

# SOUND DOCTRINE

—A—

SERIES OF BIBLE STUDIES FOR  
SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES,  
PRAYER MEETINGS,  
PRIVATE STUDY,  
COLLEGE CLASSES,  
Etc.

—By—

C. R. NICHOL and R. L. WHITESIDE

## Vol. 1

Order from the Publisher:  
NICHOL PUBLISHING COMPANY CLIFTON, TEXAS

Copyright, 1920, By C. R. Nichol Copyright Renewed 1954

[www.GravelHillchurchofChist.com](http://www.GravelHillchurchofChist.com)

# Contents

---

The Bible.....	3
Creation.....	15
Adam And Eve: their Sin And Its Consequence.....	25
The Flood.....	35
Abaham.....	46
The Covenants.....	60
The Apostles.....	73
The Great Commission.....	85
The First Sermon.....	95
Obedience.....	108
Disobedience.....	121
Grace.....	133
The Lord's Supper.....	144

# The Bible

---

*Scripture Lesson:* Ps. 19.

*Memory Verses:* II Tim. 3:16, 17.

"*Bible*" is from the Greek word "biblos," meaning a book. Since the Bible is a revelation from Jehovah to man, it may well be called "The Book."

## **NAMES FOUND IN THE BIBLE BY WHICH IT IS CALLED**

Word of God (Heb. 4:11, 12; Eph. 6:17) The Book (Heb. 10:7), The Scriptures (Jno. 5:39; II Tim. 3: 16), Oracles of God (Rom. 3:2; Heb. 5:12; I Pet. 4: 11) Living Oracles (Acts 7:38).

## **SYMBOLIC NAMES APPLIED TO THE WORD OF GOD**

*Lamp and Light* (Ps. 119:105; Prov. 6:23). Ignorance is darkness; sin is darkness. The sinner is represented a being under the "power of darkness" (Col. 1:13), and the world could not create its own spiritual light. "We have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place" (II Pet. 1:19).

*Mirror* (II Cor. 3:18; Jas. 1:23-25). The Bible is a mirror, in that it reveals man to himself. By reading it thoughtfully and prayerfully you will see yourself just as you are with all your spiritual and moral imperfections and blemishes as plainly as you can see your natural face in a mirror.

*Fire* (Jeremiah 23:29). Fire is the greatest purifying agency known. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth" (I Pet. 1:22). Fire is also an energizing agent. When one becomes full of the word of God it is like fire within him so that he cannot hold his peace; he must speak. David said: "The fire

burned; then spake I with my tongue" (Ps. 39:3). Also Jeremiah said "And if I say, I will not make mention of him, or speak any more in his name, then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with fore-bearing, and I cannot contain" (Jer. 20:9). When we all become filled with the word of God there will be no complaint about a scarcity of preachers. A man must speak what is in his heart. When the church at Jerusalem had been scattered by bitter persecution, they went everywhere preaching the word, because they had been filled with the word by the preaching of the apostles, and were unable to hold their peace (Acts 8:4).

*Hammer* (Jer. 23:29). The heart is sometimes represented as hard and stony. Inasmuch as God's word subdues the hard and rebellious heart, it is called "a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces."

*Sword* (Eph. 6:17). Sword is a symbol of war. Christians are soldiers, and their weapon of warfare is the word of God. It is called the "sword of the spirit." This does not mean that the word is the sword which the spirit uses, any more than "armor of God" means the armor which God wears. "Armor of God" means the armor which God furnishes his soldiers to wear, and "sword of the Spirit" means the word which the Spirit furnishes. We are to take the sword as a part of our equipment. Certainly then we are to use it. It is sharper than any two-edged sword (Heb. 4:12).

*Seed* (Lk. 8:11). The heart is the soil into which the word of God, as the seed of the kingdom, is sown. As there can be no life in the natural soil till seed is planted, so there can be no spiritual life in the heart till the word of God, the seed of the kingdom, is sown.

## **DIVISIONS IN THE BIBLE**

The Bible contains sixty-six books, and is divided into two great sections, namely, the Old Testament and New Testament.

The Old Testament contains thirty-nine books.

The New Testament contains twenty-seven books.

## **CLASSIFYING BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

The books of the Old Testament may be classed as follows:

*Law.* The first five books of the Old Testament, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, are generally called law, because in them the law of Moses is found; yet much of the space is taken with a concise history of God's dealing with man, from creation to the death of Moses.

*History.* The next twelve books—Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther—are history.

*Poetry.* There are six poetical books—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah.

*Major Prophets.* Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel are major prophets.

*Minor Prophets.* The minor prophets are: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

## **CLASSIFYING BOOKS OF NEW TESTAMENT**

The books of the New Testament may be classed as follows:

*History.* The first four books—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

*History.* The fifth book—Acts of the Apostles—is history. This book contains the history of the first preaching under the Great Commission, as well as the history of the conversion of many thousands in the apostolic age.

*Special Letters.* Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians,

Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, I John, II John, and III John.

*General Letters.* Hebrews, James, I Peter, II Peter, I John, and Jude.

*Prophecy.* The book of Revelation is very largely a book of prophecy.

## **THE PENTATEUCH**

Moses wrote the first five books of the Old Testament. These books are called *The Pentateuch*, from *Penie*, five, and *teuchos*, a volume, and means the fivefold volume. These five books are referred to as the "Book of the Law of Moses" (Neh. 8:1), "The Book of the Law of Jehovah" (Neh. 9:3).

## **THE DISPENSATIONS**

The Old Testament gives the history of the Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations, while the New Testament gives the history of the Christian dispensation.

*Patriarchal Dispensation.* Patriarchal means the rule of the father. In this system of worship the father was the priest or ruler of the family or tribe. This seems to have been the only system of worship till the giving of the law of Moses. The Patriarchal dispensation covered about twenty-five hundred years. Among the Gentiles this dispensation, or system of worship, evidently continued till the inauguration of the Christian dispensation.

*The Jewish Dispensation* covered about fifteen hundred years—from the giving of the law from Mount Sinai (Ex. 20) to the death of Christ. It was the national religion of the Jews, and with them superseded the Patriarchal system.

*The Christian Dispensation* began on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ (Acts), and will continue till the end of time.

Its laws and regulations are found in the New Testament.

## **COLLECTING THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE**

The books of the Old Testament were collected by Ezra, nearly five hundred years before the birth of Christ, with the exception of Nehemiah and Malachi. These two books were written after the death of Ezra.

The books of the New Testament were collected and their names published in A. D. 397, if not before that date.

## **ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS**

So far as we know there is not in existence any of the original manuscripts; that is, manuscripts written by the hands of inspired men.

## **PRESENT MANUSCRIPTS**

The fact that we do not have the manuscripts written by the hands of the inspired men does not give ground for alarm, for there are in existence, many thousands of Hebrew and Greek manuscripts which were copied from earlier manuscripts. These are the documents now referred to as "original manuscripts." We have a Greek translation of the Old Testament, which was made from the Hebrew about one hundred years after the close of the Old Testament canon. It is known as the Septuagint. This version of the Old Testament was well known in the days of Josephus, and was used extensively in the days of the apostles.

The New Testament began to be written about A. D. 50, and was completed about A. D. 96. We have a complete copy of the New Testament which was translated into the Syriac in A. D. 373.

## **QUOTATIONS BY EARLY WRITERS**

The early church fathers, beginning immediately after the close of

the New Testament canon, wrote extensively, and were so profuse in their quotations from the original manuscripts that it is claimed the entire New Testament can be compiled from their writings. Some of them in their early life were companions of the apostles.

## TRANSLATIONS

Many translations of the Bible have been made, each with a desire to express the real thought of the inspired text. It is lamentable that so many have been unconsciously biased in their work of translating, by some theory. But none of the translations are necessarily misleading.

*The Authorized Version* was published in 1611. This translation is the one most usually found in our homes. It is sometimes called the King James Version, because it was made under the authority and patronage of King James. In many copies of the King James Version you will find the title page reads, "The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments: Translated Out of the Original Tongues: and with the Former Translation Diligently Compared and Revised by His Majesty's Special Command. Appointed to be Read in the Churches." When the work of translating was complete, the translation was dedicated "To the Most High and Mighty Prince, James, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. The Translators of the Bible Wish Grace, Mercy, and Peace Through Jesus Christ Our Lord."

The king, being head of the Church of England, authorized this translation to be read in the churches, hence it was called the "Authorized Version."

Many of the members of the Primitive Baptist Churches refuse to accept any other than the King James Translation; some of them insisting that it is an inspired translation.

*The Revised Version* was published in 1885.

*The American Standard Edition* was published in 1901.



## **CHAPTERS AND VERSES**

The division of the Bible into chapters and verses was the work of uninspired men, and it was wholly for the convenience of the student. The division into chapters was made in 1250. It was divided into verses in 1560.

## **THE BIBLE PRINTED IN ENGLISH**

The New Testament was printed in English in 1525. The entire Bible was printed in English in 1535.

## **USE OF ITALIC LETTERS IN THE BIBLE**

It is almost impossible to translate one language into another without supplying words occasionally to give the correct thought. These supplied words in the Bible, for which there is no corresponding word in the Greek text, are printed in italics.

## **MEN WHO WROTE THE BIBLE**

About forty men were engaged in writing the Bible, beginning with Moses about fifteen hundred years before Christ, and closing with the Apostle John about A. D. 96.

Some of the men who were engaged in writing the Bible were not regarded as educated men. It should be remembered, however, that they were not compelled to rely on their own.. literary attainments, training, or mental ability in making known the will of the Lord, for they "spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (I Pet. 1:21).

## **VERBAL INSPIRATION**

From the following considerations it will be seen that the Holy Spirit selected the very words which inspired men used:

On no other ground can some statements in the Bible be

explained. It is expressly stated that the apostles "began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

The Holy Spirit not only selected the idea, but gave utterance to the idea. "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth" (I Cor. 2:13). This plainly declares that the inspired men did not rely on their own wisdom to select words, but used such words as the Holy Spirit taught them.

Inspired men frequently spoke and wrote things which they themselves did not understand. "Therefore have I uttered that which I understood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not" (Job 42:3). When the Holy Spirit said through Peter, "For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off" (Acts 2:39), Peter did not fully understand what was meant. The prophets sometimes searched diligently trying to find out the meaning of their own words (I Peter 1:10, 11). It is a certain fact that one cannot select words and frame a sentence to express a thought which he does not understand.

Inspired men frequently spoke in languages which they did not understand. In such instances it was utterly impossible for them to select the words.

## **WHENCE CAME THE BIBLE**

The Bible is here. If it did not come from Jehovah, whence did it come? It is unlike the product of any human being. It points out man's defects, and pronounces maledictions on the wicked. It cannot be ascribed to Satan, for it constantly strikes at the very foundations of his kingdom.

It is the world's most wonderful library. It differs from all other books in that it gives true history. It does not fail to record the shortcomings of its heroes. It tells of Noah's drunkenness (Gen. 9), as well as his faithfulness (Heb. 11); of Abraham's faith (Rom. 4), then of his weakness and lack of courage when he represented his wife to be his sister (Gen. 20); of the meekness of Moses (Num.

12), then his presumption (Num. 20:7-12); of David's wonderful power, then his criminality; of Solomon's incomparable wisdom, then his foolishness; of Peter's boldness, then his denial of Christ.

Is not the indestructibility of the Bible proof of *its* inspiration? It began in a small country with a despised and persecuted people, but it has found its way into every corner of the earth. It is the most widely read book in existence. It is the forerunner of civilization, and the foundation of every enduring government.

Through the ages many have made attacks on the Bible. These critics have passed and are almost forgotten. Voltaire, possessed with a most wonderful brain power, predicted that in one hundred years from his day there would not be a Bible. How short-sighted was this French infidel! The very press which was used to print his infidel criticism of the Bible was afterwards used to print the word of God; the very house in which he lived was used as a wareroom and filled with copies of the Bible.

Let us encourage you to read this wonderful book. It contains counsel, condemnation or approval for man, regardless of his relationship or station in life. If you are a rebel against Jehovah, you will find warnings, admonitions, entreaties; forgiveness is within your reach. If you are a Christian, work is outlined by which you can enrich your life, bless humanity, and have fellowship with the Infinite.

The Bible makes known to man his sins, reveals God's love, and shows the way to life and happiness.

You should form your life, shape your character and seal your destiny in keeping with the teaching of the Bible.

Would you like to live in a country where they do not believe the Bible? If no, why? If yes, why?

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- Find out all you can about various translations.
- Who divided the Bible into chapters and verses?
- What is the meaning of "Testament?"
- What use should we make of the Bible?
- Do you think the Bible should be taught in the public schools?

## QUESTIONS

1. Repeat the Memory Verses.
2. From what does the word Bible come?
3. What does the word Bible mean?
4. Is the name "Bible" found in inspired writings?
5. Give five names for the inspired writings?
6. What does symbolic mean?
7. Why is the Bible called a lamp? Light? Mirror? Fire? Hammer? Sword? Seed?
8. How many books in the Bible?
9. Give from memory the names of the books of the Bible.
10. Give the classification of the books of the Old Testament.
11. Give the classification of the books of the New Testament
12. By what names are the first five books of the Old Testament called?
13. What does this word mean?
14. How many dispensations have there been?
15. Give the characteristics and names of each dispensation.
16. What does patriarchal mean?
17. Give length of patriarchal dispensation. When did it begin and end?
18. Give length of Jewish dispensation. When did it begin and end?
19. When and where did the Christian dispensation begin?
20. How did the Gentile approach Jehovah in the Jewish dispensation.
21. By whom, and when were the books of the Old Testament collected?
22. About when were the books of the New Testament

- collected?
23. Before printing was invented, how were copies of the Bible made?
  24. What were these early copies called?
  25. What is the Septuagint? When was it made?
  26. About when was the first book of the New Testament written?
  27. About when was the last book of the New Testament written?
  28. When was the New Testament translated into the Syriac?
  29. When was the last book of the Old Testament written?
  30. What is said about the number of quotations made from the New Testament by the early fathers?
  31. When was the New Testament first printed in English?
  32. When was the entire Bible first printed in English?
  33. When was the Authorized Version published?
  34. What is meant by "Authorized Version?"
  35. When was the Revised Version published?
  36. When was the American Standard Version published?
  37. When was the Bible divided into chapters and verses?
  38. Why are some of the words in the Bible printed in italic letters?
  39. About how many men engaged in writing the Bible?
  40. About how many years between the first and the last writing?
  41. Did inspired men rely upon their own ability or attainments in writing or speaking?
  42. Give three arguments on the verbal inspiration of the Bible?
  43. Can you give additional arguments to support the verbal inspiration of the Bible?
  44. How do the Bible writers differ from other writers in recording the history of men? Give in detail some examples.
  45. Tell something about the enemies of the Bible.
  46. Tell something of the influence of the Bible?
  47. Personally, what do you think of the Bible?
  48. What is the Bible to you?
  49. What use do you make of the Bible?

50. How many chapters of the Bible have you read in the past week?
51. How do the heavens declare the glory of God?
52. How did David regard God's word? (Ps. 19:7-11).
53. Repeat his prayer. (Ps. 19:14).
54. Read your favorite verse of the Bible.

# Creation

---

*Lesson Text:* Genesis, first and second chapters.

*Memory Verses:* Genesis 1:1-3; John 1:1-3.

*Additional Reading Lesson:* Ps. 19:1-6; Jno. 1:1-5; 10; Acts 14:15; 17:24-26.

"*Genesis*," the name of the first book in the Bible, means origin, beginning. It is pre-eminently the book of beginnings. In it we find the record of the beginning of the heavens and the earth, of all plant and animal life, of man and the family, of sin and death of reward and punishment, sacrifice, language, human government, and the Hebrew race.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

V. 1. "*In the beginning \* \* \* God*"— (Jno. 1:1-3; Heb. 1:10). Before the world was, ere the heavens were created, God, self-existent, eternal, reigned. Who knows the motives which impelled him to create the heaven and earth? It is enough to know that he did, and to remember that his ways are past tracing out. (Rom. 11:13). How far back in the remote ages of the past the heavens and earth were created, no one knows. (Acts 14:15;17:24). The language of this verse is sublime in its simplicity. None but the divine could have expressed such an overwhelming fact in such simple language.

V. 2. "*And the earth was waste and void*," The earth was at this time in a chaotic condition, a formless mass, perhaps continually changing, with no fixed or definite shape. This seems to have antedated the six days of creation mentioned in the following verses. How long this condition of things continued before the six days of creation began, no one knows.

## **THE FIRST DAY**

*Vs. 3-5. "And, God said."* He spoke and it was done. Hitherto the earth had been enveloped in darkness. But God commanded, "and there was light." Light was divided from darkness; each had its own definite and distinct existence. Then, as now, when distinguished one from the other, the light was called day, and the darkness was called night.

## **SECOND DAY**

*Vs. 6-8.* The water had no fixed or certain bounds. The earth must have been enveloped in a thick vapor. God made the firmament, the open air, vaulted by the skies above. In all this the divine writer used words pretty much as we use them today. The waters above were gathered together into clouds, and were thus divided from the waters on the earth. The intervening space was called the firmament.

## **THIRD DAY**

*Vs. 9-13.* The waters on the earth were gathered into certain bodies, or fixed places, that the dry land might appear. Vegetation was then created; trees also were made to grow; and all vegetation by its own seed was to reproduce after its own kind. This was the spring time of God's creation.

## **FOURTH DAY**

*Vs. 14-19.* "The sun, moon, and stars had been created in the beginning, so that this statement cannot refer to their creation, but to their appointment, by becoming visible to their mission to the earth. It is implied that whatever life was upon the earth before this time, existed before the sun was visible through the thick clouds, the waters above the firmament."—Peloubet.

## **FIFTH DAY**

*Vs. 20-23.* This day marks the creation of animal life. All water



inhabitants and fowls were created on this day. The events of this day, as, in fact, the events of all preceding days, prepared the way for the next day's creation.

## **SIXTH DAY**

Vs. 24-27. On this day all land animals and creeping things were created. The last to be created was man, "God's noblest work," "creation's masterpiece," "the lord of all the rest of creation, but also dependent on all that went before." Under Jehovah man was given dominion over all the lower animals, earth, trees, plants, etc. God commanded man to multiply and replenish the earth.

## **SEVENTH DAY**

*Gen. 2:1-8.* Jehovah rested. The thought that Jehovah was weary, rested because of fatigue, must not be entertained. He is never weary (Isaiah 40:28). Finite as we are, it is not possible for us to fully comprehend the infinite. Jehovah can be known to us only so far as we are able to conceive the infinite. We speak of him in terms very largely describing the finite— or in human imagery. He does not possess hands, eyes, etc., as human beings. We speak of him having breathed the breath of life into the nostrils of Adam (*Gen. 2:7*), but surely no one thinks this as describing a literal act. Because the work of creation was finished, to the human conception he appears to have rested, and the term is made use of. He rested in the sense that he ceased from the work of creation.

