to work, so that they may have whereof to share with those who have need. Fathers of families are especially enjoined to work so as to be able to properly provide for their own. Paul wrote Timothy, by way of illustration. "If any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." There is no place for a lazy man in the kingdom of God. (Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:8.)

# PERTINENT QUOTES

"I sought to hear the voice of God And climbed the topmost steeple. But God declared: 'Go down again. I dwell among the people.' "

(Louis I. Newman)

"To feel much for others, and little for ourselves; to restrain our selfish, and exercise our benevolent affections, constitutes the perfection of human nature." (Adam Smith)

"The best way to do good to ourselves is to do it to others; the right way to gather is to scat-

ter." (Anonymous)

"It is the glory of the true religion that it inculcates and inspires a spirit of benevolence. It is a religion of charity, which none other ever was. Christ went about doing good; he set the example to his disciples, and they abounded in it." (Fuller)

"I expect to pass through life but once. If therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow-being, let me do it now, and not defer or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again." (Penn)

"It is good for us to think no grace or blessing truly ours till we are aware that God has blessed some one else with it through us." (Phillips Brooks)

"The world does not need a definition of religion so much as it needs a demonstration." (Anony-

mous)

"Measure not men by Sundays, without regarding what they do all the week after." (Fuller)

"No man's religion ever survives his morals." (South)

"Never did any soul do good, but it came readier to do the same again, with more enjoyment. Never was love, or gratitude, or bounty practised, but with increasing joy, which made the practiser still more in love with the fair act." (Shaftsbury)

"That man may last, but never

lives.

Who much receives, but nothing gives,

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Whom none can love, whom none can thank,

Creation's blot, creation's blank."
(Anonymous)

"He who bestows his good upon the poor, Shall have as much again, and ten times more." (John (Bunyan)

### The Golden Text

\*

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto Jehovah, and his good deed will he pay him again." (Prov. 19:17.)

This golden text is a passage of scripture which should be on the lips of every Christian. Every Christian should recognize the significance of the statement, "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto Jehovah." By all means memorize this verse of scripture.

One principle that stands out on the pages of both the Old and New Testaments is God's concern for the poor, the widows, and the orphans. These people are the Father's constant concern, and every dollar given to them, and every act of kindness shown to them, and every service rendered to them is a loan to Jehovah, and he will repay the loan with great interest.

# The Text Explained

# A Definition of Pure Religion

(James 1:26, 27)

"If any man thinketh himself to be religious [the implication is that many who think themselves to be religious really are not] while he bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his heart [thinks that the wild use of his tongue is a mark of zeal for Jehovah] this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled [a person could have a pure silk shirt, but if he chews tobacco, that shirt could become defiled] before our God and Father is this [here a part of religion is put for the whole], to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

# Faith Versus Works

(James 2:14-18)

"What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but have not works? can that faith save him?" James' question carries its own answer. The point is that faith must be attended by works, for faith without works will not save.

"If a brother or sister be naked and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, God in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body: what doth it profit?"

the body; what doth it profit?"

James illustrated his proposition that faith without works will not save. He struck at the very common sin of his brethren, and that sin continues till this day. Certainly, to tell a brother or sister in need to "go in peace, be ye

warmed and filled," did not take care of their human needs. In fact, such expressions did absolutely nothing to alleviate the human needs, nor will such expressions

meet human needs today.

"Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead, in itself. Yea, a man will say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my works will show thee my faith."

Here is the crux of James' practical instructions relative to faith and works. The Christian demonstrates true faith by his works, and without works there is, in reality, no faith. Woe is to the man who proclaims his faith but does not attend that faith with the works that such a faith demands. James struck the key note when he said: "I by my works will show thee my faith."

# Paul's Charge to Rich Women

(1 Tim. 5:16)

"If any woman that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed."