## **THE SECOND ACCOUNT OF CREATION**

*Gen. 2:4-25.* In the first chapter of Genesis we have a general account of the creation of all things. In the second chapter attention is directed more specifically to the beginning of the history of man. To give a correct history of man, the writer must of necessity revert to the beginning of man's existence. Hence we have the second account of the creation of man, in which naturally more of the details and circumstances of his creation are given, both of the male and female.

## **THE GARDEN**

Jehovah made a garden eastward in Eden, and caused to grow therein "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. 2:9). In this garden Jehovah placed this newly formed couple "to dress it and to keep it," and to enjoy its beauty and fruits. Of one tree only they might not eat—the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." The penalty for violating this regulation was death (Rom. 6:23; I Cor. 15:56).

## **EVE**

It was the sixth day of the creative period, the dew of earth's early morning was still sparkling. Sin had not entered the world. Adam with dominion over the earth was ill at ease. There was not amongst all created things a companion or help meet for him—a helper suited for his needs. Jehovah created woman to be his helper (Gen. 2:18-24). Adam called the name of the woman Eve (Gen. 3:20). Jehovah called the name of the woman Adam (Gen. 5:2). She was the wife of the man (Gen. 3:8).

## **MONOGAMY**

Jehovah made for man but one wife. Monogamy is the divine order. Polygamy is of man and sinful (Matt. 19:3-5).

## **SACREDNESS OF MARRIAGE**

Marriage is for the happiness of human beings, the good of society and the perpetuity of the race. From the beginning it has been sacred—it is of Jehovah.

**Man is to "leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife and the two shall become one flesh" (Eph. 5:31).**

## **WOMAN A HELP MEET FOR MAN**

As Adam needed a helper, and Jehovah made for him woman, so man today needs a helper. Woman should not think that she fills her mission when she spends her time in idleness. Work is the heritage of woman, as it is of man. The useful life is the honored life. If the wife is not a help meet for her husband, she falls short of her duty. The wife who meets the demands of Jehovah, "looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." (Prov. 31:27).

It is a mistake to think that a woman must be an idler to be a lady. Satan finds employment for idle hands—and it is as true of the woman as of the man.

## **REPLENISH**

God's command to "replenish the earth" has been a source of trouble to some Bible readers, because of the fact that we have been taught that "re" means "a-gain." This is generally true, but it has no such significance in "replenish" any more than it does in receive, rejoice, realize, rebuff, receipt, or repeal. "Replenish" simply means to fill. The command is, multiply and fill the earth. Disobedience to this command is one of the grievous sins of today.

## **THE GODHEAD**

Godhead is a scriptural term (Acts 17:29), and is applied to the divine personages, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three existed before the world was, and each performed a definite work in the creation of all things, as they did in the redemption of man.

Certain expressions in Genesis, the first chapter, sometimes considered hard to understand, become plain in the light of this fact, as will be seen as we proceed.

## **THE FATHER**

God the Father is the great Architect, the Designer of all things. He it was who laid the plans. He spoke, or commanded, and it was done. "Let us," said he, "make man," and the order was carried out. This does not mean that he spoke things into existence, but, rather, that he commanded and the active agent in creation executed the orders. The active agent was the Son.

## **THE SON**

The Son. He was the executor of the Father's will. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him and without him was not anything made that hath been made" (Jno. 1:1-3). "He was in the world, and the world was made through him" (Jno. 1:10). That the Son of God made all things is here plainly declared and the expression, "the worlds were made through him," clearly shows that he was the agent through whom another operated. The same truth is set forth in the following: "For in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things have been created through him, and unto him and he is before all things, and in him all things consist" (Col. 1:16, 17). In Hebrews 1:1, 2, it is declared that God made the world through the Son.

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

3. The Holy Spirit organized, or adapted things to their use. He is the finisher, the beautifier. He brought order out of chaos. In Genesis 1:2 it is declared that "the earth was waste and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The marginal rendering in the American Standard Version says, "The Spirit of God was brooding upon the face of the waters." This is a significant expression. Job declared, "By his Spirit the heavens are garnished" (Job 26:13); and David sings, "Thou sendest forth thy

Spirit, they are created; And thou renewest the face of the ground." (Ps. 104:30).

## **NATURE OF MAN**

God formed the body of man of the dust of the earth. Our bodies and the bodies of animals this day are composed of the dust of the ground, as really as was the body of the first man. They "consist of the very same elements as the soil which forms the crust of the earth." As to matter, there is no difference between man's body and the bodies of animals. And yet there is a vast difference between man and animal. No argument is needed to prove this. Why this difference, and wherein does it consist? Words are used in describing the creation of man that are not used with reference to the creation of animals. Into the body formed of the dust of the ground, God breathed the breath of life (Acts 17:25), and "Adam became a living soul" (I Cor. 15:45). This means more than the inbreathing of animal life. No such expression is used in reference to the creation of animals. Man was given the pre-eminence over the animals (Gen. 1:26). The "likeness and image of God" cannot refer to man's physical form, for we are unable to understand how a physical body can be like spirit. God is spirit. In his physical body man is very like the animal; in spirit, intellect, emotion, power of will, he is very like God (Acts 17:28; I Cor. 11:7; Col. 3:10). (For a full discussion of the nature of man read: Moore-Noble debate; What is Man, by Skaggs). (Nichol- Bradley debate—\$3.00).

## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

- Man's Relation to the Divine and the Animal.
- Man's Independence and Dependence.
- Man's Freedom of Will.
- The Marriage Relation. The Family.
- Labor Not a Curse, but a Means of Blessing Self and Others.

## BLACKBOARD EXERCISE

- *Seventh Day.* God rested.
- *Sixth Day.* Man, Land Animals.
- *Fifth Day.* Water Animals, Fowls.
- *Fourth Day.* Sun and Lights Set to Rule.
- *Third Day.* Vegetation, Land Appeared, Lakes Formed.
- *Second Day.* Firmament, Dividing the Waters.
- *First Day.* Light, Separation of Light from Darkness, Day and Night.

The order of creation was natural. The work of each day prepared for the events of the next. Note that light was created and dry land made to appear before vegetation was created. Animal life is dependent on vegetable life; hence vegetation before animals. As man was to have dominion over all earthly things, and yet be dependent on all these things, they were created and made ready before man was created.

## QUESTIONS

1. Repeat the memory verses.
2. What does the word "Genesis" mean?
3. Is it a suitable name for the first book in the Bible? Why?
4. Name some of the beginnings mentioned in Genesis.
5. What can you say of the nature and existence of God?
6. How did the heavens and earth come into existence?
7. What was the first condition of the earth?
8. What is meant by "waste and void?"
9. How long was the earth in this condition?
10. Describe the first day's work of creation.
11. Describe the second day's work of creation.
12. What is meant by firmament?
13. What is meant by "waters above the firmament?"
14. Name the things created on the third day.
15. What law of reproduction was established?
16. Is that true today?
17. Name the events of the fourth day.

18. What was created on the fifth day?
19. Does the same law of reproduction hold good in the animal kingdom as in the vegetable?
20. What was created first on the sixth day?
21. What is meant by "creeping things"?
22. What was the crowning work of creation?
23. What does dominion mean?
24. How great was man's dominion?
25. Who had dominion over man?
26. What command did God give man?
27. What did God do on the seventh day?
28. What is meant by "God rested"?
29. What is said in Isa. 40:28 about God resting?
30. Account for two records of creation.
31. In what country was the garden of Eden?
32. What employment was given Adam and Eve?
33. What grew in the garden?
34. What fruit were Adam and Eve commanded not to eat?
35. Why was the woman created?
36. What did Adam call her?
37. What did God call her?
38. What can you say of monogamy, and polygamy?
39. Is "help meet" one word or two?
40. What does "meet" mean?
41. What does the word signify as to woman's relation to man?
42. What of idlers?
43. Give in order the work of creation.
44. What of the naturalness of the order of creation?
45. What is the meaning of replenish?
46. To whom does the word "Godhead" apply?
47. Name the persons in the Godhead.
48. Did each one have a part in the work of creation?
49. What was the work of God the Father?
50. What evidence can you give for your answer?
51. What was the work of the Son, the Word?
52. Give the evidence.
53. What was the work of the Holy Spirit in creation?
54. Give the evidence.
55. What can you say of the body of man and body of

animals?

56. What difference is there between man and animal?

57. What is meant by "the likeness and image of God?"



# Adam And Eve: their Sin And Its Consequence

---

*Lesson Text:* Genesis 3.

*Memory Verses:* Gen. 2:16, 17; I Cor. 15:21, 22.

The garden into which God put the newly-formed couple did not cover all the land of Eden. Eden was a district, and God planted a garden eastward in Eden. In this Eden-home man was innocent and care-free. The most perfect and sweetest companionship, untainted by sin, misunderstanding, or sorrows, was the happy portion of earth's first couple—no weariness, no fatigue, no toil, no heart-aches, no sorrow. They worked, yes; but work brought no fatigue, for they could eat of the tree of life which perpetuated the freshness of youth in undiminished vigor. O blessed family of God's first paradise, how hast thou sinned against thyself, and, in sinning against thyself, how hast thou sinned against us thy helpless offspring!

## **COMMENT ON THE LESSON THE TEMPTER**

V. 1. The tempter is described by Peter (1 Pet. 5:8) as, "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." He is referred to as "the evil one" (Matt. 6:13), "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2), "the prince of this world" (Jno. 12:31), "the tempter" (I These. 3:5), "murderer" (Jno. 8:44), "the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan" (Rev. 20:2).

In our lesson he appeared to Eve in the form of a serpent. Here he is described as being more "subtle" than any beast of the field which God had made. "Subtle" is sly, cunning, crafty. Of course, any Bible student recognizes the fact that we have recorded in Genesis 3 only an outline of the incidents and sayings of this momentous occasion.

## THE TEMPTATION AND SIN

Vs. 1-3. By his cunning craftiness the tempter was able to throw Eve entirely off her guard, and thus to approach her in the most seductive and captivating way. How much time he spent in indulging in flattery and pleasing speech, so as to gain the confidence of Eve before finally tempting her, we have no means of knowing. When Satan asked Eve if God had prohibited their eating any fruit of the garden, he perhaps meant to insinuate that such prohibition was a reflection on them: any way, Eve's pride, if any had been stirred up, would be wounded by her being forced to acknowledge that God, despite his liberality, had restricted their freedom. The woman acknowledge that they were restricted only at one point; they might not eat of the fruit of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." The penalty for this act was death. Here the devil took square issue with Jehovah and boldly affirmed that Jehovah knew the consequences would be the reverse, that eating the fruit in question would make them as God, "knowing good and evil."

That the devil here told the truth, in part, is attested by the fact that God later said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil" (v. 22). But the devil deceived her in that she did not know, and he failed to inform her, that the legal consequences of an act may be the very opposite of the natural consequences. If the legal consequences had not been inflicted the result would have been that they came to know "good and evil," and the devil deceived her by making her believe that this would be the only consequence.

When the serpent said to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil," he uttered a most deadly lie; for his statement contained enough truth to make it overwhelmingly deceptive. In his assertion he charged God with untruthfulness; and, in saying that the fruit would make them as God, he virtually charged that God was holding them in ignorance through selfishness, envy, and jealousy. This would tend to stir up a spirit in Eve that would prepare her for the final

act. In addition to this, she saw that the tree was good for food, that it was a delight to the eyes, and that it was to be desired to make one wise. Everything about this fruit commended it to Eve as a very desirable thing. The only restraining influence was her respect for God's command, and fear of the consequences of disobedience; and Satan had almost, if not altogether, removed these. Hence, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat. Eve was deceived; Adam was not deceived (I Tim. 2:14). Shame and fear seized them, and they sewed fig leaves together for aprons, and hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah. Sin not only produces separation from God, but it creates a desire for that separation.

## **JEHOVAH APPEARS AND PRONOUNCES CURSES UPON THEM**

*Vs. 9-21.* When God questioned Adam and Eve each sought to minimize his guilt by blaming others for getting him into the transgression. Neither denied the act, but sought to shift at least a part of the blame on others. How like their offspring today. Our confessions of wrongs are usually only half-way confessions. "I did wrong, but"— and some excuse is given. How few can humbly hang their heads in shame and contrition and say as did David, "I have sinned greatly, in that I have done this thing: but now put away, I beseech thee, the iniquity of thy servant for I have done very foolishly" (I Chron. 21:8).

*Curse on the Serpent.* The serpent was condemned to go upon his belly always, and to eat the dust of the ground; and God put an undying enmity between him and the woman, and between his seed and her seed.

*The Curse on Eve.* Unto the woman he said: "I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule thee."

*The Curse on Adam.* For the man the earth was cursed so that,

amidst the thorns and other noxious growths, the earth, yields her fruit only by the severest toil and labor. Work was not now required of man as a curse, for before his sin his duty was to "dress the garden and keep it." Then he might eat the refreshing, invigorating fruit of the life-perpetuating tree, insuring the vigor of his body. But now, under adverse circumstances and against the evils of noxious growths, he must toil for his daily food. Weariness is only the result of the death and destruction of the cells of the body. Now he has no life-giving fruit to prevent this death; hence weariness must accompany work.

## **DRIVEN FROM THE GARDEN**

*Vs. 22-24.* The expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden was one of the direct results of their sin. They must be driven out, away from the tree of life, lest by continuing to eat of its life-perpetuating fruit they might live forever in sin.

## **DEATH A NECESSITY**

Death became necessary because of sin. With no restraining influence to hold them in check sinners grow worse and worse as long as they retain their vigor of manhood and womanhood. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." Not only so, but they grow wiser and more skillful in their crimes and diabolical deeds. Think what the world might have been today if all the evil men of all past ages had lived till now, becoming more and more depraved and all the while growing wiser and more cunning in their efforts to satisfy their growing thirst for sin. Think what death has done for the world in arresting the career of such men; hence, death which came as a result of sin is also a powerful check on sin. While it is true that sin brought death, it is also true that death brings an end to the active career of the sinner.

## **PENALTY FOR SIN**

Adam's sin—his disrespect and disregard for God— brought on him the penalty of the infracted law— death. How long Adam and Eve were in the Garden before they sinned we do not know. In the

garden they had access to the tree whose fruit perpetuated life. They were as mortal before as subsequent to their sin in the garden. It is a mistaken idea that eating the fruit planted the seeds of mortality in their bodies. There is no reason to believe that the nature of their bodies was changed in the least degree. Their sin resulted in their being cast out of the garden, away from the fruit which perpetuated natural life, and death followed as a natural consequence.

*What kind of death.* "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17). Death was the penalty for sin. "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin" (Rom. 5:12). In the Bible we read of the death of the body (Jas. 1:26), and of death in sin (Eph. 2:1). What death did Adam experience the day he sinned?

It should be remembered that existence does not necessarily mean life. Rocks and minerals exist, but they do not live. Even the spirit of the sinner exists while he is dead in sin. The devil lives, but he does not have what is termed in the Bible spiritual life. Man is dead to that with which he is not in union, to that with which he is not in correspondence. Adam's sin separated him from God (Isa. 59:2). He thereby became dead to God, dead in sin. Is this the only result?

*Death passed on all.* Paul declares (Romans 5:12) that, as a result of Adam's sin, death passed on all. Again, "In Adam all die" (I Cor. 15:22). This cannot have reference to death in sin, or spiritual death for the infant which does not sin, and cannot sin, dies. Christ died, and he did not sin. The death which passed on all as a result of Adam's sin can be naught but physical death. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (Cor. 15:21). Physical death comes to us unconditionally on our part; resurrection will come to us without conditions on our part. Hence, what we lost unconditionally in Adam, we regain unconditionally in Christ. In I Cor. 15 Paul is discussing physical death, and the resurrection from that death.

In Adam all die, that is, as a consequence of the sin of Adam all

die. We are not guilty of Adam's sin, but we do suffer the consequences of his sin. The guilt of sin attaches only to him who commits sin, but the consequences may be transmitted to remote generations. Children often suffer the consequences of the fathers' sin without in any way having shared in his guilt. But does not Paul say, "All sinned"? Certainly; but in what sense? Levi is said to have paid tithes before he was born. At the time the tithes were paid, Levi existed only in the sense that he was in the loins of Abraham, who paid the tithes (Gen. 14:18-20; Heb. 7:9-10). Hence Levi paid tithes representatively; so we sinned only by representation. The whole human family existed in Adam in the same sense that Levi existed in Abraham.

### **SOME IMMEDIATE RESULTS OF SIN**

- Fear of Jehovah (Gen. 3:10).
- Shame (Gen. 3:7).
- Moral deterioration. This is seen in Adam's case—
- When God inquired, "Where art thou?" Adam lied as to why he had hidden.
- Folly in trying to hide from Jehovah.
- Coward; blamed his wife.

### **BLIGHT OF SIN**

Sin has been a blight in the world. View the brokenhearted husband as he follows the corpse of his wife to the grave; the mother as she touches her lips to the cold brow of her babe in the embrace of death, or hear her wail as she sees her son marched off to prison; see the pain, sickness, heartaches, tears and sorrows of earth, and know that they are the result of sin. Behold the rose as she breathes her sweet perfume; reach forth your hand to pluck the flower and feel the prick of the thorn, and know that briars and thorns are the result of sin.

Some men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. Most sins are committed in the night, and in covert and secret places. Germs and vermin of all kinds thrive in the darkness—

they can not live in the sunlight. Neither can sin abide in your heart if you allow God's word to illuminate it. Why v/ill men cleave to a life of sin when such fatal results always follow?

## **BREAKING THE LAW**

"Sin is the transgression of the law," or, "Sin is lawlessness" (I Jno. 3:4). Frequently it is said that sin is breaking the law. This is but an accommodated expression. Man cannot really break the law; he breaks himself against the law. This, is the truth both as to God's natural laws and those revealed in the Bible. The man with a wrecked body did not break the law of nature; he broke himself against the law. The law stands unbroken.

## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

- Freedom of Will.
- The Origin and Character of Satan.
- The difference between the Natural and the Legal
- Consequences of an Act.
- The Enormity of Sin as seen in—
- What it does for us.
- What it cost to Redeem us from Sin.
- The Punishment due on Account of Sin.

## **BLACKBOARD EXERCISE**

*Sources of Temptations (I John 2:16)*

- Lust of the flesh.
- Lust of the eye
- Pride of life.

*Adam and Eve's Case (Genesis 3:6)*

- Good for food.
- Pleasant to the eye.
- Make one wise.

*The Case of Christ (Matthew 4:2-11)*

- Stones to bread—lust of the eye
- Kingdoms—lust of the flesh
- Temple—pride of life.

Temptations may be classed as, "lust of the flesh," "lust of the eye," and "pride of life." Satan was successful in the garden when he tempted Eve. From that day till the time of Christ you will find Satan with a high hand and full assurance boasting of his ability to seduce man. Every man has gone down before him, many to rise no more. It must have been with much confidence that he approached Christ. His method of attack was the same as in the garden.

Christ had fasted forty days, and was hungry. Satan appealed to his appetite—"Make bread of these stones."

He showed Christ the kingdoms of the world and their glory. "All these will I gave thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." What a glittering array of splendor and glory passed before the eyes of Christ!