The instruction that Paul gave relative to rich or wealthy widows has considerable implications for many women in the church today. The business and banking world takes note of the fact that much of the wealth of this nation is held by women. In most cases, those women are widows whose late husbands have left them with large estates and holdings. Often such

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women have saved and skimped in their earlier years of married life, and they left the matter of how much they should give to their husbands. Then when their husbands were gone, they have felt very insecure, and they have, thus, tended to become somewhat miserly in comparison to what they are financially able to give.

Paul's instruction in the above verse contemplates women such as Lydia, a seller of purple, who was the first person at Philippi to accept the gospel, and it also contemplates widows that have been left with considerable wealth. Paul structed that women with homes and/or wealth sufficient to care for another or others should relieve the widows of their own family and kin so that the church be not burdened. relief could come through providing a home for a widow, or through the means of providing work for her, or by giving her finan-cial assistance. The emphasis of Paul was, and is, that if the church is relieved of the burdens of such widows, it will have more capacity to support those whose needs must be met by the church.

# Paul's Charge to the Rich (1 Tim. 6:17-19)

"Charge them that are rich in this present world [earthly wealth is a transitory nature, and a person

IN SUMMARY

In summary, the rich, by the very fact of their riches, are faced with grave responsibilities and also with and the rich or dangers, wealthy women are included in the instruction which Paul gave. Some of those responsibilities and dangers may be itemized as follows:

 The responsibility of the rich is to give to the poor, to the support of the gospel, and to support other worthy causes, but the tendency of those who have riches is to hoard

and acquire more riches.

The rich are stewards for God, like all other Christians, and they are not only responsible for giving but also for the best use, or stewardship, that they can make of that which they do give; and there is\_a very real danger at this point. To illustrate, they will be sought out again and again by those who

considered to be wealthy in one era might, with the same wealth, be a poor man in another era], that they be not highminded [arrogant, boastful, as if wealth is the answer for all problems that arise], nor their hope set on the uncertainty of riches [one calamity, wrong business deal, and can be gone], but on God [man can repose faith and confidence in him, bût he cannot repose confidence in the material things of this life], who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good [to other people], that they be rich in good works [the rich Christian should be just as rich spiritually, ready give and to share, as he is materially), that they be ready to distrib-[to the necessities willing to communicate have a liberal financial part in the evangelistic programs of the church]; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come [every cheerfully made sacrifice or gift is a spiritual investment that bears rich dividends against that day when death overtakes the person, and particularly against the day of the coming of Christ A person only saves that of Christ. A person only saves that material wealth which he gives away], that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed [life in this body is transitory and fleeting, but life is eternal life with the Father]."

promote one cause and another, and some of those causes, and the persons promoting them, will prove to be unworthy even to the point of downright chicanery. In time and such circumstances under rich people become disillusioned and bitter relative to their efforts to do good, and they withdraw all their efforts to help others.

While the rich may continue humble and assume their responsibilities to do good to others, there is the very real danger that their children will be affected adversely by those riches. Many of the rebellious youth of today's society are homes of the wealthy. such instances, those young people do not know of what real responsi-bility consists. They often do not know the lot of the poor and the privations which they experience.

Further, in many instances,, they do not learn the worth and dignity of work.

"If you find that life is flat, Full of this, with none of that,

Try giving!

Introspection makes it flatter; few more years—what will matter?

Try giving!

If the world is dark and bitter; Things all tend to make a quitter, Try giving!

Forget yourself in helping others; Know that all men are your brothers You will see then life is sweeter Than you thought and far com-

plefer-

When you give!"

–Margaret Gordon Kulman

"Not what we give, but what we share,

For the gift without the giver is bare:

Who gives himself with his alms feeds three.

Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me.

– James Russell Lowell

## Povertu

Who walks beside a rosebud And does not sense its bloom Its lovely form and color, Its delicate perfume;

Who walks beneath the heavens And does not see the sky, The sunrise and the sunset. The tints that glow and die;

Who treads a rural pathway And never hears a bird, Nor notes the trembling grasses A passing breeze has stirred;

Who dwells among his fellows And sees them pass his door. Nor ever hears their heartbeats— Is pitifully poor.

—Anonymous

### Questions for Discussion

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

#### Introduction

For what purpose should Christians live? begs for emphasis to the Ephesians What point Paul's instruction work?

#### The Golden Text

What is the principle which stands out on of both the Old and New pages Testaments?

### The Text Explained

What is the mark of a vain religion? What does James mean by an undefiled religion?

What is the means of Christians meeting the needs of other human beings?

In what way does one keep himself "un-spotted from the world"? Why must faith be attended by works? Discuss James' illustration of the proposi-tion that faith without works will not

proposi-

What is the crux of James' instructions relative to faith and works? Discuss Paul's rich instructions women.

What was Paul's charge to the rich in his epistle to Timothy? is the hope of the what reason to be set in God?

### In Summary

What are some the rich becau the of responsibilities of because of the verv of their riches? the

at are rich? some of the What dangers

# Lesson XII—December 19, 1976

### RULES FOR LIVING

# Lesson Text

Luke 6:27-38

27 But I say unto you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to them that háte vou,

Bless them that curse you, for them that despitefully use pray

you. To him that smiteth thee on one cheek offer also the other; and from him that taketh away thy cloak withhold not thy coat also.

30 Give to every one that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

- And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.
- 32 And if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? for even sinners love those that love them.
- 33 And if ye do good to them that do good to you, what thank have ye? for even sinners do the same.
- 34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have

ye? even sinners lend to sinners, to

receive again as much.

35 But love your enemies, and do them good, and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil.

36 Be ye merciful, even as your

Father is merciful.

37 And judge not, and ye shall not be judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: release, and ye shall be released:

38 Givé, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be

measured to you again.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with sacrifices God is well pleased." (Heb. 13:16.)
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Luke 6:20-26.

### Daily Bible Readings

December 13. M	The Rule in Personal Life (2 Pet. 3:14-18)
December 14. T	The Rule in Home Life (Luke 2:40-52)
December 15. W	The Rule in Civic Life (Rom. 13:1-7)
December 16. T	The Rule in Moral Life (Eph. 4:17-27)
December 17. F	The Rule in Business Life (2 Thess. 3:6-13)
	The Rule in Social Life (Rom. 12:9-16)
December 19. S	The Rule in Church Life (1 Cor. 12:12-27)

TIME. - A.D. 27.

PLACE.—On a mountain near Capernaum.

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

#### Introduction

No greater and more accurate set of rules for living can be devised than those given by the Master in his "Sermon on the Mount." The rules which he set forth on that occasion pertain, among other things, to the Christian's enemies—or those who would despitefully use and afflict violence upon him. The rules

also pertain to those who take material advantage of him.

The rules for living are summed up in the Golden Rule, which reads: "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." This Golden Rule is the rule for all ages and races of man.

#### PERTINENT QUOTES

"Do not look for wrong and evil; You will find them if you do: As you measure for your neighbor, He will measure back to you."

"Judge thyself with the judgment of sincerity, and thou wilt judge others with the judgment of

charity." (J. Mason)

'The quality of mercy is not strained; it droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath; it is twice blessed; it blesseth him that gives and him that takes: 'tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes the monarch better than his crown. Mercy is an attribute to God himself; and earthly power doth then show likest God's when mercy seasons justice. Consider this,—that, in the course of justice, none of us

should see salvation: we do pray for mercy, and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy." (Shakespeare)

"How would you be if he, who is the top of judgment, should but judge you as you are? O think on that, and mercy then will breathe within your lips, like man new made." (Shakespeare)

"A good deed is never lost. He who sows courtesy, reaps friendship; he who plants kindness, gathers love; pleasure bestowed upon a grateful mind was never sterile, but generally gratitude begets reward." (Basil)

"The greatest attribute of heaven is mercy." (Beaumont and Fletcher)

"We may imitate the Deity in all his moral attributes, but mercy is the only one in which we can pretend to equal him. We canDECEMBER 19, 1976 313

not, indeed, give like God, but surely we may forgive like him."