He placed Christ on the temple, and challenged him to cast himself down, quoting God's promise of protection. Such a feat would dazzle the people and gain for himself great renown—an appeal of pride.

Have you learned the lesson of how Jesus successfully withstood and defeated Satan? In each instance Jesus replied, "It is written." Be it remembered that the word of God is the sword of the Spirit. You can in every temptation defeat Satan if you will use the "sword" on him. The importance of familiarizing yourself with the word of God that you may be prepared to successfully use it in defeating Satan must be apparent to all.



## QUESTIONS

1. Repeat the memory verses.
2. Where is the land of Eden?
3. Where was the garden in which Adam was placed?
4. What can you say of the character of Adam and Eve in the garden?
5. Give some of the names by which the tempter is called.
6. In what form did he appear to Eve?
7. What is the meaning of "subtle"?
8. Describe the freedom of Adam and Eve and the restrictions thrown around them.
9. What was the penalty for disobedience?
10. Give your idea as to the manner of Satan's approach to Eve.
11. Was there any truth in what Satan said as to the results of eating the fruit? If so, how much?
12. Did he lie? If so, wherein?
13. Did his statement have a tendency to create in Eve an unfavorable opinion of God? If so, wherein?
14. Are the natural consequences and the legal consequences of an act always the same? Can you give illustrations wherein they differ?
15. What were the natural consequences of eating the "Tree of knowledge of good and evil?"
16. Give the legal consequence.
17. In what sense did they know good and evil after eating the fruit that they did of know before?
18. What is the worst and most deceptive kind of lies?
19. How did the fruit of the tree appeal to Eve?
20. What influence should have restrained her?
21. Was Adam present when Eve was being tempted?
22. Was Adam deceived?
23. Why did Adam eat the fruit?
24. After eating the fruit what did Adam and Eve do?
25. What questions did God first ask them after they sinned?
26. What was Adam's reply?
27. What excuse did Adam give for his sin?
28. What excuse did Eve offer?

29. Tell about the curse put upon the serpent.
30. What curse was pronounced on Eve?
31. What curse was pronounced on Adam?
32. Did Adam and Eve have to work before they sinned?
33. What, then, is there about work that is a curse?
34. Why did God send them out of the garden?
35. What did He place at the entrance to prevent their return?
36. What is the meaning of Cherubim?
37. Why was death necessary?
38. Is death in any sense a blessing?
39. What was the penalty for sin?
40. Were they mortal before they sinned?
41. Why was the tree of life necessary in the garden?
42. What death did Adam die the day he sinned?
43. What is the difference between life and existence?
44. Does the devil have spiritual life?
45. What death do all die in Adam?
46. Describe and illustrate the difference between the guilt and consequence of sin.
47. How did Levi pay tithes to Melchizedek?
48. Give some of the immediate results of sin.
49. Name some of the blighting results and influence of sin.
50. Does a sinner really break the law?
51. Explain I Jno. 2:16.
52. Show how the lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and pride of life were factors in Eve's temptation.
53. Show the same with reference to Christ's temptation.
54. How did Christ meet these temptations?
55. Why did not Eye use the same weapon?
56. What preparation is necessary that we may successfully meet temptation?

# The Flood

---

*Lesson Text:* Genesis 6th, 7th and 8th chapters.

*Memory Verses:* Genesis 6:9; Matt. 24:37-39.

## **LEADING UP TO THE LESSON**

Cain and Abel were the first children born to Adam and Eve, so far as the record indicates. Abel was a herdsman, Cain was a farmer. Both brought offerings to the Lord—Abel brought the firstlings of his flock; Cain, the first fruits of the ground. God accepted Abel's offering, but rejected Cain's. This seems to have embittered Cain, and he slew his brother. Cain, having now become a sinner in a double sense, "went out from the presence of Jehovah." In the land of Nod, he became the progenitor of a numerous posterity. Some of Cain's descendants made considerable progress; Jabel invented musical instruments, and Tubal- Cain made cutting instruments of all sorts. Polygamy also originated with Cain's descendants. See Genesis 4:19-22. Lamech, the first polygamist, was also a murderer. Seth, another son born, to Adam and Eve, is counted in the line of the patriarchs (Gen. 5). Among his descendants, down to Noah, only Enoch is worthy of special mention. He "walked with God: and he was not, for God took him." "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him: for he hath had witness borne to him that before his translation he had been well-pleasing unto God" (Heb. 11:5). Being a prophet he warned the people of God's wrath against all the ungodly and sinners (Jude 14, 15).

## **THE CAUSE OF THE FLOOD**

Man, had progressed in wisdom rather than in righteousness. They were flesh (Gen. 6:3); or, according to the marginal reading in the American Standard Version, "In their going stray they are flesh." Corruption had been added to corruption, and sin piled up on sin,

till "Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). "And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence" (verse 11). There was no thought of good in their hearts. Jesus says they were eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage till the flood took them away. Selfish indulgence, wicked scheming and plotting, corrupt practices, red-handed violence, made up the sum-total of their lives. No greater depravity could be reached. The cup of their iniquity was full—all possibility of reformation was gone. Hence, God determined to destroy them; yet he gave them.

## **ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS OF RESPITE**

Some have thought that Noah was engaged 120 years in building the ark; this is a mistake, as the following dates will show; Noah was 500 years old at the birth of his oldest son (Gen. 5:32; 7:6; 11:10). He was 600 years old at the flood (Gen. 7:6). His oldest son was therefore only 100 years old at the flood. But his three sons were all married when God commanded him to build the ark (Gen. 6:13-18). The 120 years mentioned was the period of respite which God gave the people when he informed Noah that his Spirit would not always strive with them.

## **NOAH AND HIS FAMILY**

To Noah and his wife were born three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. These sons had wives. Only the family of Noah were righteous, and only they found favor in the eyes of Jehovah. Of Noah it is said, "Noah was a righteous man, and perfect (marginal reading, blameless) in his generation; Noah walked with God" (Gen. 6:9). "Righteous," or just, signifies that he treated his fellow-man right. "Blameless" indicates that he had no bad habits. "Walked with God" indicates his confidence and trust in God, and his reverence and piety towards him. Thus he "found favor in the eyes of Jehovah." Lamech, Noah's father, had prophesied concerning him, saying, "This same shall comfort us in our work and in the toil of our hands, which cometh because of the ground which Jehovah hath cursed" (Gen. 5:29). Noah was a preacher of

righteousness (II Pet. 2:5). Through him as God's inspired spokesman the Spirit was striving with the people. For more than a century Noah preached with no results outside his own family. To a less heroic spirit that would have been unbearably discouraging. The people gave no heed, did not even believe a flood would come, and knew not of their doom till destruction was upon them (Matt. 24:39). But when safe in the ark, it must have been a comforting thought to Noah to realize that he had saved his own.

## **THE ARK**

The exact dimensions of the ark were given. God was the architect; Noah was the builder. The student should notice every specification mentioned in Gen. 6:14-16. Every specification was literally carried out, not an item was omitted or changed. "According to all that God commanded him, so he did."

"The ark, which was divided into three stories, was 300 cubits long, 50 cubits broad, and 30 cubits high (or, allowing 21 inches for a cubit, as Professor Perowne does in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," 525 feet long, 87 feet wide, and 52 feet high . . .). Tiele, in his commentary on, Genesis, has calculated that the cubic contents were 3,600,000 feet. ... In 1609 the Mennonite P. Jansen, of Horn, in Holland, built a vessel after the model of the ark, and discovered that it would hold a third more freight than ships built in the usual way with the same number of cubic feet. The ark was not built for sailing but for carrying freight."—Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge,

## **THE INMATES OF THE ARK**

Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives, by the invitation of Jehovah, were to enter the ark. Two of every sort of animals, birds, and creeping things—all in whose nostrils was the breath of life— male and female were brought into the ark. As to clean beasts there was this exception: seven, pairs of all clean animals were to be taken into the Ark. Clean animals were those which might be used for food and which might be offered in sacrifice.

For the distinctions made in the law of Moses concerning clean and unclean animals see Lev. 11; Deut. 14:3-20.

## **THE FLOOD**

Skeptics deny the fact of the flood, and claim it is only a tradition. They tell us that all nations have a tradition of a great deluge. But the universality of the tradition of a flood rather proves that there must have been a fact out of which these traditions grew; otherwise, how do you account for the fact that all nations believe it occurred? Who in, the remote past could have invented such a story and given it such wide circulation? What nations in the remote past with such limited communication with each other, and with much fighting and enmity between each other, would have accepted such a story invented by one of another nation? Why should any one feel that the story of the flood as recorded in the Bible is incredible? Even scientists bear witness that the greater part of the earth at some former time has been under water.

"An important confirmation of the Biblical record is furnished in, the traditions of other nations. The most interesting of these accounts was found by George Smith, among the Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions of the British Museum, which is much more full than the account of Berosus, and betrays a striking coincidence with the record of Genesis. Fragments of three copies of this original account, dating from 660 B. C., are also preserved. They belonged to the library of King Asurbanipal. The ancient Chaldean inscription of Smith is assigned by this scholar to the seventeenth century B. C. Sisit (Hasisadra), an old Chaldean king, takes the place of Xisuthros of Berosus and the Noah of Genesis. He describes the godlessness of the world, the divine command to build the ark, its construction, the flood, the resting of the ark upon a mountain, the dispatch of the birds, including the raven, etc. In these points the Chaldean accounts agrees with the record of Genesis. But there are certain differences which are very suggestive. Like the other accounts, the Chaldean ascribes the scene to a locality connected with its own special habitation, and brings it into close relation with its national origin. The Biblical account is in these respects more general, but, on the other hand,

alone gives the indications of time, month, day, and year when it began, when it ended, etc.; and these marks of time stand in no relation whatever to the feasts of the Jews. In these omissions and additions we have a strong pledge of the accuracy of the historian."—Schaff-Herzog.

What brought such an, overwhelming of the waters? Torrential rains fell for a period of forty days and nights—"the windows of heaven were opened," says the writer. Of course this is a figurative expression, used to indicate the excessive downpour, just as we speak of a "cloudburst." In addition to this, "the fountains of the great deep were broken up." The "great deep" is the ocean, and this expression can mean nothing more nor less than that there was a great upheaval in the ocean causing its waters to rush out over the land.

## **HOW LONG WAS NOAH IN THE ARK?**

The flood began on the seventeenth day of the second month of the six hundredth year of Noah's life. All remained in the ark till the six hundredth and first year of his life, the second month and twenty- seventh day. Adam Clark, in his Commentary, says: "From this it appears that Noah was in the ark a complete solar year, of three hundred and sixty-five days; for he entered the ark the seventeenth day of the second month, in the six hundredth year of his life, chapter 7:11

and continued in it till the 27th day of the second month, in the six hundredth and first year of his life, as we see above. The months of the ancient Hebrews were lunar; the first six consisted of thirty days each, the latter six of twenty-nine; the whole twelve months making three hundred and fifty-four days; add to this eleven days, (for though he entered the ark the preceding year on the seventeenth day of the 2nd month, he did not come out till the twenty-seventh of the same month in the following year), which make exactly three hundred and sixty-five days, the period of a complete solar revolution."

## GOD'S SPIRIT STRIVING WITH MAN

That God's Spirit did strive with man before the flood is attested by the record (Gen. 6:3). That he has continued to strive with man till this day is also a fact. But the method or manner of his striving is not clear in the minds of some. Evidently he was striving with man then, and is striving with him now, to turn from sin. Some think that he accomplishes this by a direct impact on the heart, independent of any medium or means—that his work is accomplished without the word of God. But it is not possible for us to see how finite man can withstand or resist a direct impact of infinite power. Besides, such theory is not in harmony with the word of God.

Jesus says the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin (Jno. 16:8). It must follow, therefore, that in each instance where man is convicted of sin, it is done by the Holy Spirit. Let us take an example from the word of God. Saul of Tarsus declares himself to have been a sinner. He was convicted of sin. Yet, he himself declares, "Through the law cometh the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20), and "I had not known sin, except through the law" (Rom. 7:7). As Paul affirmed that his knowledge of sin came through the law, and Jesus says the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, it must follow that the Holy Spirit uses the law, or speaks through the law. Where the law of God is not known people may commit the grossest sins and their conscience be void of offense. While some people hold to the direct work of the Spirit, in theory, none hold to it in practice; for when they undertake to make Christians amongst the heathen they always send a preacher to them.

*The Parable of the Sower (Lk. 8).* In the parable of the sower Jesus declares that the word of God is the seed of the kingdom (Lk. 8:11). In the vegetable kingdom there can be no life without seed. Jesus says the same is true in the spiritual kingdom, and tells us that the word of God is the seed. If this parable does not teach that the spiritual seed, the word of God, is as essential to spiritual life as vegetable seed is to vegetable life, then the parable and his explanation of it is a misleading riddle.



*Resisting the Spirit.* Though the Spirit strives with man, man has the power to resist. Stephen says, "Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51) How did their fathers resist the Holy Spirit? Of their fathers, "Yet many years didst thou bear with them, and testified against them by thy Spirit through thy prophets: yet would they not give ear" (Neh. 9:30). It is impossible to resist words; we may reject words, and, in so doing, may resist the power or person speaking the words. The Holy Spirit spoke through the prophets, reproving the fathers of their sins; but they did not give ear. They rejected the word, and thus, Stephen says, they resisted the Spirit.

Building the ark was itself a powerful sermon to the people. Such labors showed them that Noah believed what he preached, and was a constant warning to them. But human nature was the same then as now. Unbelief was stubborn and resisting. It scoffed at the wiser course of faith and humble obedience. No doubt the people condemned Noah as a fool and pronounced building the ark a crazy expenditure of time and means. To them Noah's preaching and warnings were only the babblings of a crazy fool. To the most conservative amongst these unbelievers Noah was not a practical man, only a dreamer of dreams. But all, whether conservative or radical, resisted while Noah labored and warned. But when the flood came, they must have realized that Noah was wise and they were fools. They might resist God in his entreaties, but they could not resist him in his wrath.

## **NOAH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

Jesus gives his endorsement of the story of the flood and of Noah and the ark, and refers to the wickedness and sensuality of the people who were destroyed by the flood (Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26,27). Paul bears witness to Noah's faith: "By faith Noah, being- warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (Heb. 11:7). God commanded Noah to build the ark and gave him full directions. Noah's faith, or confidence in God, led him to do all things as

commanded. By faith he built the ark. And whether he was ten years or fifty in building the ark every step that he took and every lick that he struck are covered by the phrase "by faith." He believed God and did what he said, and the ark stood forth a creature of his faith. By building the ark as God directed Noah condemned the heedless course of his fellows.

*Saved by water.* God does not indulge man in sin, though he is long-suffering toward him. He was long-suffering in the days of Noah, but destruction finally came to the impenitent. The faithful were saved.

Peter says that Noah and his family, eight souls, were saved in the ark by water. Water was the means by which the ark was transported from the ante-diluvian to the post-diluvian world. The water which was the means of destroying the wicked was the means of saving Noah and his family from that wicked generation. The water which saved Noah was a type of baptism which saves us. "The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water; which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 3: 20, 21). For "after a true likeness" the marginal reading in the American Standard Version has "in the antitype."

- Noah was really, actually, saved by water.
- Christians are really, actually saved.
- Peter says baptism *now* saves us.

Peter does not say that baptism represents something, but that baptism is the interrogation of a good conscience.

Peter thus declares baptism to be a seeking act. He contemplates people who were conscious of the guilt of sin, and were seeking a good conscience, a conscience of freedom from sin. Baptism is a condition of salvation, of remission of sins (Acts 2:38). In baptism

a man of faith is seeking remission of sins—seeking a conscience which is not lacerated by the consciousness of guilt and which does not goad him because of sins unforgiven.

Let the student reflect on the following facts:

- God saved Noah (II Pet. 2:5).
- By faith Noah was saved (Heb. 11:7).
- The ark saved Noah (Heb. 11:7).
- Noah was saved by water (I Pet. 3:20).
- It is true also that by building the ark as God directed and entering therein at God's invitation he saved himself.

## **SOME REFLECTIONS**

When Noah emerged from the ark, he looked out on a world purified from its former sins and corruption. How strange he must have felt as he looked out on the stillness of this new world and viewed its desolation! How terrible had been the judgment of God! The waters which had destroyed the sinners that the earth might be pure morally had also continued long enough to destroy all the putrifying bodies that the earth might be literally pure also. Hence, Noah stepped out into a world pure in a double sense. What emotions must have filled his heart as he reflected on all these things! He could realize that it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10:31). It is a poor student who cannot gain from the study of this story lessons of lasting benefit to himself.

\* \* \*

## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

- How Noah showed his faith.
- How we may show our faith.
- A character study of Abel, Enoch, and Noah.
- Many men become so wicked that there is no hope of reformation?

- God's method of dealing with such.

## QUESTIONS

1. Repeat the memory verses.
2. What was Abel's vocation?
3. Why was Cain's offering rejected?
4. In what two senses was Cain a sinner?
5. Where is the land of Nod?
6. Mention some of Cain's descendants.
7. For what was Jabal famous?
8. In what art did Tubal-Cain engage?
9. For what was Lamech notorious?
10. What religious people are polygamists in these modern days?
11. What was the character of Seth, and who was his father?
12. Tell all you know about Enoch.
13. In what did the people make the most progress?
14. Describe the moral and religious condition of the people immediately preceding the flood.
15. To what extent were they depraved?
16. What did Jesus say of them and of the people at his second coming?
17. Why did God destroy them?
18. After he determined to destroy them, how long did he wait?
19. How long was Noah in building the ark?
20. How long did Noah preach, and with what results?
21. Name the sons of Noah.
22. What was the character of Noah?
23. What does "walked with God" mean?
24. How do we find favor in the eyes of Jehovah?
25. Describe the ark.
26. Describe the extent of the destruction to be accomplished by the flood.
27. What did God establish with Noah?
28. What is a "covenant"?
29. How many people were in the ark?
30. What else was brought into the ark?

31. How many animals of each sort, clean and unclean, were brought into the ark?
32. What is meant by "clean" and "unclean" animals?
33. Name some of each.
34. What do infidels say about the flood?
35. What about the traditions of the flood?
36. What produced the flood?
37. What is meant by the expressions, "the windows of heaven were "opened," and, "the fountains of the great deep were broken up"?
38. How long did it rain?
39. When did they enter the ark?
40. How long did they remain in the ark?
41. How deep were the waters on the mountains?
42. Where and on what did the ark rest on the land?
43. Where is this mountain?
44. Describe Noah's effort to find out whether dry land had appeared.
45. What was Noah's first act after leaving the ark?
46. Did God make any effort to reform the people before the flood?
47. Tell what is said of God's Spirit.
48. Give some theories of the Spirit's work in conversion.
49. Can you conceive how finite man can resist the direct impact of the Infinite?
50. What did Jesus say the Spirit would do?
51. How did Paul know he was a sinner?
52. In sending out missionaries, do not the denominations surrender the "direct" work theory?
53. Discuss the parable of the sower in its bearing on this matter.
54. How do the people resist the Spirit?
55. What does preparing the ark "by faith" mean?
56. How does Peter say God saved Noah and his family?
57. From what did the water save them?
58. The water is a type of what?
59. In what way is baptism a "seeking" act?
60. In what two senses did the waters purify the earth?