(Sterne)

"Among the attributes of God, although they are all equal, mercy shines with even more brilliancy than justice." (Cervantes)

"If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we should find in each man's life sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility." (Longfellow)

"It is much safer to reconcile an enemy than to conquer him; victory may deprive him of his poison, but reconciliation of his

will." (Feltham)

"To love an enemy is the distinguished characteristic of a religion which is not of man but of

God. It could be delivered as a precept, only by him who lived and died to establish it by his example." (Anonymous)

"The fine and noble way to destroy a foe, is not to kill him; with kindness you may so change him that he shall cease to be so; then

he's slain." (Alleyn)

"There never was law, or sect, or opinion did so much magnify goodness as the Christian religion doth." (Bacon)

"Goodness is love in action, love with its hand to the plow, love with the burden on its back, love following his footsteps who went about continually doing good." (J. Hamilton)

### The Golden Text

"But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." (Heb. 13:16.)

The import of the writer in this text is that Christians must remember to do good and to communicate

to the welfare of their fellow men by meeting their spiritual and physical needs. God is well pleased with such sacrifices, and he is displeased with all who fail to render the proper care for their fellow man.

# The Text Explained

# Rules Pertaining to One's Enemies (Luke 6:27-31)

"But I say unto you that hear, Love your enemies, and do good to them that hate you..."

Moses had commanded that the Israelites should love their neighbors, but in Christ's day the Jews limited the obligation to their fellow Jews; and even then, their doctrine did not square with their practice because they did not in reality love their own fellow Jews. rejected their false tions.

Here, then, Jesus urges their obligation to love all men including their enemies, even to the point of doing good to those who hated them. Love is the very foundation of the Christian faith Cod of the Christian faith. God loved men-when they were his enemies by wicked works-that he gave his only begotten son to die for them. The concept of such love is sublime and divine. Such love as is required here could only stem from the heavenly throne.

" . . . bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you."

Master continues with rejection of the Jews' false contention that their obligation to love their neighbor was limited to their fellow Jews, and he gives practical examples of the manner in which the Jews were to practice or show their love toward all men, including those who cursed them and despitefully used them. They were to bless, or invoke, divine care and protection upon those that cursed them. Further, they were to pray for them.

Such prayers would necessarily have to be made in keeping with God's will. Under no circumstances could they pray that God would forgive them in their evil and impenitent state, but they could and should pray that God would give them time and opportunity to see the error of their way and repent. Jesus prayed for those who crucified him on the Roman cross, and Stephen prayed for those stoned nim to death. The great apostle Paul was included in Stephen's prayer; for at that time, he was persecuting Christians to death, and lie had given his voice against Stephen.

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"to him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and from him that taketh away thy cloak withhold not thy coat also. Give to every one that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods

ask them not again."

The principle involved in "turning the other cheek," and in "giving thy coat also," and in "giving to those who ask"—all of which are figurative expressions—is that the Christian must do good for evil. Paul wrote: "Render to no man evil for evil." Hatred should never be repaid with hatred, or hypocrisy with hypocrisy, or violence with violence. Genuine love requires that the Christian shall always do that which will be the best for his enemy, or bring out the best that is in his enemy. (Rom. 12:17.)

The principle enjoined here does of require that a Christian shall not require that á Christian condone sin in any person, and in a fellow Christian, particularly. In fact, to condone sin, instead of correcting it, is to intensify it and to stimulate its growth. To illustrate, in another place Jesus taught: "If thy brother sin against thee, go show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church: and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as Gentile and the publican." (Matt. 18:15-17.)

### The Golden Rule

(Luke 6:31)

"And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them

likewise."

This is the Golden Rule to which attention has been given in a prior lesson. The Rule had been expressed in a negative form both by some of the pious Jews and also by certain heathen sages, including Hammurabi. The negative form was essentially, "What you do not want others to do unto you, do not unto them." The Master's statement enjoins good actions; whereas, the negative form prohibits bad or harmful actions. The priest and Levite in the parable of the Good Samaritan operated under

the negative form of the Rule. They did not harm the clubbed and wounded man in any way. The Golden Rule as set forth by the Master is the rule for this age and for all the ages to come.