# Abraham

---

*Memory Verses:* Gen. 12:1, 2; 22: 15-18.

## **LEADING UP TO THE LESSON**

After the flood the descendants of Noah multiplied greatly. It seems that each of the sons of Noah—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—became the progenitor of a distinct race of people. One of Ham's descendants, Nim-rod, established the first government that is called a kingdom (Gen. 10:10). He is called a great hunter, but all authorities declare his hunting was for men—he was a warrior, a persecutor of man.

For a long time it seems the people remained in close proximity with each other, and were of one language. To perpetuate this unity, to prevent their being scattered, some one conceived the idea of building a great tower that would be a center of attraction and perhaps a temple of worship. But this was not God's plan or purpose; hence, he confused their tongues so that they could not work or associate together. This tower was called Babel—confusion, or confounding. This marks the beginning of the different languages.

It is easy to determine the approximate date of the confusion of tongues. Arphaxad was born two years after the flood, and was thirty-five years old at the birth of his son Shelah; Shelah was thirty-five years old at the birth of Eber; and Eber thirty-four at the birth of Peleg (Gen. 11:10-16). Adding these figures we learn that Peleg was born one hundred and one years after the flood. Peleg means "division," and he was given that name, "for in his days the earth was divided" (Gen. 10:25). That he was given a name which means division indicates that this division must have come not far from the time of his birth.

## **ABRAHAM'S NAME AND EARLY ENVIRONS**

Abraham was the son of Terah, one of the descendants of Shem. He was first called Abram, "Exalted Father"; later God changed his name of Abraham, "Father of Multitude." These names of Abraham had a significance. This is always true when Jehovah selects names. Search and see.

It is said that long before Abraham left his home, Ur of the Chaldees, it was a "great city, the political and religious center of the greatest empire of the Orient." Recent excavations have revealed much about that city. "Its inscriptions speak of at least five temples, of which the ruins remain." Ur was not the capital, but was the holy city of the nation. The land of the Chaldees was wholly given to polytheism. They had some twelve or fifteen gods of nearly equal dignity and authority, and a great number of lesser gods. Marcus Dod says, "The remains make disclosures regarding the worship of the gods, which must shock even those who are familiar with the immoralities frequently fostered by heathen religion." We learn from Joshua 24:2 that Terah, Abraham's father, worshiped idols. It would be impossible, in such surroundings to develop a race of true worshipers. God called Abraham out from such unholy surroundings and corrupt influences.

## **THE CALL AND PROMISE**

"Now Jehovah said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee" (Gen. 12:1). This call was made while Abram was in Ur. Stephen says (Acts 7:2, 3), "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy land, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I will show thee." But Abraham did not obey this injunction fully, for his father, Terah, and Lot, his nephew, went with him as far as Haran. Here it seems that God detained them till the death of Terah. At least Abraham did not leave this place till after the death of Terah. Stephen says, "From thence, when his father was dead, God removed him into this land wherein ye now dwell" (Acts 7:4).

On the conditions specified, God promised, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I cure: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3). The first part of these promises was fulfilled in the history of Abraham and his fleshly descendants and God's dealings with them; and the last was fulfilled in the coming of Christ to bless the world.

## **THE LAND OF PROMISE**

To Abraham and his seed God promised the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:7, 12:15). Later God made a covenant with Abraham in which this land was covenanted to his seed. Abraham was in the land of Canaan for a time and had a small portion of land there, yet Stephen says: "And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on it" (Acts 7:5). It should be remembered that the portion of the land of Canaan which Abraham possessed was his by purchase (Gen. 23), and not by inheritance.

It was not to Abraham personally, but to him as the representative of the nation that God promised the land (Gen. 15:18).

This land promise to Abraham did not embrace the entire earth (Gen. 13:14; 15:18; 17:8; Deut. 1:7-8). "The land was to be an everlasting possession, on the condition of faithfulness (Deut. 30:17, 18; Josh. 23: 16; I Kings 9:6, 7; II Kings 21:8)."—W. P. Skaggs. This land promise was fulfilled when the Jews were given possession of the land under the leadership of Joshua (Josh. 21:43, 45; 23:11-16; 24:13; Neh. 9: 7-8). They were driven out of the land when they rebelled against Jehovah, and their hope must now be in Christ.

## **INTERMARRIAGES FORBIDDEN**

Jehovah has always legislated against intermarriages between his people and those not in covenant relation with him. Even



Abraham strictly forbade that his servant should take a wife for Isaac from among the Canaanites (Gen. 24:1-8). Neither was the servant allowed to take Isaac back to Mesopotamia in search of a wife. To marry into the families of the Canaanites amongst whom they lived would bring Isaac into such close touch with them socially that he would likely be corrupted, and his wife would be under the influences of her people and former customs and worship, where it would be well-nigh impossible to reform her. Had Isaac returned to his idolatrous kindred in Mesopotamia the same difficulties would have been met. This Abraham knew, and for that reason he sent his servant for a wife for Isaac, to bring her away from her social and religious influences, which were corrupting, that in new surroundings and under true religious influences, she might be a true and helpful companion. Later when Esau married into the families of Canaan, Rebekah, Isaac's wife, said, and "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?" (Gen. 27:46). Immediately "Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan" (Gen. 28:1). On this point Jehovah was very particular and emphatic in his laws to the Israelites. "Neither shalt thou make marriage with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou not take unto thy son. For he will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods" (Deut. 7:3-4). Joshua earnestly warned his people against such marriages, telling them that such companions "shall be a snare and a trap unto you, and a scourge in your sides, and a thorn in your eyes, until ye perish from off the good land which Jehovah your God hath given you" (Josh. 23:13).

In Ezra's day the princes informed him that "the people of Israel and the priests and the Levites" had not separated themselves from the idolatrous people and were doing according to their abominations, and added, "For they have taken of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of the land: yea, the hand of the princes and the rulers have been chief of this

trespass" (Ezra 9:2). Ezra then made earnest prayer and confession. The people were greatly stirred, and made oath that they would put away their strange wives (Read Ezra, chapters 9 and 10).

In the days of Nehemiah the same corrupting practices existed (Neh. 13:23-31). With such Nehemiah made no compromise, but "contended with them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God." He also chased one of the priests from his office. From Nehemiah we learn the cause of Solomon's fall: "Nevertheless even him did foreign women cause to sin."

*Is There a New Testament Law?* It may be argued that we are not under the law. True: but are not evil influences as hurtful now as then? Is not the marriage tie as close now as then? And are we not as liable to be led astray by an unbelieving companion now as they were? The marriage law to the Jew was not arbitrary—there were reasons for it. The same reasons are as urgent now as then. A disregard for these principles has been the source of much evil amongst Christians. How many people have you known to grow cold and careless through the blighting influence of an unbelieving companion? How many such marriages have been a cross to the believer all his days? The Christian needs help; most of all does he need the sympathetic help and encouragement of his companion; but the influence of the unbelieving companion is the other way. The Christian cannot bring his children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, as he is commanded to do, without the pious assistance of his companion (Eph. 6:1).

Is the New Testament silent on this question? Paul says, "Have we no right to lead about a wife that is a believer, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" (I Cor. 9:5). It is implied in this that Christians have the right to marry only believers.

Paul says of the widow, "She is free to marry to whom she will only in the Lord" (I Cor. 7:39). This does not signify that the

restriction "only in the Lord" is a regulation meant solely for the widows. The general statement that "she is free to marry whom she will" might lead her to think that she was at liberty to marry without being restricted, and Paul adds "only in the Lord" to show her that the restriction "only in the Lord" was also binding in her case.

Paul's injunction in I Cor. 7:12-15 that a believer should not forsake an unbelieving companion is thought by some to justify mixed marriages; but the reverse is true, else why should the believer think that he should leave the unbeliever? Two unbelievers marry, and later one becomes a Christian. The thought would naturally come to the Christian under such circumstances, "if it is wrong for the Christian to marry an unbeliever, is it right to live with an unbeliever?" With any other view, how could such a question arise?

"Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers" (II Cor. 6:14). This does not refer directly to the marriage relation; but it does prohibit our joining with unbelievers in such a way as to make common cause with them. Marriage is a joining together in the closest possible way, and there is no other relationship where the contracting parties have so much in common. How, then, can a believer make common cause with an unbeliever in a relationship where the two become one, without violating the spirit, if not the letter, of Paul's solemn injunction?

## **ABRAHAM BUILDS ALTARS**

That Abraham was intensely religious and a devout worshiper of the one true God, is seen in his building altars to God that he might offer sacrifices thereon,. After he reached Canaan he erected altars wherever he went, excepting his short sojourn in foreign lands. Soon after his arrival in Canaan he built an altar at Shechem. Then one near Bethel (Gen. 12:6-8). After his sojourn in Egypt he returned to his altar near Bethel and worshiped God (Gen. 13:3, 4). After his separation from Lot he moved to Hebron, where he built an altar (Gen. 13:18). His supreme test came when he must build an altar on which to

sacrifice his own son (Gen. 22:18).

## **HIS PROSPERITY AND LIBERALITY**

"Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold" (Gen. 13:2). In, his declining days Abraham sent his chief servant back to Ur of the Chaldees for a wife for Isaac. In his speech to the family of Bethel the servant said, "Jehovah hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great; and he hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and men servants and maid servants, and camels and asses" (Gen. 24:35).

When trouble arose between the herdsmen of Lot and the herdsmen of Abraham, Abraham gave Lot the choice of the land (Gen. 13:5-9). This is an example of rare generosity and liberality. Later, after Lot had been captured and carried away, Abraham made pursuit, rescued Lot, and returned with great booty. He gave a tenth to Melchizedek; and the remainder of his portion he gave to the king of Sodom (Gen. 14). His generosity and liberality are also seen in his rescue of Lot. He was under no obligation to do so, since Lot had selfishly selected the best of the land. Abraham rescued him at considerable personal risk, and at a great sacrifice to himself. It was magnanimous in him to do so.

## **SOME DATES IN THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM**

Abraham was born 352 years after the flood, and was seventy-five years old when he came into Canaan (Gen. 12:4, 5); eighty-six when Ishmael was born (Gen. 17:24, 25); one hundred when Isaac was born (Gen. 21:15); one hundred and thirty-seven when Sarah died (Gen. 17:17; 23:1); (Abraham was ten years older than Sarah); and one hundred and seventy-five at the time of his death (Gen. 25).

## **ABRAHAM'S WEAKNESSES**

We sometimes seem to forget that these Bible heroes were human, possessing weaknesses and liable to err as other human

beings. We surround them with a halo of glory, and unconsciously attribute to them divine perfection. We place them on an eminence beyond human reach, and thus make them practically worthless as examples of struggling human beings. Abraham was human, and though he excelled in faith and strength of character, he sometimes faltered and failed.

When he was called to leave his father's house and kindred he failed to comply fully, for his father and Lot accompanied him. He was detained in Haran till his father died, and Lot, who accompanied him for a time, was a source of trouble.

Because of a famine in Canaan he went down into Egypt to sojourn, and because Sarah was fair he was afraid the Egyptians would kill him, that they might take his wife. Hence, he required that Sarah tell them that she was his sister. He was thus guilty of falsehood. His fear was unwarranted. When Pharaoh learned that she was his wife, he sent Abraham away under the protection of a guard. This must have been a most humiliating experience for Abraham (Genesis 12:10-20).

For the same reason he committed the same offense when he went to sojourn in Gerar (Gen. 20:1-8). Here Abimelech reproved him so severely that he felt he must make some defense more than he made to Pharaoh. He sought to justify himself on the ground of fear, but argued also that he had told the truth, "and," said he, "moreover she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father but not the daughter of my mother." But he had withheld from Abimelech the fact that she was his wife, and thus deceived him.

After Abraham had been in the land of Canaan for some time, God renewed to him the promise that he would give him the land. Possibly Abraham expected to possess the land in a way God did not intend. Abraham's faith for the moment weakened; and he said, "O Lord Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Jehovah showed his displeasure at this distrust. He commanded Abraham to prepare sacrifices, which he did; but no fire came from the Lord to consume them. While Abraham

watched over his offering birds of prey came down on the carcasses, and Abraham drove them away. While waiting a deep sleep came over Abraham, and a horror of great darkness. Then God revealed to him the future bondage of his posterity (Gen. 15:7-21). This must have been a bitter experience for Abraham.

## **HIS FAITH**

Weakness was not the leading trait of Abraham's character. His confidence and trust, his faith in God, shine out in such brilliance all through his life as to practically obscure the few manifestations of weakness. Though his surroundings were unfavorable, his life is the manifestation of great faith in Jehovah, and he is called "the friend of God," "the father of the faithful," and all believers are called the "children of Abraham." "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out into a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out not knowing whither he went" (Heb. 11:8). At the call of Jehovah he promptly left the great opulent city of Ur to risk his life and fortune in a strange land, he knew not where. At the very outset his faith stood a test which yours might not, though you may have been a Christian for years. "By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise as in a land not his own"; and though no clear revelation had been made as to the future life, his faith enabled him to look "for a city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:9, 10).

*The Severest Test.* The great trial of his faith came when God commanded him to offer up his son Isaac (Gen. 22:1-9). The record says that God did tempt, or prove Abraham. Perhaps his faith might not have stood this test in his earlier life; but if there was a faltering step when God commanded him to offer Isaac, if for a moment he wavered, we have no intimation of it in the record. Does not such faith put us to shame? O ye who are called upon to go but a short distance to engage in delightful worship, think of Abraham who made a three days' journey to engage in the saddest worship man was ever called on to perform; and ye who are called on to give a small portion of your means which you selfishly withhold, think of him who at God's command was

willing to give up his only son.

*Justification of Abraham.* After Abraham had been in the land of Canaan for some years, God "brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now towards heaven, and number the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in Jehovah; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6).

"But 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; and the Scripture was fulfilled which said, And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness and he was called the friend of God. Ye see that by works a man is justified; and not only by faith" (Jas. 2:20-24).

It has been argued that Genesis 15:6 refers to the justification of Abraham as an alien sinner and that James 2:20-24 refers to his justification as a servant of God. But the facts show that he had been a believer in God and servant of God for a considerable period of time prior to Genesis 15:6. God had appeared to him in Ur of the Chaldees and told him to leave his country and kindred and go unto a land which God would show him, promising to bless him and all the families of the earth through him (Gen. 12:1-3; Acts 7:1-3). He obeyed God (Gen. 12:4; Acts 7:4). "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out not knowing whither he went" (Heb. 11:8). Also, previous to Gen. 15:6 Abraham had builded altars and worshiped God (Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:8); and Melchizedek, God's high priest, had said, "Blessed be Abraham of God most high" (Gen. 14:18), and Jehovah had said, "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward" (Gen. 15:1). Hence Genesis 15:6 does not refer to the justification of Abraham as an alien sinner.

It has also been urged that he was justified in the sight of God

when he believed God's promise of a son (Gen. 15:5, 6), and justified in the sight of men when he offered Isaac. But such argument implies that if Abraham had refused to offer Isaac he would still have been justified in the sight of God, but condemned by men. God would have been pleased, but man displeased! Can any sane man entertain such a thought? Besides, it is abhorrent to the finer feelings of any one who is acquainted with the attributes of Jehovah to think that he would stage such a tragedy simply that Abraham might be applauded or justified by the heathen-world. Not believing in Jehovah, they would have been more likely to condemn such a course as the act of a crazy fanatic than to justify him. The whole of God's dealings with men and all his teachings to man condemn the idea of staging any spectacular performance to be seen of man. But the theory breaks down completely when one remembers that no man saw, and no man knew of the circumstances when Abraham offered up Isaac. Not even the servants who accompanied Abraham on that solemn journey knew of his intention, nor were they permitted to witness the scene. As he neared the place, Abraham said to them, "Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder; and we will worship, and come again to you" (Gen. 22:5). Not even Isaac knew that he was to be the victim as he and his father trudged up that mountain. God alone was witness to that act, the supreme test of Abraham's faith; and when the act was all but completed God stayed Abraham's hand and said, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me" (Gen. 22:12). Then the statement that Abraham believed God was fulfilled to the limit. His faith had sometimes wavered before, sometimes he did not believe God. Immediately after Genesis 15:6, when God promised him the land of Canaan, his faith staggered and wavered, and he said, "O Lord Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" (Gen. 15:8). But his faith grew till the final test came in the offering of Isaac. Nothing now was too hard for him to believe, no test too severe. His faith, his confidence, in God, rose to the most sublime height and stood the severest test. In God's sight his faith was fully approved, perfected by his works; and the statement that Abraham believed God was shown to be true beyond any possibility of



doubt, and was fulfilled to the utmost limit.

\* \* \*

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- Significance of names God gave to man and things.
- God impartially tells the good and bad about men.
- The "Golden Rule" in Abraham's Life.
- Abraham's life a blessing to the world.
- How we walk in the steps of Abraham (Rom. 4:12).
- How Abraham was, and was not, justified by works.

## QUESTIONS

1. Repeat the memory verses.
2. Tell something about Shem, Ham and Japheth.
3. Give a brief history of Nimrod.
4. Why was Nimrod called a great hunter?
5. What of the unity and language of the people?
6. Tell what you know of the tower of Babel.
7. What does Babel mean?
8. What gave rise to the name?
9. What gave rise to the different languages?
10. About how long was this after the flood?
11. Who was Abraham's father? Who was his grandfather?
12. What does the name Abram mean?
13. What does the name Abraham mean?
14. What can you say of the significance of God-given names?
15. Give some illustrations.
16. From what country was Abraham? What city?
17. Tell us something about that city.
18. Tell something about the religion of Terah.
19. Why was Abraham called out of his home county?
20. To what place did he first go?
21. Wherein did he fail to comply fully with God's call?
22. How many promises were made to Abraham, and what

- were they?
23. What land did God promise Abraham?
  24. Give the location and boundaries.
  25. Did Abraham personally inherit this land?
  26. Has this promise been fulfilled to Abraham's seed?
  27. How was the second promise to Abraham fulfilled?
  28. What charge did Abraham give regarding a wife for Isaac?
  29. Why was it better to get a wife from Mesopotamia?
  30. Whom did Esau first marry?
  31. Of what did Rebekah complain, and why?
  32. What charge was given Jacob?
  33. Give the law of God to Israel relative to intermarriages.
  34. What did Joshua say regarding the results of such marriages?
  35. Did they observe this law in Ezra's day?
  36. How were violations treated?
  37. How did Nehemiah deal with violators?
  38. What effect did foreign wives have on Solomon?
  39. Are such marriages dangerous now?
  40. Give reason for your answer.
  41. Whom does Paul indicate he had a right to marry?
  42. Whom might a Christian widow marry?
  43. Was this restriction for widows only?
  44. What bearing does I Cor. 7:12-15 have on this question?
  45. What bearing does II Cor. 6:14 have on this question?
  46. What does Abraham's building altars signify?
  47. Give names of places where he built altars.
  48. Give the nature of his sacrifices.
  49. What can you say of Abraham's prosperity?
  50. Is it sinful to be prosperous? To be rich?
  51. What are the proper uses of wealth?
  52. Tell us something about Lot.
  53. Tell of Abraham's liberality toward Lot.
  54. How did he dispose of the booty secured in the rescue of Lot?
  55. Wherein was selfishness manifested by Lot?
  56. Name the period in which Abraham lived, and the leading dates in his life.

57. Give some instances of Abraham's weaknesses.
58. What are the leading traits of Abraham's life?
59. What names did he gain for himself?
60. Give some instances illustrating His great faith.
61. Show that Abraham had faith before the record of Gen. 15:6.
62. Did his faith alone justify in God's sight?
63. Did his works—offering Isaac—justify him in the sight of men?
64. Where were the servants of Abraham when he offered Isaac?
65. What man or men saw Abraham offer Isaac as a sacrifice?

# The Covenants

---

*Memory Verses:* Heb. 9:16, 17.

## COVENANT DEFINED

A "covenant" is an agreement or contract between two or more parties. From Exodus 19:5-8 we learn that Jehovah through Moses outlined to the people his demands, and promised that if they would meet these demands they would be his "own possession from among all people"; and "All the people answered together and said, All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do." This is plainly a covenant, a contract, between Jehovah and the people; but the people at that time did not know the specific things which Jehovah would require of them—they knew only that he expected them to obey his voice and keep his covenant. The details of the covenant were made known to them.

## TWO COVENANTS

We speak of the "Two Covenants" by way of contrast, for there were others.

The two great covenants, sometimes called "testaments," were the outgrowth of two promises made to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3, the first of which reads as follows: "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse."

*First Covenant.* The first covenant was based on the foregoing promise, and related to the fleshly descendant of Abraham, and contained the seed of all God's dealings with them.

To fulfill this promise, to make a great nation of them, and bless them in the highest degree, it was necessary: (1) To give Abraham a numerous posterity — "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the

heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore" (Gen. 22:17). (2) To keep them separate. To this end God gave them the covenant of circumcision (Gen. 17) and prohibited intermarriages with other nations. (3) For them to have a country in which to live, and develop as a nation; hence, God gave them the land of Canaan (Gen. 17:8). (4) For them to have laws or a government. No nation can develop and prosper without laws. Anarchy is a curse. In the law of Moses their need for a government was supplied. (5) To cultivate and regulate their religious life. Without the elevating influences of a pure and holy religion a nation will degenerate till it becomes a curse to itself and the world. In all true religion there is worship to elevate the thoughts, cultivate the heart, and keep alive a religious sentiment. For these reasons provisions were made in the law of Moses for worship and religious exercises. All these laws and regulations, both secular and religious, were given at Mount Sinai, through Moses, and constitute what we call the First Covenant.

## **COVENANT MADE**

From Mount Sinai the Ten Commandments were delivered (Ex. 20:1-17). To Moses Jehovah delivered many additional commands and ordinances. See Exodus, chapters 21-23. "And Moses came and told the people all the words of Jehovah, and all the ordinances." To all of which the people replied, "All the words which Jehovah hath spoken we will do, and be obedient" (Ex. 24:7). Then Moses "took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded to you-ward" (Heb. 9:19; Ex. 24:7, 8). Thus" the covenant was ratified and sealed. This covenant Paul calls the "first covenant" (Heb. 8:7; 9:1, 18).

## **THE SECOND PROMISE TO ABRAHAM**

We have abundant evidence that Jehovah never intended that this first covenant should be final. In fact during its existence the way was being prepared for the second. There were types and prophecies looking forward to better things. These better things,

the better covenant of which Paul speaks (Heb. 8:6), had its foundation in the second promise to Abraham: "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3).

To fulfill this promise it was necessary: (1) That Christ should come of the seed of Abraham. That Christ did come of the seed of Abraham is settled by Paul: "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). We could not have known that Christ was of the seed of Abraham, had Abraham's seed lost their identity by mixing with other people. Circumcision was a powerful factor in keeping Abraham's seed distinct. So far as we know this is the only way in which circumcision is related to the new covenant. Paul indicates this use of circumcision: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision; that he might be the father of all them that believe" (Rom. 4:11). (2) That they should have a spiritual home full of piety, reverence, and love for God and man. The church with its hallowed influences and soul-satisfying worship meets these demands. It is God's house, God's family (Eph. 3:15; I Tim. 3:15). (3) Laws and governments are needed. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." The highest and purest possible conduct is needed to lead us to the highest degree of usefulness and development. We find this in the gospel, "the law of the Spirit of life," "the perfect law of liberty." To be a law unto ourselves is rebellion and anarchy. Jesus as king administers the affairs of his kingdom. Children of God are its citizens. Jesus will reign in this kingdom, as now constituted, till he, after the resurrection, delivers up the kingdom to God the Father (I Cor. 15:21-24).

## **THE FIRST COVENANT TAKEN AWAY**

The first covenant had to be abrogated before the second could be established. Two covenants, both designed to control the entire religious and moral life of the same people, and differing in their requirements, could not be in force at the same time. "He taketh away the first that he may establish the second" (Heb. 10:9). In Romans 7:1-6 Paul teaches the same fact. He presents the marriage relation as an illustration—the woman is bound to the

husband while he lives; if the husband dies she is free to marry another. Paul is not in this passage seeking to teach a lesson on marriage, but is using a well-known principle of the marriage relation to teach us a lesson on our relation to the law of Moses and to Christ. The argument is, That so long as the legal relations between the law of Moses and the Jew remained they could not be joined to another. "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" (Rom. 7:4).

We "were made dead to the law through the body of Christ" when, through the death of his body on the cross, the law ended" (Col. 2:14). It is worthy of note here that the joining of Christ came after he was raised from the dead.

"But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were held; so that we serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7:6). That Paul's use of the term "law" here, includes the ten commandments is clear from the fact that in the next verse he quotes one of the ten commandments—"Thou shalt not covet"—as part of the law to which he refers. No one should be alarmed at the statement that the Ten Commandments have been taken away, and conclude that the whole moral law is gone; for every command and principle of the Ten Commandments, excepting the Sabbath law, was brought over and incorporated in the New Covenant, as is shown in the following:

### **The Ten Commandments**

1. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me. (Ex. 20:4).
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image. (Ex. 20:4).
3. Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain. (Ex. 20:7).
4. Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. (Ex. 20:8).
5. Honor thy father and thy mother. (Ex. 20:12).
6. Thou shalt not kill. (Ex. 20:13).

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery. (Ex. 20:14).
8. Thou shalt not steal. (Ex. 20:15).
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. (Ex. 20:16).
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, . . . wife . . . servants, . . . nor anything that is thy neighbors. (Ex. 20:17).

### **Nine of the Ten Commandments Repeated in the New Testament.\***

1. There is no God but one. (I Cor. 4:8). Keep yourself from idols. (I Jno. 5:21).
2. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man. (Rom. 1:23).
3. Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane. (I Tim. 1:8-11).
4. Honor thy father and mother. (Eph. 6:2).
5. Thou shalt not kill. (Rom. 13:9).
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery. (Rom. 13:9).
7. Thou shalt not steal. (Rom. 13:9).
8. Put away all falsehood, speak ye the truth. (Eph. 4:25).
9. Thou shalt not covet. (Rom. 13:9).

\*There is not a command in the New Testament to keep the sabbath.

In a subsequent lesson of this series, the sabbath question will be fully discussed.

### **MINISTERS OF THE NEW COVENANT**

In II Cor. 3:6 Paul declares that God made them, the apostles, ministers of the New Covenant; and in the remaining part of the chapter he contrasts the Old and New covenants, and shows the superiority of the New over the Old at every point, and speaks of the Old as "that which passeth away," and of the New as "that



which remaineth."

## **NEW COVENANT**

In Hebrews 8:7 Paul speaks of a first covenant and a second covenant, and then quotes, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them forth out of the land of Egypt" (Heb. 8:8-13). This language identifies the old covenant with the law of Moses, the covenant entered into at Sinai. This covenant was in force in the days of Jeremiah, and yet the Lord says through him, long after Sinai, "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant"—not have made, but "will make." This can refer to no covenant made before that time, as the better covenant, of which Christ is mediator (Heb. 8:6). Both Jeremiah and Paul declared it to be a new covenant, and too, that it was to be unlike the old covenant.

## **CHANGE IN PRIESTHOOD—CHANGE IN LAW**

Under the patriarchal dispensation the head of the family was the priest, but when, amongst the Jews, the nation instead of the family became the governmental and religious unit, it became necessary to change the priesthood. The national superseded the family religion and a new order of priests which could officiate for the whole nation became necessary. New laws, new regulations, to meet national needs, therefore, became necessary. The law of Moses, now called the Old Covenant, came in to supply the national needs. It was meant for only one nation—the Hebrews. Malachi says, "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb, for all Israel even statutes and ordinances" (Mal. 4:4). Paul says the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God (Rom. 3:2). Even the Sabbath was given to the Jews only; "And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commandeth thee to keep the Sabbath

day" (Deut. 5:15).

But when the world-wide religion superseded the national, and when simple congregational worship was to take the place of the tabernacle and temple worship, a new priesthood became necessary. Jesus Christ is now the high priest (Heb. 9:11), and God's children are all priests (I Pet. 2:5). Hence a new covenant became necessary; "for the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12). If Christ "were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, seeing there are those who offer the gifts according to the law" (Heb. 8:4); for the priests under the law were of the tribe of Levi, and "it is evident that our Lord hath sprung out of Judah; as to which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priests" (Heb. 7:14). Jesus being perfect could not have been a priest under the law; "for the law appointeth men high priests, having infirmity" (Heb. 7:28). Under the law they were made priests without an oath (Heb. 7:21), "but the word of the oath, which was after the law, appointeth a Son, perfected forevermore" (Heb. 7:28).

## **LAW OUR SCHOOLMASTER**

When God's law through Moses served its purpose, it expired by divine limitation. The law was our schoolmaster—tutor—to bring us to Christ (Gal. 3:24). The world needed to be taught that "God is," that he alone is the rightful ruler in the affairs of men, and that sin bringeth ruin upon us, and too, the world needed to be trained in the elements of worship. Men needed to be lifted above the carnal things of sense and sight to a higher spiritual plane, where they might appreciate and take hold of the eternal things of faith. "But now that faith is come, ye are no longer under a tutor," or schoolmaster (Gal. 3:25).

## **SEPARATING WALL ABOLISHED**

The new covenant, the gospel of Christ, is intended for all nations, for all people. "Make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19), "preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:16), said Jesus. God's people were to be gathered into one fold (John

10:16), called into one body (Col. 3:15). The oneness of God's people, set forth in so many passages, and enjoined so repeatedly and earnestly in the divine record, could never be attained so long as the law of Moses with its exclusiveness stood as a middle wall of partition, effectually separating Jew and Gentile. "But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13) ; for by the shed blood of Christ the barrier was removed, the wall of separation was abolished. The cause of the enmity being removed, both Jew and Gentile can worship together in peace; "for he is our peace, who made both one, and break down the middle wall of partition, of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace (Eph. 2:14, 15). When Christ "broke down the middle wall of partition," the law that kept the Jew and Gentile separated, he abolished the cause of enmity, "even the law," that he might create in himself of the two (Jew and Gentile) one new man, (new body or church). Both Jew and Gentile were to be reconciled in one body. He thus slew the enmity, or cause of enmity, which Paul declares to have been the "law of commandments contained in ordinances."

## **NAILED TO THE CROSS**

The law was against us, contrary to us. Paul ends all reason for dispute, both as to the fact and the time of its ending: "Having 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" (Col. 2:14). Thus the cross ended the yoke which even the Jews could not bear (Acts 15:10), and made possible the opening of the "new and living way," dedicated for us by the blood of Christ (Heb. 10:19, 20).

## **WHEN DID THE NEW COVENANT BECOME OPERATIVE?**

Christ said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill. 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"

(Matt. 5:17, 18). While the law was in force one might as well have tried to abolish heaven and earth as to destroy the binding force of the law, but Christ clearly affirmed that the law would pass away when it was fulfilled. Immediately after he was raised from the dead, he said, "These are my words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the Psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:44). Touching this very matter Paul says, "And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb" (Acts 13:29). While on the cross Jesus said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). The law was fulfilled; and that it ceased to be of force is attested by Paul when he said it was nailed to the cross (Col. 2:14).

*Not Under the Law.* That the old covenant has ended is evident again from the statement of Paul: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to him that are under the law" (Rom. 3:19). Hear him again, "Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?" (Rom. 3:15).

Covenant and testament are the same. A man must make his testament, during his life. When he dies his testament is probated, executors appointed, or if he has named his executors, they must qualify, and then the estate is administered in keeping with the will—testament. Paul recognized these facts and said, "For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it. For a testament is of force when there hath been death: for it doth never avail while he that made it liveth" (Heb. 9:16, 17.) This is declaring that the new covenant could not be of force before the death of Jesus.

The apostles having been fully informed of the will by the Master himself, and having been fully qualified by the power of the Holy Spirit, began their work of administering that will on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2).

## COVENANTS CONTRASTED

<b>The Old</b>	<b>The New</b>
The First. (Heb. 10:9)	The second. (Heb. 10:9)
Old taken away. (Heb. 10:9)	The New established. (Heb. 10:9)
Faulty. (Heb. 8:7).	Better, Perfect. (Heb. 8:6; Jas. 1:25).
Moses mediator. (Ex. 20:19).	Christ mediator. (Heb. 12:24).
Glorious. (II Cor. 8:9-10)	Exceeds in glory. (II Cor. 3:10, 11)
Figure of true. (Heb. 9:24).	The true. (Heb. 8:1, 2).
Blood of animals. (Heb. 9:18-20).	Blood of Christ. (Heb. 9:12).
Carnal ordinances. (Heb. 9:10).	Spiritual sacrifices. (I Pet. 2:5).
Purify flesh. (Heb. 9:13).	Purify soul. (I Pet. 1:22).
Continuous sacrifices. (Heb. 10: 1-4).	Christ offered once only. (Heb. 10).
Abraham's seed. (Gen. 17:1-14).	All Nations (Ephesians 2:11-16)
Natural Birth (Genesis 17:1-14)	Spiritual Birth (Jno. 3:1-5)
Infants (Genesis 17:1-14)	All Know the Lord (Hebrews 10:1-4)
No clear Conscience (Hebrews 9:8-9)	Makes Perfect (Hebrews 7:18-19)
Temporal Inheritance (Psalm 105:11)	Eternal Inheritance (I Peter 1:4)
Ministration of Condemnation (II Corinthians 3:9)	Ministration of Righteousness (II Corinthians 3:9)
Passed away (II Corinthians 3:11)	Remains (II Corinthians 3:11)
Bondwoman (Galatians 4:30-31)	Free Woman (Galatians 4:30-31)
Priest with Infirmary (Hebrews 7:28)	Priest Perfect (Hebrews 7:27)
Priest had sins (Hebrews 7:27)	Priest sinless (Hebrews 7:26)
Priest by oath (Hebrews 7:21)	Priest without oath (Heb. 7:27)

Priest by carnal commandment (Hebrews 7:16)	Priest by endless life (Hebrews 7:16)
Priest, tribe of Levi (Hebrews 7:11)	Priest, tribe of Judah (Hebrews 7:14)
Priests die (Hebrews 7:23)	Priest continues ever (Hebrews 7:24)
Sins remembered (Hebrews 10:1-4)	Sins remembered no more (Hebrews 10:1-4)
Written in stone (II Corinthians 3)	Written in the heart (Hebrews 8:10)

\* \* \*

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- How was the law a schoolmaster?
- Was the thief on the cross an alien sinner?
- Was he saved?
- What benefits are derived from studying the old covenant?
- The deliverance of Israel from bondage.
- The baptism of the Israelites unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

## QUESTIONS

1. Repeat the memory verse.
2. How many covenants can you mention?
3. What is a covenant sometimes called?
4. Name the two great promises God made to Abraham.
5. Contrast these promises.
6. To what did the first promise relate?
7. What things necessary to the fulfillment of this promise?
8. What is meant by "first covenant?"
9. When and where was this covenant entered into?
10. How was it ratified and sealed?
11. Give some of the circumstances of its enactment.
12. Did God intend for this covenant to be final?
13. Give some evidence to support your view.

14. To what does the second promise relate?
15. How was Abraham's seed kept pure?
16. Why was the church needed?
17. Why are the laws and government needed?
18. Who is our law giver?
19. How long will Jesus reign?
20. Can two conflicting covenants be in force at the same time?
21. Discuss and show the force of Paul's reasoning in Rom. 7:1-6.
22. How and when were we made dead to the law?
23. When are we joined to Christ?
24. Does Paul have reference to the ten commandments in Rom. 7:2? Give proof.
25. How many of the ten commandments are in the New Testament?
26. Which one omitted?
27. Why were Gentiles never commanded to keep the Sabbath?
28. Who are the ministers of the New Covenant?
29. Describe the contrasts made by Paul in II Cor. 3.
30. How does Paul identify the first covenant with the law of Moses?
31. Could Jeremiah's prophecy of a new covenant have reference to the first covenant? Why?
32. Who were the priests under the Patriarchal Dispensation?
33. Why did a change in the priesthood become necessary?
34. For whom was the law of Moses intended?
35. Give one reason why the Hebrews were commanded to keep the sabbath.
36. Who is high priest? Who are priests?
37. The change in the priesthood required what?
38. Why could Jesus not be a priest while on earth?
39. To what tribe did the Old Testament priests belong?
40. Of what tribe was Jesus?
41. What kind of men did the law make priests?
42. Why the law called a schoolmaster?
43. Are we under the schoolmaster now?
44. For whom is the gospel, or new covenant?

45. How is the law of Moses exclusive?
46. How did the law of Moses interfere with God's worldwide purposes?
47. What was the Jew's attitude toward the Gentile?
48. With the law separating them, could they worship in one congregation?
49. Why was it necessary to abolish the law?
50. Where is reconciliation?
51. What is the "new man"?
52. When and where did the law end?
53. Did Christ come to destroy the law?
54. The law speaks to whom?
55. Are we under the law?
56. When is a testament of force?
57. When did the New Testament become operative?
58. Contrast the Old and New Testaments?



# The Apostles

---

*Memory Verses:* Matt. 16:19; II Cor. 5:20.

## MEANING OF THE WORD APOSTLE

The word Apostle (Greek Apostolos, from apo, from, and stello, to send) means one sent away; by implication, one sent on a mission. Jesus selected twelve men that he might send them forth to preach (Mark 3:14). Hence, they were called apostles. They have been too much neglected; we are not as familiar with them as we should be. Their importance is attested by the fact that Jesus selected them, carefully taught them, and trained them during his ministry on earth, bore with their weaknesses and follies, and entrusted to them the great work of preaching the gospel to the world. The prevailing ignorance of their work and relationship to the unfolding and developing of the kingdom of God is both lamentable and criminal; lamentable because it is criminal.