# A Contrast of the Righteous with the Sinners

(Luke 6:32-34)

"And if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? for even the sinners love those that love them. And if ye do good to them that do good to you, what thank have ye? for even the sinners do the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? even sinners lend to sinners, to receive again as much."

Jesus had already stated that the righteousness of his disciples must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees; else, though disciples, they could not enter into the kingdom of God. (Matt. 5:20.) There was not, and is not, anything particularly commendable in the fact that Christians love those who love them, or in the fact that Christians do good for those who do good for them, or in the fact that Christians lend on the basis of repayment. All this the sinners do, though they live faithless and corrupt lives. The acid test of a true Christian lies in a bountiful, compassionate, and unselfish love toward even those who are evilly disposed against him.

# The Basis of Acceptance Before God (Luke 6:35)

"But love your enemies, and do them good, and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil."

The real emphasis here is that in order for a Christian to be really acceptable before God, he must love his enemies and return good for evil. This is perfect love, and without this kind of love the Christian demonstrates no more love than does the sinner. The reward for such perfect love will be a sharing in the glorious and eternal life with God.

# Other Rules for Righteous Living (Luke 6:36-38)

"Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful. And judge not, DECEMBER 19, 1976 315

and ye shall not be judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: release, and ye shall be released: give, and it shall be given you; good unto measure, pressed shaken together, down, running unto your over, shall they give bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you

On the basis of these verses, the following truths should be empha-

sized:

1. The Christian must not only be well disposed toward his enemies, but also he must be merciful toward them. If they repent, he must cheerfully forgive them.

2. The Christian must avoid all censorious and revengeful judg-

ments and condemnations.

3. The Christian may—must in fact—make distinctions and judgments between good and evil, but he must bear in mind at the same time that God is the sovereign Judge of heaven and earth.

4. The Christian must, like the heavenly Father, take thought for

and pity upon all of the people.

- 5. The Christian must be characterized by compassion, expressions of mercy, and a readiness to give to the poor, the orphans, and the widows, and for that matter to everyone—including an enemy—that may be in need.
- 6. The Christian may, on these conditions, look forward confidently to great blessings in this life and to greater blessings in the life to come.

# IN SUMMARY

In summary, the obligations that devolve upon Christians as a result of the Master's sermon on the mount, together with his living and dying example as a confirmation of the high and universal principle for mankind of ages and races, are often quite difficult to perform. For a Christian to give mental ascent to those principles when all things go well with him is one thing, but for him to practice them when he is being maligned, or de-

frauded, or violated by his enemy is quite another thing.

No more trying and exacting commandment has ever been given than the command to "love your enemies, and do good to them that hate you." This command calls for a self-examination on the part of every Christian, but the more every a Christian practices the command in the ultimate sense, the more like Christ he becomes.

# Do Not Judge Too Hard

\* \*

Pray do not find fault with the man that limps

Or stumbles along the road, unless you have worn

the shoes he wears—

Or struggled beneath his load. There may be tacks in his shoes that hurt, though

hidden from view,

Or the burdens he bears placed on your back — Might cause you to stumble too.

Don't sneer at the man who is down

Jon't sneer at the man who is down today— Unless you have felt the blow

that caused his fall, Or felt the pain that only the fallen know.

You may be strong, but still the blows that were his

If dealt to you in the selfsame way at the selfsame time—Might cause you to stagger, too.

Don't be too hard on the man who

Or pelt him with words or a stone,

unless you are sure, doubly sure, That you have not sins of your own.

For you know perhaps if the tempter's voice

Should whisper as soft to you as it did to him

when he went astray,
'Twould cause you to falter, too.