## THEIR NAMES

Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, or Nathaniel, Thomas, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Lebbaeus or Thaddeus, Simon and Judas Iscariot.

## SOCIAL STANDING

The original twelve were not selected from among the religious leaders of the Jews, nor were they selected from what might be styled the lower strata of society—the shiftless, irresponsible element; but rather from the great common class, the class that heard Jesus gladly (Mark 12:37). While they were not learned in the schools of the rabbis, they were not illiterate; for it is said that all Jewish children were taught to read in the Synagogue schools.

Some of them, at least Peter and Andrew, James and John, were fishers. Simon owned a goat (Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:11). The fact

that they had hired servants indicates that they were men of some means and business ability. Matthew was a publican, tax collector (Matt. 9:9; Luke 5:27). The Bible gives us very little information touching the life and occupation of the apostles, because their office and work is to be emphasized rather than their personal history.

## **JUDAS ISCARIOT**

Possibly there is no one character more detested than a traitor, and especially must this be true of him who betrayed the Master. In the list of the apostles Judas is always last. He was selected by Christ and with the others sent forth on their mission to the Jews, empowered as they were (Matt. 10:4-15; Luke 6:16; Mark 3:19). Matthew and Mark add, following his name, the qualifying clause, "who also betrayed him." Luke adds, "who was the traitor." Judas was the treasurer for the company (John 13:29), and to him most likely was entrusted the duty of making the purchases incident to their work, as well as for their personal necessities. Though he was styled the friend of Christ (Psalms 41:9), his selfishness as well as parsimonious-ness is manifested when he interposed an objection to Mary's spending money for ointment with which to anoint the feet of Jesus (John 12:1-5). Not only is Judas Iscariot numbered with the twelve apostles, but he "obtained a part of the ministry" (Acts 1:17).

Satan entered Judas (John 13:26), for money he betrayed the Lord (Matt. 26:15), and than committed suicide (Matt. 27:5).

Touching the matter of his sins, Peter says, "Judas fell away" (Acts 1:25).

## **MATTHIAS**

In the first chapter of Acts is recorded the selection of Matthias to "take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas fell away" (Acts 1:25).

Peter declares that an apostle must be a witness of the resurrection

of Jesus (Acts 1:22). In the company of the disciples assembled as mentioned in Acts 1, there were two, Barsabas and Matthias, who possessed the necessary qualifications for the apostleship. "Of the men therefore that have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that he was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us of his resurrection. And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabas who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, "Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show of these two the one whom thou has chosen, to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas fell away, that he might go to his own place, And they gave lots for them; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles" (Acts 1:21-26).

Some have entertained the view that the disciples had an election—that by balloting they elected Matthias. Such is far from the fact.

They prayed, Lord, "show of these two the one whom thou hast chosen" (verse 24). They did not ask the Lord to show them which one to choose, or elect, but prayed the Lord to show which one he had chosen. They then gave lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias.

The idea of election is not in casting lots. In an election, there is necessarily the expressing of choice, while in casting lots there is not, and can not be. Thayer says, "Kleros, A lot; i.e., an object used in casting or drawing lots, which was either a pebble, or potsherd, or a bit of wood, . . . the lots of the several persons concerned, inscribed with their names, were thrown together in a vase, which was then, shaken, and he whose lot first fell out upon the ground was the one chosen." "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of Jehovah" (Prov. 16:33). The idea of the disciples electing one to take the place of Judas is not in the lesson. The Lord made the selection and made known his choice.

## **WAS MATTHIAS AN APOSTLE?**

Some have contended that since the occurrence in Acts 1 was before the apostles were "clothed with power from on high" (Lk. 24:49; Acts 2:1-4), their action was without authority. Had they been making the choice there might be some ground for this contention; but it was never within the province of the apostles to make the selection. That Matthias became one of the apostles is attested by Luke when he says that Matthias "was numbered with the eleven apostles." "But Peter, standing up with the eleven" (Acts 1:26; 2:14), also by Paul when he affirmed that Christ appeared to "the twelve" after his resurrection (I Cor. 15:1-5). The "twelve" are referred to in Acts 6:2.

## **PAUL THE APOSTLE—SIGNS OF AN APOSTLE**

To be an apostle one must see the Lord. Paul was no exception to this though he was not chosen, from the disciples who had been instructed by the Lord during his personal ministry. Paul says, "Last of all, as to the child untimely born, he appeared to me also" (I Cor. 15:8). By way of parenthesis it might be observed that Paul could not be "last of all," if there were ever to be any more apostles. Hence, the contention by the Mormons that they have apostles now cannot be true. The expression, "as to the child untimely born," means that Paul was made an apostle out of the ordinary, after the regular time for making an apostle. If within such a few years after the death of the Lord Paul felt that his selection was as one "untimely born" for the apostleship, what must be the feeling of one who makes the claim that he is an apostle nearly eighteen hundred years after the death of the Lord?

Jesus appeared to him on his way to Damascus and said: "I appeared unto thee to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things where in I will appear unto thee" (Acts 26:16). Paul was called to the apostle-ship by the Lord in person, and not by man—"not from men, neither through man but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father" (Gal. 1:1). He received the gospel by revelation as did the other apostles, "Neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught

it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12). He affirms that the other apostles imparted to him nothing (Gal. 2:6). His special mission, was to the Gentiles (Gal. 1:16; 2:7-9).

The signs of an apostle were (II Cor. 12:12): (1) A divine call—"not from men, neither through man" (Gal. 1:1). (2) A witness of Christ's resurrection— must have seen the Lord (Acts 1:21-22; I Cor. 15: 5-8).

Inspiration (Luke 24:47-49); Acts 1:8; Gal. 1:12). (4) Miraculous power (Acts 2:43; Heb. 2:4). (5) Speaking with tongues (Acts 2:4; I Cor. 14:18).

## **THE APOSTLES WERE—**

*Judges.* "Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon the twelve thrones, judging- the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28). It is the province of the judge to interpret the law, declare what the law is touching any point, pass sentence, and make decisions and rulings. With respect to what the law is, the apostles are the authority. In an important sense they have also passed sentence—they have declared the doom of the wicked, and the reward of the righteous.

*Witnesses.* "Ye are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8; 2:32). No man now can be a witness of the life, works and resurrection of Christ.

*Ministers of the New Testament* (II Cor. 3:6). Not only does Paul affirm that the apostles were ministers of the New Testament, but he very positively affirms that they were not ministers of the Old. After contrasting the Old and New Testaments, and affirming that the Old had passed away (II Cor. 3), that he might develop further the apostolic relationship to the new order, he reaffirms their ministry—"Therefore seeing we have this ministry," the ministry of the New Testament, "we faint not" (II Cor. 4:1). It was their duty and mission "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory

of God" (II Cor. 4:6).

*Earthen Vessels.* A vessel is a container. The apostles were earthen vessels in which the gospel was deposited that they might carry it to the world. Jesus might have elected angels by which to send the gospel to the world; but in that case, people would have given chief attention to the messengers rather than the message, and would have thought that the power and saving force was in the vessel, rather than in the message it contained. But God would emphasize the value of the message and the saving power back of it. He selected earthen vessels, men beset with human weaknesses as, we are, in whom every one knew dwelt no regenerating power "that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves" (II Cor. 4:7).

(5) *Ambassadors* (II Cor. 5:18-21). Paul declares that God gave unto the apostles the ministry, or service, of reconciliation—the work of bringing the world back to God. Evidently they could do this only by preaching the gospel to the world and bringing them through penitent obedience back to harmony with God. This is made certain by Paul's further declaration (in verse 18) that God had committed to them (marginal reading, "placed in us") the word of reconciliation. These preliminary affirmations led him to declare, "We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God."

"An ambassador is the highest rank of diplomatic agent. He represents the person of his sovereign as well as the state which sends him." As ambassadors they were acting on behalf of Christ. It is presumption now for a preacher to claim to be an ambassador.

## **KEYS OF THE KINGDOM**

While Christ was with them he indicated that great power and authority would be given them. Jesus said to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16: 19). It

should not be concluded from this quotation that Christ gave this power to Peter only. The same was given to each of the apostles (John 20:21-23). Giving the "keys of the kingdom" to the apostles was simply transferring to them authority in the kingdom, which is indicated further by their binding and loosing. Some speak of "keys" as though Jesus gave them two keys with which they might open two doors, thus indicating that there were two ways of entering the kingdom, one for Jews, and another for the Gentiles. The conditions imposed on Jews and Gentiles were the same.

*To Hear the Apostles Was to Hear of Christ.* When a true messenger has been selected and sent by Christ, he delivers the message of Jesus. It follows that the declaration of Jesus, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me" (Luke 10:16), is applicable to the apostles as it was to the seventy. No one should be so impious as to say that the words uttered by Jesus are of more importance than those uttered by his accredited messengers. The apostles had tremendous power granted them; but Jesus did not leave them to proceed in their ignorance and prejudices nor according to human wisdom. They had adequate preparation.

## **THEIR PREPARATION**

The twelve were with Jesus from the beginning of his ministry, first, simply as disciples; later, chosen as apostles. They were with him during his entire ministry, under his personal care, influence, and teaching. In this school there was no seclusion from the world, but out in the open and amidst the throngs and busy marts they learned the practical lessons of life from him who "spake as never man spake." It is true that on occasion when alone with them he taught them the deep things of his kingdom, things which the world was not prepared to receive. He even taught them how to pray (Matt. 6:5-15). On one occasion the disciples asked him to teach them to pray, as John taught his disciples (Luke 11:1-4). Notice the brevity, the directness, the simplicity, and yet the fullness, the comprehensiveness of this model Jesus gave his disciples.

*Did Not Rely on Self.* The personal teaching and training was not sufficient for so great work. Memory is treacherous—they might forget, indeed would forget much. To forestall this human weakness, Jesus promised them "The Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:713).

## **"PRIMACY OF PETER" AND APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION**

*"The Primacy of Peter"* is a Catholic dogma. They claim that he was placed by Christ as supreme head of the church on earth, over even the rest of the apostles; and that the Pope of Rome is his successor, and today has the keys of the kingdom, with power to change times, seasons and laws, being infallible in his official capacity. Because of Peter's impulsiveness, energy and boldness, he for a time gained more notoriety than the other apostles, but that is no indication of official superiority. The church at Jerusalem had no such idea as that of Peter being superior to the others, for when he returned from preaching to Cornelius, some contended with him about it (Acts 11:118). Peter did not dismiss the matter by denying their right to call his conduct in question, but quietly explained the whole matter. They were satisfied. His explanation, not official authority as a Pope, silenced them. Imagine, if you can, any number of Catholics attacking a Pope as these men did Peter! Would he silence them by argument? He would excommunicate them, and they would not be reinstated in favor unless they did penance.

Again, in the controversy about circumcision (Acts 15) there is no indication that the church or the other apostles ascribed to Peter any superiority over the other apostles. Later Paul withstood Peter to his face, because Peter was in the wrong (Gal. 2:11-14). Certainly Peter did not here assert any official superiority over Paul; and Paul asserted that he himself was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostle (II Cor. 11; 5:5; 12:11).

From the facts already submitted, "It follows, of necessity, that the



apostles could have no successors in office. Neither the Pope of Rome nor the Archbishop of Canterbury can ever possess their qualifications, or discharge the special duties of their office. The fact is that in, and by, and through their writings they themselves still live and preside over the whole church of God, according to the promise of Christ given to them in Matt. 19:28, and in the same sense it is that Christ will be with them, even to the end of the world (Matt. 28:20). And hence we conclude that the twenty-seven canonical books of the New Testament are the only proper successors of the apostles on earth."

## **WHEN AND WHERE THEY BEGAN**

It is evident that they could not begin their worldwide work as apostles till they were fully prepared by the reception and miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit. In fact, Jesus emphatically charges them, "Tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). The city was Jerusalem (verse 47). "Being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father ... ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence" (Acts 1:4, 5). They were in Jerusalem, the proper place, and the time was near, "not many days hence." Again, "But ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). "In Jerusalem," "when the Holy Spirit is come upon you," "Not many days hence."

A few days later "when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all together in. one place," the proper place, the city of Jerusalem, "and suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder like as a fire; and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4). They were now in the proper place, and the time for their work had come. The multitude came together, and Peter preached to them, convincing them of sin, so that they asked, "Men and brethren,

what shall we do." Whatever Peter told them to do was binding on them and is binding on us today (Acts 2:36-38).

## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION

- The Model Prayer.
- Personal Traits of Peter.
- Personal Traits of Paul.
- Personal Traits of John.
- Personal Traits of the Other Apostles.

## QUESTIONS

1. Repeat the memory verses.
2. What does the word apostle mean?
3. Why were they called apostles?
4. Repeat from memory the names of the apostles.
5. From what class of men were they selected?
6. Were they illiterate?
7. Tell about the business of some of them.
8. Was Judas ever an accredited apostle?
9. Give your reasons for your answer.
10. In what capacity did Judas serve Christ and the apostles?
11. How did he manifest his parsimoniousness and love for money?
12. Give the closing incidents in the history of Judas.
13. How did Judas lose his apostleship?
14. Who took the place of Judas?
15. What necessary qualifications does Peter mention?
16. How was the choice of Matthias indicated?
17. Was Matthias elected by the apostles?
18. What does casting lots mean?
19. Give quotations and proof that Matthias was an apostle.
20. Was Paul one of the original apostles?
21. When did the Lord appear to him?
22. What is the meaning of "as to one untimely born?"
23. In what sense was this true as to Paul?
24. What does "last of all" mean?

25. Can there then be any apostles now?
26. Why did the Lord appear to Paul?
27. Give some references proving that the Lord called him?
28. To whom was he an apostle?
29. Give five signs of an apostle.
30. Give the work of apostles as judges.
31. Give the work of the apostles as witnesses.
32. Of what were they witnesses?
33. What is essential to being a witness?
34. Can one be a witness now?
35. Apostles are ministers of what?
36. In what sense were they earthen vessels?
37. Why men instead of angels selected to carry the gospel to the world?
38. What does the word reconciliation mean?
39. Why was reconciliation necessary?
40. Who was to be reconciled?
41. How did the apostles bring about reconciliation?
42. What is the official rank of an ambassador?
43. What quotations indicate their authority as ambassadors?
44. What is the significance of "the keys of the kingdom?"
45. Do you know how many "keys" were given?
46. How many ways of entering the kingdom are there?
47. Are the words of Jesus of more authority than those of the apostles?
48. Give something of the personal training the twelve received of Christ.
49. Repeat the prayer Jesus gave them as a model.
50. What can you say of its length, brevity and the like?
51. Why was not personal training and teaching sufficient?
52. How was this deficiency supplied?
53. Give the Roman Catholic position as to the official superiority of Peter.
54. What does Paul say of his own authority as an apostle?
55. Why can the apostles have no successors?
56. For what must they wait before beginning?
57. Where were they to wait?
58. When did they receive the power?
59. What was this power?

60. Whose sermon is recorded?
61. What effect did it have?
62. What reply did Peter make?
63. Is it binding?

# The Great Commission

---

*Memory Verses:* Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:46-49).

The personal ministry of Jesus, that period between his baptism at the hands of John in the river Jordan (Mark 1:9, 10), and his death on Calvary (Luke 23:46) was devoted to labor among the Jews. (John 1:11,12).

## LIMITED COMMISSION

When he sent the apostles out to preach, during his personal ministry, he limited their field of labor to the Jews. "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and charged them, saying Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:5,6).

## THE GREAT COMMISSION

After his resurrection from the dead Jesus gave what we call the Great Commission. This Commission is recorded six times in the New Testament, as follows: (1) "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: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you" (Matt. 28:19, 20). (2) "And he said unto them, 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). (3) "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission, of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46, 47). (4) "Jesus therefore said to them again, Peace be unto you: as the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when, he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit: Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven

unto them; whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:21, 23). (5) "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). (6) "But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:16, 18).

## **ALL AUTHORITY**

If this commission is not founded on absolute authority it is worthless. He came forth from the grave supreme in power, for he had conquered Satan, and all power "in heaven and on earth" had been given him (Matt. 28:18). He is now on the right hand of God, angels and powers and authorities being made subject to him (I Pet. 3:22). Though he has all authority, all power, he is not at this time exercising all power; all things have not yet been subdued, and will not be till the end of time. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. "Then cometh the end when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy which shall be abolished is death" (I Cor. 15:24-26).

All authority must include legislative, judicial, and executive. Jesus is Lawgiver, Judge and King. Men who have swayed the scepter over a few of the denizens of earth have been styled great; but think of Jesus who rules the hosts of angels, and is the rightful ruler over all men. Satan does not rightfully rule in any heart—he is a usurper. The disciples to whom Jesus gave this world-wide commission must have been well prepared to hear him claim all authority. They had seen him open the eyes of the blind, loose the bound tongue, unstop the deaf ear, make the lame walk, cleanse

the leper, raise the dead, cast out devils, and still the winds and waves.

## **DIFFERENT WORDING OF COMMISSION**

Some have wondered why Matthew, Mark and Luke differ in the wording of their records of the Great Commission. In those days effort was made to give the sense rather than the exact words. But another very important fact has been overlooked. Jesus was about to send the apostles out on the greatest work ever committed to man. It is a mistake to think that he mentioned the contents of the Great Commission only once. After his resurrection, he was with the disciples about forty days, speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God (Acts 1:1-3). What was more natural, yea, more important, than for him on various occasions to dwell on every phase of their work, and speak of it from every angle. This is exactly what he did.

Matthew records the Commission as given on a mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28:16-20). Mark and Luke seem to have recorded what he said on different occasions in Jerusalem.

In each record emphasis is placed on different phases of the Commission.

Matthew's record emphasizes rather the duty of the preacher, Go—make disciples—baptize—teach.

Mark's record covers more the duty of the people to whom they preached, and the blessing they may obtain, Go—preach the gospel— he that believeth—and is baptized—shall be saved.

Luke's record emphasizes the beginning, time and place, Preach—repentance and remission of sins—beginning at Jerusalem— when clothed with power from on high.

## **HEAVEN'S MARCHING ORDER: GO**

This command was given directly to the apostles, but every

disciple to the extent of his ability is obligated to carry the gospel to the world. Love for souls should impel us, and the love of Christ will constrain us in the work. The imperative command is "Go," but the method of going is left to the convenience and common sense of the individual, so long as he does not contravene the rights of others.

## **NO NEED FOR MAN-MADE SOCIETIES**

The command to "go" does not authorize the organization of societies to send forth men to preach. A society is not a method of doing anything; it is an organization to do a certain work. Societies must adopt the same methods of sending men and money that have been open to the churches throughout the Christian dispensation. There is not a righteous work they undertake that is not a work the church should do as such. Societies today are rival institutions of the church, proposing to do the very work the church must do to fully carry forward the work the Lord has commanded. A mob is an unauthorized, unlawful body of men who propose to do the work which belongs to the courts of the land; so, societies today are unauthorized, unlawful organizations proposing to do the work which belongs to the church. Do not forget, in opposing the unlawful societies, to go and preach the gospel.

## **THE FIELD**

The apostles began at Jerusalem, their home at that time; then to Judea, the homeland; then Samaria, the neighboring country, then to the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8). Let us not begin and end at home. What missionary effort have you put forth in the past year, and what are you to do this year to have the gospel preached to others?

## **PREACH, TEACH**

In Matthew, the Commission reads, "Make disciples of all nations." In Mark it reads, "Preach the gospel to the whole creation." To "make disciples" is to make learners, and in



preaching the gospel information is imparted to the people. The world in sin needs teaching; people need to know that they are sinners, that sin is ruinous and leads to a damnation in the world to come, that God longs for their salvation, and that in mercy he points out the way to escape. Without being taught, there is no way for them to escape. "And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me" (John 6:45). What, my brother, are you doing to open the eyes of the blind, and to turn them from darkness to light? But you must first inform yourself. Ignorance is sin. Failure to strive to save lost men is a crime against God and man.

## **ANALYSIS OF THE COMMISSION**

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19, 20).

In this record we find: (1) Make disciples. (2) All nations. (3) Baptize. (4) Teach.

The apostles were commanded to make disciples and baptize, and to teach those they baptized. Salvation is not directly mentioned in this record, though they were to baptize "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," which in every instance necessarily brought salvation.

*Does the Commission Contemplate Infants?* Some who are partisans to a theory to which they have subscribed insist that "all nations" are to be baptized, that since "nations" includes infants, they are, therefore, subjects of baptism. That such a contention is untrue must be obvious to the thoughtful. "Nations" are composed of murderers, infidels, and moral reprobates, as well as good men and infants. The pedo-baptist puts it this way: (1) Christ commanded the baptism of all nations. (2) Infants are a part of nations. (3) Therefore infants are subjects of baptism.

That such is not correct reasoning must be evident from the

following: (1) Christ commanded the baptism of all nations. (2) Infidels, drunkards and moral perverts are part of nations. (3) Therefore infidels, drunkards and moral perverts are subjects of baptism.

The trouble with the foregoing reasoning is that the major premise is false. Christ did not command the baptism of "all nations."

The command is not to baptize infants, adults, men or women. They were commanded to baptize the ones discipled. The command is "make disciples" and baptize them—the ones discipled. Infants cannot be disciples, neither are moral perverts disciples, and for that reason neither can be baptized.

*Is a Disciple a Christian?* "Jesus therefore said to those that had believed him, if ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31, 32). A disciple is not necessarily a Christian; the word signifies that one is a learner, a pupil. Before one can be baptized he must be a disciple—a learner—must be taught till he believes in Christ as required in the Commission as recorded by Mark. It should be remembered, though, that after one has been baptized, after one becomes a Christian, one is to continue to learn of Christ, and is therefore a disciple.

*Record of the Commission by Mark.* "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).

In this record we find: (1) Preach. (2) Believeth. (3) Baptized. (4) Saved.

This record emphasizes the duty of the people, and promises salvation to those who believe and are baptized.

From the Commission in Matthew and Mark it is learned that the apostles were to make disciples, and baptize the believer. It is also learned that the ones baptized are to be taught to observe all things

that Christ commanded; but it has not been learned from the record by either Matthew or Mark, when or where they were to begin their work of teaching or baptizing.

*Record of the Commission by Luke.* "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46, 47).

In this record we find: (1) Preach. (2) Repentance. (3) Remission. (4) Begin at Jerusalem. (5) After being clothed with power from on high.

*The Commission in Full.* To get the Commission in full, we must take all the items learned from all the writers. This gives us the following:

### **Matt.**

- Make disciples.
- All nations.
- Baptize in name.

### **Mark**

- Preach.
- Every creature
- Believeth.
- Baptize Saved.

### **Luke**

- Preach.
- All the nations.
- Repent.
- Remission.

Preach. All nations, Believe, Repent, Baptize. Saved.

Though everyone recognizes that all the foregoing items are in the Great Commission, we are well aware that different people arrange them differently. Our Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian neighbors insist that salvation comes before baptism—that baptism is not necessary to salvation.

Are you able to follow the records of the Great Commission and place salvation before baptism?

Let us follow the apostles and see how they arrange the items in their preaching.

## **FIRST SERMON UNDER THE GREAT COMMISSION**

The Great Commission demanded they begin in, the city of Jerusalem, after they were clothed with power from on high. On the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ the apostles were in the city of Jerusalem, were baptized in the Holy Spirit, and began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:1-4).

### **THE FIRST SERMON**

The multitude came together, and Peter's sermon followed. Did he follow the record?

- He preached. That much is certain (Acts 2:14).
- He demanded that they believe (Acts 2:36).
- He commanded them to repent. (Acts 2:38).
- He commanded them to be baptized (Acts 2:38).
- They were promised remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

Here then is, 1 Preaching, 2 Believing, 3 Repenting, 4 Baptism, 5 Remission of sins, in the exact order as outlined in the summing up of the Great Commission.

### **BLACKBOARD EXERCISE**

## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

- Whose duty is it to preach?
- How all may have part in preaching.
- Purpose of the miracles performed through men.
- Importance of having a teachable spirit.
- Jesus as a teacher.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Repeat the memory verses.
2. What is meant by Personal Ministry of Jesus?
3. To whom did Jesus come?
4. What is the Limited Commission?
5. What is the meaning of the word "commission?"
6. Who were the Samaritans?
7. Tell about the business of some of the Apostles.
8. What do we mean by the "Great Commission?"
9. When was it given?
10. How many times recorded in the New Testament?
11. To whom given last?
12. What authority is back of the Commission?
13. Do your actions indicate that you so believe?
14. Has Christ subdued all things?
15. What is the last enemy to be destroyed?
16. When will the last enemy be destroyed?
17. What will Christ then do with his kingdom?
18. What does all authority include?
19. Were the disciples prepared for the great commission?
20. How do you account for the different wordings of the Commission?
21. How long was Jesus with them after his resurrection?
22. Where was the Commission given as recorded by Matthew?
23. Where was the Commission given as recorded by Mark and Luke?

24. Matthew emphasizes what features of the Commission?
25. Mark gives prominence to what?
26. What does Luke feature?
27. What is the first commandment in the Commission?
28. How broad is its application?
29. Was any method of going prescribed?
30. What is meant by method?
31. Is a Missionary Society an institution or a method?
32. To whom is the gospel to be preached?
33. What was their order of procedure?
34. Did they begin at home and remain there?
35. Should we?
36. What does "make disciples" mean?
37. Why must the gospel be preached?
38. What lessons do sinners need to learn?
39. What are you doing to bring sinners to Christ?
40. Give the items in Matthew's record of the Commission.
41. They were to baptize into what?
42. Are infants a part of nations?
43. Why not then baptize them?
44. What is the meaning of the word disciple?
45. Is a disciple necessarily a Christian?
46. Quote the Commission as given by Mark, and name the items.
47. From whose record do we learn when and where the apostles were to begin?
48. What do we learn from Luke's record?
49. Name the items contained in the Commission in full.
50. What is your idea as to the proper arrangement of the items?
51. Name the time and place of the beginning.
52. When did the Holy Spirit come?
53. Show the harmony between the Great Commission and Peter's preaching on that occasion.

# The First Sermon

---

*Lesson Text:* Acts 8.

*Memory Verses:* Acts 2:46, 47.

## **JEWISH FEASTS**

The law prescribed three annual feasts which all able-bodied men were required to attend, namely, The Feast of Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Ex. 23:16, 17; 34:22, 23; Lev. 23:4-44; Num. 28:16-31; 29: 12-37; Deut. 16:1-17).

## **PENTECOST**

Each feast had its special requirements and significance. Our present lesson has specially to do with Pentecost. Pentecost is a Greek word meaning fiftieth. The Jews made reference to this feast by this name after they learned to speak Greek. It is also called the "Feast of Weeks" and "The Feast of Harvest."

*When Did Pentecost Come.* The method of determining the time of its observance has been a matter of much dispute. That it was held on the morrow after the end of seven weeks, which would make it fifty days from the day the count began, is certain. But from what date are we to count? Some hold, as Josephus (and he is not always reliable), that the count began on the second day of Passover week. But the first day of Passover week, though it is called a holy day, is never called "the sabbath," and the count was to begin on "the morrow after the sabbath" (Lev. 23: 15, 16). "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering; seven sabbaths shall there be complete: even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days." The Sabbath mentioned in the last clause can refer to nothing but the regular weekly sabbath. For the fiftieth day to fall on the morrow after "the sabbath," the count must begin on the first day of the week.

This proves conclusively that the sabbath from which they began to count was the regular weekly sabbath. Since Pentecost came on the morrow after the sabbath, it necessarily came on the first day of the week.

Some have held that the sabbath from which the count began was the weekly sabbath of the Passover week; but we fail to find any authority for this in the word of God. In fact Deut. 16:9 says, "Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: from the time thou beginnest to put the sickle to the standing grain shalt thou begin to number seven weeks." Now seasons vary somewhat; besides, the Jews added a month every two or three years to keep the balance between the calendar and the solar year. This also would offset the matter somewhat. It is easy therefore, to see that they would not always begin to "put the sickle to the standing grain" the same week of the first month. Our conclusion, therefore, is, 1. That the Passover had nothing to do with the time of beginning the count. 2. That Pentecost always came on the first day of the week. 3. That the count did begin on the first day of the week after beginning the harvest.

## **BLACKBOARD EXERCISE**

### *Pentecost*

- Joel 2:28-30 began to be fulfilled on Pentecost (Acts 2:16-21).
- Isaiah 2:1-4 fulfilled on Pentecost (Acts 2:14-42).
- Luke 24:46-49 fulfilled on Pentecost (Acts 2: 38).
- Matt. 16:20 Keys—began to be fulfilled on Pentecost (Acts 2:33).
- On Pentecost was the beginning of the gospel in its completeness. (Matt. 16:20; I Cor. 15:1-4; Acts 2:22-42).
- On Pentecost was the beginning of the work of the Holy Spirit in convincing the world of sin (Jno. 16:7-8; Acts 2).
- On Pentecost was the beginning of the work under the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15, 16; Luke 24: 46-49; Acts 2).



- On Pentecost was the beginning of remission of sins in the name of Jesus Christ (Luke 24:46-49; Acts 2:38).
- On Pentecost was the beginning of the work of the apostles as ambassadors for the Lord (II Cor. 5:20; Acts 2).
- On Pentecost was the first announcement that Jesus had been seated on the throne of David, as promised (Isa. 9:7; Luke 1:32; Acts 2:29-35).
- On Pentecost the Holy Spirit came to guide the apostles into all truth (John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 2:1-4).
- On Pentecost was the beginning of the New Covenant. (Heb. 9:15-17; Acts 2).

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

V. 1. *"They were all together in one place."* Whether only the apostles were present, or the one hundred and twenty mentioned in the first chapter were also present, has been a source of much discussion. The verses following would seem to indicate that only the apostles were present; at least, it is clear that only the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit.

V. 2. *"And suddenly"*—'without notice, unexpectedly on their part, "there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind." It is not stated that there was any wind, but a sound as of a wind. "And it filled all the house where they were sitting."

V. 3. *"There appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as a fire."* The manifestation could be seen as well as heard. Not tongues of fire, but with the brightness, appearance of fire. The fiery appearance was first presented as one body, but was then separated into tongues like fire—a tongue for each one in the assembly, "and it sat upon each of them."

V. 4. *"All filled with the Holy Spirit."* They were completely overwhelmed with the influence and power of the Holy Spirit. This is not the first time people were filled with the Holy Spirit. Elizabeth, Zacharias, and John the Baptist were each said to have been filled with the Holy Spirit (Lk. 1:15, 41, 57). But the apostles

on this occasion received such power as had never been given before. It is the fulfillment of the promise of Christ as recorded in John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 1:5, 6. "*Began to speak in other tongues,*" i.e., in languages other than their own. "*As the Spirit gave them utterance.*" The Holy Spirit not only filled them and inspired them, but so took possession of them as to control their vocal organs, and, by means of their vocal organs, to give utterance to his own words—the words were the words of the Holy Spirit.

V. 5. "*Dwelling at Jerusalem Jews,*" the residents as well as those who were there to attend the feast of Pentecost. Some historians state that it was the custom of the foreign born Jews, when they earned a competency for life, to move to Jerusalem to spend their last days.

"*Devout men*"—religious men. This term is used to describe the Jews just mentioned. During the days of Christ and the apostles many of the Hebrews were scattered amongst other nations. V. 6. "*When this sound was heard. "Sound," Greek phones,* is not the Greek word for report or rumor. As usual when something out of the ordinary takes place "*the multitude came together*" "*Every man heard them speaking in his own language.*" Some of the languages were no more than different dialects but this was not true of all. Not one man spoke in all the languages, but that one spoke in one, and another in other language.

## **PETER'S SERMON**

V. 14. Peter is found, as ever, the ready speaker among the apostles. Though it seems that all the apostles spoke on this occasion, only Peter's discourse is recorded. After calling for the attention of the people he entered into a discussion of the wonderful incidents of the occasion.

V. 15. "*These are not drunken,... it is but the third hour of the day.*" It was 9 A.M. according to our time, the time for the morning prayers and sacrifices. It is said that during the feast of Pentecost the Jews considered it improper to take food before this hour, much less to drink wine.

V. 16. "*Spoken through Joel.*" Joel 2:28-30.

V. 17. "Last days" cannot be the last days of the Jewish dispensation, for that dispensation ended when Jesus died on the cross (Col. 2:14). The Christian dispensation being the last dispensation, it is called the last days. "*will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.*" "All flesh" was not used in the absolute, for there is flesh of men, birds, fish and beasts, etc. On such God did not propose to pour out his spirit; neither does the term "all flesh" include every human being. Wicked men, liars, murderers, infidels and gamblers are not contemplated. The term includes all nationalities. The Spirit was poured out on the Jews on Pentecost and on the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10) "*Shall prophecy,*" speak of God. A prophet is God's spokesman whether foretelling future events or revealing the truth, or making known present duties.

V. 18. "*Servants... handmaidens.*" No class distinction with the Lord.

## **PETER'S ARGUMENT**

In the verses thus far considered Peter does not enter into the main, theme. Here he seeks to remove the prejudices of his hearers, refuting the charges of drunkenness, and to gain their attention by showing them that what they thought was an indication of intoxication was only the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel.

*First Argument, Vs. 22-24-* Peter shows that God's approval rested upon Jesus; for God had wrought great miracles through him. The people knew of these miracles. Likely Peter referred in detail to many of the miracles as proof. The circumstances would call for him to enforce the argument with all the power he could summon. We must remember that we have recorded only an abridgement, the substance, of Peter's sermon.

*Second Argument. Vs. 25-31.* He here appeals to the Scriptures, to their own devoted David. He shows that David could not have

been speaking of himself when he said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul unto Hades, neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption," for David "died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day," but that "he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ."

*Third Argument. Vs. 32.* "This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses." The apostles had every means of knowing whether or not Jesus was raised. They claimed to have seen him after he arose. They could not have been mistaken. They were willing to stand up in Jerusalem, where Jesus was crucified, and in the presence of his murderers say, God raised him from the dead, for we saw him, knowing that they might suffer death also. No man will knowingly tell a falsehood under such circumstances, and stick to it.

*Fourth Argument. Vs. 33-35.* Here he refers to the great demonstration which had attracted and astonished them as proof that Jesus had been exalted to the right hand of God, and had "poured forth this, which ye see and hear." His hearers could not explain what they saw and heard, but he could. He then quotes David as additional proof.

*Conclusion. Vs. 36.* "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified." Here Peter calls for a full acceptance, a full belief of the truth of what he had said. It carried conviction of many hearts, and many who, a few days before had been crying, "Crucify him, crucify him," now, pricked in their hearts cry out,

## **"WHAT SHALL WE DO?"**

Being convinced that they were sinners they show by this question that they had surrendered to Christ. Their hands were stained in blood. People are disposed to maintain a position once decidedly taken. No people have ever more thoroughly committed themselves than had these Jews for the crucifixion of Christ. They were overwhelmed by the proof of his divinity as presented by Peter. They were left not a vestige of ground on which to stand. If

there was ever a people prepared to prove that Peter did not present the facts certainly this people were. They were in the very shadow of the cross, in, the very city where the crucifixion had taken place, in short, they were parties to the death of the Lord, and every detail was fresh in their minds. Like brave men, honest men, they acknowledged their mistake, their wrongs, and cried out, "What shall we do?" They surrendered, gave up. What do you think of people in this day, so far removed by time and distance from the scenes of the crucifixion, who insist that these men were fools—in allowing themselves to be so easily convinced by Peter?

*"What shall we do?"* This was the first time this question was asked in the Christian dispensation, the first time since the death of the Testator. How important, how far reaching it must be. The answer has to do with the eternal destiny of the soul of men. How anxious were these people for the answer. Are you thus anxious? The answer, having been given under the Great Commission, is applicable to you, to all men in this age of the world. Hear the answer.

## **THE ANSWER**

V. 38. *"Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins."* They were commanded to do two things, (1) Repent, (2) Be Baptized. "Repent ye, and be baptized." This is to be done *"in the name of Jesus Christ."* Though they had despised, rejected, and crucified Jesus, they must now, if they would be saved, do as he directs; they must rely on him for the salvation desired. The command is plain, *"Repent ye, and be baptized. . . unto the remission of your sins."* Repentance and baptism come before the remission of sins.

## **BAPTISM BEFORE SALVATION**

In every place in the Bible where baptism and salvation are mentioned in the same connection, baptism is always mentioned before salvation.

*Mark 1:4.* "John came, who baptized in the wilderness and

preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins. 1. Baptism. 2. Remission of sins.

*Luke 3:3.* "Preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins." 1. Baptism. 2. Remission of sins.

*Mark 16:16.* "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." 1. Believe. 2. Baptized. 3. Saved.

*Acts 2:38.* "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." 1. Repent. 2. Baptized. 3. Remission of sins.

*Acts 22:16.* "Arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins." 1. Baptized. 2. Wash away sins.

*1 Peter 3:21.* "After a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism." 1. Baptism. 2. Save.

## **THE FIRST SERMON UNDER THE GREAT COMMISSION**

As you know, this sermon of Peter's is the first sermon delivered after the giving of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18, 19; Mk. 16:15, and is, of course, in perfect harmony therewith.

*Mark 16:15, 16.* "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

*Acts 2:38.* "Repent ye, and be baptized... unto the remission of your sins."

(1) Believe. (2) Baptized. (3) Shall be saved. (Mk. 16:15, 16).

(1) Repent. (2) Baptized. (3) Remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

Is baptism presented as a condition of salvation in the Great Commission, and in Peter's sermon.—Is there perfect harmony

between the two statements— Acts 2:38 and Mark 16:15, 16?

Undue importance should not be attached to baptism, but that it is a condition of salvation in this dispensation cannot be successfully denied.