—Anonymous

The Secret of a Happy Life

The secret of a happy life Is an industrious hand. Which gladness finds in earnest work

For noble purpose planned. It leaves no time for idle fears, Thoughts morbid or depressed, 316 LESSON XIII

But cheerfully it does its part And leaves to Heaven the rest.

The secret of a happy life Is in a loving heart Whose good-will flows to all its kind. To all would joy impart.

It shares in others' weal and woe; Is not with self engrossed.

The richest and the happiest heart

Is his who loves the most.

principle is other cheek"

other

The secret of a happy life Is a believing soul Serenely trusting in the power Which animates the whole. On earnest, upright, loving lives Heaven's choicest blessings fall; The Christ of God within the soul The crowning joy of all.

-Charles Wendte

in

giving"

involved

and

"turning

# Questions for Discussion practice love for all men? What principle is

the

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

#### Introduction

To whom do these particular rules the Christian's life pertain? for

#### The Golden Text

What is the import of the writer in this text?

#### The Text Explained

What had Moses commanded in relation ow did the Jews limit their to their neighbor? to one's neighbor? ow did the l How obligation

To what point did Jesus urge the obliga-tion to "love your enemies"? What practical example did Christ give of the manner in which the Jews were to

coat also"? does genuine love require Christian in his relationship with enemies? Golden Rule enjoin voorms of the principle What does does the Gold negative forms the not? In what does Christian lie? the acid test of a What is perfect love? What is the reward for such perfect love?
What should be the Christian's toward an enemy who repents? attitude What judgments must Christians avoid? What judgments must Christians make? what should Christians characterized? what may the Christian look forward

if he follows these "rules for living"?

Lesson XIII—December 26, 1976

# A SUMMARY OF CHRISTIAN DUTY

# Lesson Text Mark 12:28-34

28 And one of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together, and knowing that he had answered them well, asked him, What commandment is the first of all?

29 Jesus answered. The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God,

the Lord is one:

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.

31 The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater

than these.

32 And the scribe said unto him. Of a truth, Teacher, thou hast well said that he is one; and there is none other but he:

33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is much more than all whole burntofferings and sacrifices.

34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

Golden Text. — "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." (John

Devotional Reading. — Mark 12:35-44.

### Daily Bible Readings

December 20. M	The Golden Rule (Luke 6:27-36)
December 21. T	
December 22. W	Example of Christ (Phil. 2:5-11)
December 23. T	Burden Bearing (Gal. 6:1-10)

TIME.-A.D. 30.

PLACE.—The Temple in Jerusalem.

Persons.—Jesus, a scribe, and the people in the Temple.

### Introduction

With this lesson entitled, "A Summary of Christian Duty," the uniform Bible lessons for the fourth quarter are brought to a close. The general theme of these lessons is entitled, "How to Deal with Social and Civic Problems," and the aim of the lessons was to awaken in the saints a deeper sense of spiritual obligation for the needs and the welfare of humanity, and especially for brethren in the faith.

Those who have studied these

lessons from Sunday to Sunday should take an inventory of themselves. Hopefully, every student will feel that he is a better Christian, a better neighbor, and a better representative of Christ than he was before he began the study. One thing is certain: No person can be a true and humble and forthright Christian who does not strive daily to put into practice the principles contained in the lessons studied.

# PERTINENT QUOTES

"The true measure of loving God is to love him without measure." (St. Bernard)

"Life is made up, not of great sacrifices or duties, but of little things, in which smiles, and kindnesses, and small obligations, given habitually, are what win and preserve the heart and secure comfort." (Sir H. Davy) "Love thyself last." (Shakespeare)

"Most actions, good or bad, may be resolved into the love of ourselves; but the self-love of some men inclines them to please others, and the self-love of others is wholly employed in pleasing themselves. This makes the great distinction between virtue and vice." (Swift)

"A man cannot touch his neighbor's heart with anything less than his own:" (Anonymous)

"What is serving God? 'Tis doing good to man."

(Anonymous)

"Love never asks how much must I do, but how much can I do." (Frederick A. Agar)

"To love the whole world For me is no chore; My only real problem's My neighbor next door."

(C. W. Vanderbergh)

"Every day remember that today you have a God to glorify; a Saviour to imitate; a soul to save; your body to mortify; virtue to acquire; heaven to seek; eternity to meditate upon; temptation to resist; the world to guard against; and perhaps death to meet." (Anonymous)

"Duty makes us do things well, but love makes us do them beautifully." (Anonymous)

"If thou neglectest thy love to thy neighbor, in vain thou professest thy love to God; for by thy love to God, the love to thy neighbor is begotten, and by the love to thy neighbor, thy love to God is nourished."

(Quarles)

"As every lord giveth a certain livery to his servants, love is the very livery of Christ. Our Saviour, who is the Lord above all lords, would have his servants known by their badge, which is love." (Bp. Latimer)

"Love is an image of God, and not a lifeless image, but the living essence of the divine nature which beams full of all goodness."

(Luther)

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### The Golden Text

"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." (John 14:15.)

These were the words of Christ as recorded by the apostle John, the disciple whom Jesus especially loved. The statement is clear and emphatic, and it really needs no explanation, except to emphasize it.

John continued to present this principle of love throughout his entire long life. In his first epistle he wrote: "This is the message which ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another." Further in the epistle, he wrote: "Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the

brethren. , . . . Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. . . . Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." (1 John 3:11; 4:7, 11.)

John also continued to emphasize the principle that if a person loves God he will keep his commandments. He wrote: "For this is the love of God, that ye keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. (1 John 5:3.)

# The Text Explained

## **Events During the Passion Week**

The day of the week was Tuesday, and the week was the passion week of the Master—the week when the greatest crime of all the ages was committed. It was, further, the most eventful week in all the annals of history. The passover was at hand.

Many people went up out of the country that year to the feast of the passover. Their going up in great numbers might have been actuated primarily by a burning desire to see and hear Jesus. They arrived early, and they inquired among themselves, "What think ye? Will he come to the feast?" Their anxiety had been intensified by the high pitch of excitement over the recent raising of Lazarus after he had been dead for four days. Bethany and Jerusalem had been filled by wonder and awe, and word of the miracle swept the countrysides like wildfire.

When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, he cleansed the temple for the second time. This stirred the bitterness of Caiaphas and Annas, and only the multitude restrained them from seizing Jesus by force and putting him to death.

Jesus taught daily in the temple during that passion week of his. The scribes and chief priests sought eagerly for an opportunity to arrest him and to put him to death, but there was no way for "all the people hung upon him, listening."

Members of the great Sanhedrin came into the temple with much

show of authority and asked: "By what authority doest thou these things?" or who gave thee this authority to do these things?" They thought that Jesus would be compelled to defend himself by publicly declaring himself to be the Messiah. To their utter chagrin, however, Jesus with amazing resourcefulness met their malignant design with the retort, "I will ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or from men?" The question was a crushing one. The rulers reasoned within themselves, saying, "If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, why then did ye not believe him? But if we say, From men—they feared the people: for all verily held John to be a prophet." In humiliation, they answered. "We know not."

On the same day the Pharisees and the Herodians sought to ensare him on the matter of paying tribute to Caesar. Jesus discerned their craftiness and the dilemma in which they sought to place him. His reply, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's", silenced them and they went away.

Presently, Jesus was approached by a Sadducean group. Their design was to confound Jesus and the defeated Pharisees, by pointing up the absurdity of the idea of the resurrection. They inquired of a woman that died having had seven husbands. "In the resurrection,"

said, "whose wife shall she they said, whose whe shall safe be?" Though they were grossly ig-norant, they did not approach Jesus with a sinister design; and he in compassion replied, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven."

# The Second Trial by the Pharisees

(Mark 12:28-34)

"And one of the scribes came, and together, heard them questioning and knowing that he had answered them well, asked him, What commandment is the first of all? Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Is-rael; The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."

This scribe or lawyer was put forward by the Pharisees in their second planned effort that day to ensnare the Master. "And scribe said unto him, Of a truth, Teacher, thou hast well said that he is one: and there is none other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is much more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. And Iesus saw that he answered creetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

And no man after that durst him any question."

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The Pharisees had made an unfortunate selection, for the lawyer declared: "Of a truth, teacher, thou hast well said that he is one; and there is none other but he." The lawyer emphasized further that "to love God with all the heart ... is much more and much better than all the whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices."

The lawyer was an earnest man, and when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." The lawyer was not prejudiced against truth, and with his fair appraisal of God's word, he was ready to enter into the way of the Master. Prejudice keeps many people of the many ple from the kingdom—from salvation in fact.

## The End of the Day

Mark records: "And no man after that durst ask him any question."
Their questions had exposed and humiliated them, and at the same time, had pointed up the great wisting the state of the same time. with which Christ spake. Silence became the better course of

Thus, the long day of controversy had ended, and Jesus stood victorious. Throughout the whole day and the entire ordeal, he had pos-sessed himself in calmness and fearless dignity. In no single instance did he blunder or speak a word which he needed to retract. At that point Jesus took the offensive, but the nature and outcome of the offensive belongs to another lesson.

### IN SUMMARY

In summary, a portion of time for this lesson should be given to a review of the lessons studied for the quarter. The review should include the consideration of the following:

A review of what is involved

in being a good neighbor.

2. A review of the Christian's obligation for helpfulness.

3. A review of the Christian's obligation to respect all men.

4. A review of the Christian's obligation to guard his speech.

5. A review of the Christian's obligation to perform his civic respon-

6. A review of the Christian's obligation to desist from fault-finding.

7. A review of the Christian's obligation to avoid hypocrisy.

8. A review of the Christian's obligation to show sympathy for the grief-stricken.

9. A review of the Christian's obligation to bear the burdens of oth-

10. A review of the Christian's obligation for maintaining respect for people of other races.

11. A review of the Christian's obligation for the meeting the needs of others.

A review of the Christian's obligation for observing the Mas-

ter's rules for living.

'Love is the greatest thing that God can give us, for himself is love; and it is the greatest thing we can give to God, for it will also give ourselves, and carry with it all that is ours. The apostle calls it the bond of perfection; it is the old, the new, and the great commandment, and all the commandments, for it is the fulfilling of the law. It does the work of all the other graces without any instrument but its own immediate virtue."

– Jeremy Taylor

### Savior, Teach Me

Savior, teach me day by day, Love's sweet lesson to obey: Sweeter lesson cannot be Loving him who first loved me.

With a childlike heart of love, At thy bidding may I move, Prompt to serve and follow thee— Loving him who first loved me.

not arrest him at this time?

What question did

did

Sanhedrin ask him?

hat three groups sought Jesus on the same day?

What was his counter question to then

Strong to follow in thy grace. Learning how to love from thee— Loving him who first loved me.

### **Ouestions for Discussion**

eventful

What

What

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

#### Introduction

What was the aim of this quarter's lessons? What must hat must a person would be a true Christian? strive do who

### The Golden Text

Discuss the present t fact that John continued this principle throughout his entire long life.

#### The Text Explained

When did the events of this lesson take

made this week the most one in history?

what probably actuated the greater number of people who went up to Jerusalem for the passover that year?
What had intensified the pitch of excitement among the people?
What did Jesus do daily this week?

Why could the scribes and chief priests

Teach me all thy steps to trace,

-Jane E. Leeson

concerning

the members

ensnare

lawver's

the

the

they question? How did the Pharisees and the Herodians hope to ensnare the Master? group? What was the design of the Sadducees whom was the scribe put forth to as his question? What was his question? What was Jesus' reply? What was the law lawyer's declaration upon hearing the Master's answer? What did Jesus say to the lawyer seeing that he answered discreetly? What did this show about the

reason

attitude? How had the Master possessed himself throughout this day?

In Summary Review the lessons for this quarter.

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