## **NO INFANTS**

It must be evident to each one that infants are not contemplated as subjects of baptism by Peter, for he commanded that people repent before baptism, and infants cannot repent. The Great Commission makes belief necessary to baptism, and infants cannot have faith.

## **IN CHRIST**

- Salvation is in Christ (II Tim. 2:10).
- We are baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:26,27).
- We are new creatures in Christ (II Cor. 5:17).
- We are baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3, 4).

## **A WORD FROM COMMENTATORS**

Dr. Hackett, Baptist, on Acts 2:38 says, "*Eis aphesin amartion, in order to the forgiveness of sins* (Matt. 26:28; Lk. 3:3), we connect naturally with both the preceding verbs. This clause states the motive or object which should induce them to repent and be baptized. It enforces the entire exhortation, not one part of it to the exclusion of the other." Page 69.

Mr. John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church, commenting on Acts 22:16, says, "*Be baptized, and wash away thy sins*—Baptism administered to real penitents, is both a means and seal of pardon. Nor did God ordinarily, in the primitive church, bestow this on any, unless through this means."—Wesley's Notes, page 197.

## GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*Acts 2:38. "The gift of the Holy Spirit."* As to what this language means there has been an endless controversy. It is a matter that we do not wish to attempt to settle for the student, though we suggest a few things which we think will be worth considering in the study. The people on that occasion evidently accepted the words with their natural import, as we should today. If a father should say to his son, "You shall receive the gift of \$100," no one would misunderstand. At the house of Cornelius "the Holy Spirit fell on them that heard the word" (Acts 10:44). The next verse says, "On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit." If we let the Bible explain itself, and leave theorizing off, we will save much trouble.

*V. 39. "For to you is the promise, and to your children."* As this promise is conditioned on "repentance" and "baptism" it can be to no others than those who repent and are baptized. It does not, therefore, apply to infants. "*All that are afar off*" evidently has reference to the Gentiles, and that Peter did not fully comprehend the statement is seen in the fact that it took a miracle to convince him that he should preach to the Gentiles (See Acts 10).

*V. 40. "With many other words he testified, and exhorted."* This shows that Luke gave only an epitome of Peter's sermon. The term "testified" refers to the argumentative part, followed by exhortation, "save yourselves." In the absolute no man can save himself; but the gospel having been preached and the terms of pardon made known, the sinner saved himself by accepting salvation on the terms announced.

*V. 41. "Then they that received the word were baptized."* Received his word, believed it fully, and complied with its demands. Their obedience was not delayed, it was "on that day."

*V. 42. "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching."* The apostles were faithful in obeying the command of Jesus to teach those baptized all that he commanded them (Matt. 28:20). The disciples were earnest, persistent, in their efforts to learn. We need



a revival of their spirit today. "Fellowship" sometimes refers to contribution, but it usually has a much wider significance, and implies a joint participation in all our relations. "*Breaking of bread*" refers to the Lord's Supper. "*The prayers.*" Some of the foolish and hurtful theories by which some try today to restrict prayers never entered in amongst the early Christians to cool their zeal or dampen their ardor. They believed in God, felt their dependence on him, and, as a natural result, prayed to him. Some people develop a negative religion and study more about what they should not pray for than about that for which they should pray.

Vs. 44, 45. Here we have a remarkable exhibition of the fellowship mentioned in verse 42. Further reference is made to their generosity in chapter 4:32-35; 5:1-11; 6:1-6. A full discussion of this would require more space than can be allotted to it in this lesson; but an unbiased study of these references and the attendant conditions and circumstances will show the following to be true: (1) Many of the converts, having come from other countries to the feast, had no means of support while in Jerusalem. (2) They must remain there for a time to learn the principles of Christianity. (3) They must have help in supplying the necessary food and clothing. (4) Those who had possessions gave freely. (5) It was no Communism, but an effort to meet an emergency. (6) No man was compelled to sell his possessions.

V. 47. Such unselfishness brought them in "favor with all the people."

## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

- Meaning of terms, "Lord" and "Christ."
- Miracles of Christ; and their import.
- Resurrection of Christ.
- "Added to the Church."
- Liberality of the first Christians.

## QUESTIONS

1. Repeat the memory verses.
2. Name the annual feasts of the Jews.
3. By what names was the feast of Pentecost known?
4. Meaning of Pentecost?
5. Method of determining the time of the observance of Pentecost?
6. On what day of the week did Pentecost come?
7. Describe the fulfillment of Joel 2:28-30 on Pentecost.
8. Show how Isa. 2:1-4 was fulfilled on Pentecost.
9. Show how Lk. 24:46-49 was fulfilled on Pentecost.
10. Show how the "keys" were used on Pentecost.
11. Show how the complete gospel began on Pentecost.
12. How did the Holy Spirit convince of sin on Pentecost.
13. Prove that Great Commission began on Pentecost.
14. Prove that remission of sins was in the name of Christ on Pentecost.
15. Show work of apostles as ambassadors on Pentecost.
16. Give proof that Jesus was on David's throne on Pentecost.
17. Prove that New Covenant began on Pentecost.
18. Who were baptized *in* Holy Spirit?
19. With what manifestations did the Holy Spirit come?
20. Describe the visible appearance.
21. What does "filled with the spirit" mean?
22. Name some who were filled with the Spirit previous to this.
23. What does "tongues" mean?
24. How did the apostles speak?
25. What brought the multitude together?
26. How many languages and dialects were represented on Pentecost?
27. At what hour did Peter begin his sermon?
28. What proof did Peter give that they were not drunk?
29. Whose prophecy did Peter quote as fulfilled on Pentecost?
30. What does "last days" signify?
31. To what does "all flesh" refer?
32. When was the Holy Spirit poured out on the Jews and Gentiles?

33. What does prophecy mean?
34. What was Peter's first argument?
35. What was Peter's second argument?
36. What was Peter's third argument?
37. Were the apostles competent witnesses?
38. What was Peter's fourth argument?
39. Repeat his conclusion.
40. What effect did this have on the people?
41. What did they ask?
42. Were they in position to refute his argument if false?
43. Discuss the importance of their question and Peter's answer.
44. Repeat Peter's answer.
45. What of the order of repentance, baptism, and remission of sins?
46. Show the harmony between this sermon and the Commission.
47. What gift was promised to those baptized?
48. To whom is the promise?
49. Upon what is the promise conditioned?
50. Who were the ones a "far off"?
51. Give some proof that we have only a synopsis of Peter's sermon.
52. How do we save ourselves?
53. Who were baptized?
54. Give substance of verse 42.
55. Discuss verses 44 and 45.

# Obedience

---

*Memory Verses:* I Sam. 15:22; Eccl. 12: 13, 14.

*"Obedience, compliance with command, prohibition, or known law and rule of duty prescribed; the performance of what is required or enjoyed by authority, or the abstaining from what is prohibited, in compliance with the command or prohibition. To constitute obedience, the act of forbearance to act must be in submission to authority; the command must be known to the person, and his compliance must be in consequence of it, or it is not obedience."*—Webster.

## **TEST OF OBEDIENCE**

The essence of obedience is willing submission to authority. A man may do some things which God commands every one to do without, in the least degree, obeying God. He may do it because of the pressure of circumstances, or because his reason suggests it as the proper thing to do. Hence, in all ages God has had some test of obedience, some way to test a man's loyalty to Him. We can see a reason for many things God commands, and, while we must, in all such cases, comply, there is no test of our loyalty in such cases. In a test of faith or loyalty there must be no apparent connection between the act commanded and the result promised, and there should be no outside circumstances or surroundings impelling us; the command must be such that the moving cause is our reverence for God and our devotion to him. Illustrations will be given as we proceed with the lesson.

## **LEARN OBEDIENCE**

It is the nature of the will to assert itself; it is an inseparable quality of the will. This is seen early in child-life. It is not an indication of perversity, but of will force. The will must be trained; it must learn its lesson. The child very early learns some lessons of obedience to natural laws. He reaches forth his hand

and touches a live coal, and learns a lesson in self restraint. Were it not for these lessons he learns early in life he would soon destroy himself. But he must learn obedience to his parents. Many parents fail to realize that obedience must be learned, but it is true. Paul says of Christ, "Though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb. 5:8). Every human being must learn obedience. The parent does his child an irreparable wrong when he fails to teach him obedience. Training the child to respect parental authority prepares him to be more respectful for all other rightful authority, both civil and divine. Failure of parents to discharge this God-given duty is flooding the country with men and women without respect for constituted authority, making of them criminals. One of the first lessons a soldier learns is unquestioning and prompt obedience. The purpose of much of his training is that he may learn to obey, as well as respect, the authority.

## **THE GREATEST WAR**

From the time that Satan tempted Eve there has been waging a great war, before which all other wars, both as to numbers engaged, time of duration, and issues involved, pale into insignificance, involving, in some way, every human being. This is the war between right and wrong, between the forces of righteousness and the forces of sin, between God and Satan. There is, there can be, no neutral ground. "He that is not with me is against me" (Matt. 12:30). Every intelligent creature has by voluntary choice lined up on one side or the other. "Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16). Our obedience is the measure of our allegiance.

God seeks an enlightened, willing, whole hearted obedience. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds) ; casting down imaginations, and every high things that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to

the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:3-5). This is a war of complete subjugation; every imagination, thought, and action must be brought into harmony with his will.

## **GOD'S RULE IS FOR MAN'S GOOD**

God seeks the present and eternal good of man; Satan seeks the present corruption and eternal ruin of man. It must be evident to every one who believes in God, that whatever God requires is for man's good. His commands grow out of man's needs. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23), hence God in his mercy and benevolence supplies man's most urgent and fundamental needs by directing his steps. God's rule therefore is benevolent, not tyrannical; and his commands are manifestations of his grace, and not antagonistic to it.

*Commands and Grace.* It is unfortunate that some religious teachers have placed the grace of God on the one side, and the commands of God over against it, thus making them antagonistic, and have taught that if man obeys God's conditions of salvation he is not depending on the grace of God, and that if he depends on God's grace the keeping of God's commands is a matter of no consequence. But the person not blinded by false theories sees in all God's commands his grace or favor for man. God has shown man how to live; he has taught him the true philosophy of life. It is easy, therefore, to see that man's highest good and happiness lies along the pathway of obedience to God.

## **OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLES**

*Their use to us.* "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). But these things written aforetime will not benefit us, unless we acquaint ourselves with them. It is encouraging and comforting to learn that God has never forsaken his own, nor failed in a single promise.

## **ADAM AND EVE**

Gen. 2 and 3. The happiness of Adam and Eve continued so long as they listened to the voice of God, but disobedience brought despair.

## **NOAH**

Gen. 6, 7 and 8. The world had become so corrupt by sin that the Lord determined to destroy it, but Noah found favor with God because he walked with God (Gen. 6:9). Only Noah and his family would God save from the flood. To this end God commanded him to build an ark. God's power is not limited. He could have chosen other ways of saving Noah, but having selected this method, and having announced it, Noah had no choice but to disobey and be lost, or obey and be saved. It is not the province of man to legislate as to how he is to be saved. For Noah to have offered a substitute or made a change in any of the specifications would have been disobedience. But Noah, rejoicing in the infinite wisdom and goodness of God, and knowing his own limitations and helplessness, did not presume to do other than God directed. "And Noah did according to all that Jehovah commanded him" (Gen. 7:5).

## **THE BRAZEN SERPENT**

Num. 21:4-9. The Israelites murmured against God and against Moses. They were dissatisfied with their food. "And Jehovah sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." The people confessed their sins, and asked Moses to pray for them. This he did; but, instead of removing the serpents, God provided a remedy. "Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a standard: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he seeth it, shall live." Moses obeyed: "And it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked upon the serpent of brass, he lived." For the people there was no other way of escape. God might have chosen another way. But this plan having been chosen and announced, left the people without any choice but to disobey and die, or obey

and live. No substitute on their part would do, and they offered none. Their case was too desperate to admit of delay or experiment. Of course none of them thought the brass cured them. And there was no blasphemous blatherskite present to call it "*snake salvation.*" It was God's cure brought about in his own way. But it was a test of their faith. Evidently they could see no reason in it, but their confidence in God led them through obedience to the point where God healed them. They knew the cure came from God. Thus that which was a test of their faith became also a means of strengthening their faith. Had God commanded Moses to make a strong decoction of herbs and bathe the wounds with it, the people, thus cured, would have attributed the cure to the solution of herbs and lost sight of God in the matter. But the whole circumstances, as arranged, strengthened their faith in the power, and benevolence, and mercy of God.

## **WALLS OF JERICHO**

Josh. 6:1-21. When the Israelites had crossed the river Jordan into the land of Canaan, they first camped near the river. God had given them the land, yet they must, by God's help, drive out the inhabitants. The city of Jericho stood first in their way. It is a mistaken idea to suppose, as some do, that, because God gives us a thing, we have nothing to do to gain possession of the gift. "And Jehovah said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thy hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor." He had given him the city, yet he told him how to get it. They were to march around the city once each day for six days, and on, the seventh day seven times. The priests were then to blow the trumpets, and the people were to give a shout unto God; the walls would then fall down and every man was to go straight before him and take possession of the city. Then, and not till then, might they have what God had given them.

Jesus taught his disciples to pray for their daily bread (Matt. 6:11), but no one expects the bread to come already baked and the hams already cured. He has provided the means by which we are to receive it, yet it comes from him, he gives it.



What the Israelites did in taking possession of the city was in no sense paying God. The whole procedure of taking the walls was a strange affair, and, no doubt, after it had gone on for some days, it excited a good deal of curiosity and discussion in the city. Human wisdom would never have suggested such a method of warfare. Every Israelite knew that their marching, blowing the trumpets, and shouting could have no effect on the walls; but God did not throw them down till the last act had been performed. A test of their faith. Yes; but their faith was sufficient for the occasion. Paul says, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been compassed about for seven days" (Heb. 11:30).

## **NAAMAN THE LEPER**

II Ki. 5:1-19. Naaman was captain of the armies of Syria. In some of the expeditions made by the soldiers a Jewish maiden had been taken captive and was servant maid to Naaman's wife. Though Naaman was a great man with the king, he was unfortunately suffering from the loathsome disease, leprosy.

Though this Jewish maiden was a slave in a strange land, she was not bitter towards her captors, but was solicitous for the welfare of the husband of her mistress, and lamented his condition. We do not know the age of this Jewish maiden, but it is worthy of note that she had been taught of the God of Israel and his prophet, and, though amongst strangers and associated with people who worshiped idols, she was neither ashamed nor afraid to tell of Jehovah and his power. Indeed the Jews taught their children the law of Jehovah.

This Jewish maid said to the wife of Naaman, "Would that my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, then would he recover him of his leprosy." The report of the Jewess is made known to Naaman, and then to the king. As is often the case, a correct report was not made, as is evidenced by the fact that the king of Syria sent to the king of Samaria, demanding that he cure Naaman. The king of Samaria was much disturbed, for he knew his inability to cure the man, and declared that the king of Syria was only seeking a pretext for war.

The prophet of Israel sent word unto Jehoram saying, "Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." So Naaman came and stood at the house of Elisha, and Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of Jehovah his God, and wave his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. And his servant came near, and spake unto him, and said, "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? how much rather then when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?" He was unable to see any connection between the act commanded and the end to be attained. He was quite certain there was no virtue in the water to cleanse him of his disease. In his rage he began to retract his steps. How many have their own idea as to how Jehovah is to save them, and are waiting, quite willing to be saved, so soon as Jehovah adopts their method of saving? At the solicitation of his servant, Naaman followed the directions of the prophet, went and dipped seven times in the river Jordan, "and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." Naaman's faith was so weak that it came perilously near not standing the test. Surely no one thinks the water of Jordan cured Naaman. If such a view were entertained we would send all lepers to Jordan that they might be cleansed. Jehovah cured Naaman, but not till he obeyed. In every age of God's dealings with men he has blessed them when they obeyed his commandments.

No doubt there are people who would have cried "water salvation" had they heard the command of the prophet to Naaman.

Christ commanded proper subjects to be baptized (Matt. 28:18, 19; Mk. 16:15, 16). You may be unable to see how baptism can have any connection with salvation, but if you earnestly desire salvation, and your faith is of the character that will bring you justification, you will trust God for the promise and rejoice in

being baptized.

## **AN EXAMPLE UNDER CHRIST'S PERSONAL MINISTRY**

*Blind man.* Jno. 9. This man was born blind. Jesus "spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed his eyes with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." Surely this was an unheard of procedure, and so far as the record informs us, Jesus did not indicate what the result would be, or whether there would be any. He left him with the command to go and wash. If Jesus so much as furnished him with a guide, the record is silent. But he had the spirit of prompt obedience. "He went away therefore, and washed, and came seeing." This was no "water cure," nor clay cure; yet there was clay and water in the obedience which brought the cure. When questioned by the Pharisees as to how he received his sight, he replied, "He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and I see." But the Pharisees did not think for a moment that the water and the clay opened his eyes, for they asked him concerning Jesus. "What say-est thou of him, in that he opened thine eyes?" And the man who was given the power to see knew that the power was not in the water and clay, for he said, "He opened mine eyes."

Jesus says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"; and every one who knows as much as those Pharisees or the blind man, knows that the water is not the saving agent any more than it was the curative agent in the blind man's case.

## **NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING**

We show our confidence in our physician by following his directions. When we decide to set aside some of his directions as unnecessary and follow only those that suit us, we show more confidence in self than in the physician, and, by such a course, take the case in our own hands. The same is true in our treatment of what God says. The soldier shows his confidence in his leader by unquestioning obedience. No good soldier acts on the supposition that some of his commander's orders are essential and

some are not, nor does he ever substitute. If a man performs the wrong act thinking he is doing God's will he has the obedient spirit. There is in him no intentional rebellion; his guilt is that of ignorance. Jehovah requires whole hearted compliance with his will. "Though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:8, 9). That Jesus is the author of salvation no one questions, and that he is the author of salvation to the obedient this passage plainly shows; but who are the obedient? Certainly those who unquestionably do his will.

## **THE PURPOSE OF OBEDIENCE**

God is fitting and preparing us for eternal habitation with him. In heaven God's will must reign supreme, otherwise confusion and disorder will prevail. In heaven they serve him (Rev. 7:15; 22:3). Joyful, loving obedience will be there, but it must be learned here. Here we form our characters. God is seeking in his preparatory school to train us in the art of obedience. "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth" (Matt. 6:10). No man can sincerely make that petition to God unless he is willing for God's will to reign supreme in his own heart. No one in heaven will urge that some of God's commandments are non-essential. Such characters will not be there.

## **OBEDIENCE IN TEACHING**

Parents are commanded to teach their children, to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). God expects all his children to arrive, in reasonable length of time, at a point where they can teach others (Heb. 5:12). Teach is the command, and it is our duty to obey.

*What shall we teach?* Here the command rings clear: "Preach the gospel," "Preach the word." Beyond this no teacher in religion has a right to go. In olden times God said: "He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully" (Jer. 23:28). The servant who delivers the word of his master has no right to change it by

addition or suppression. To do so is presumptive disobedience. The teacher is duty-bound to speak God's word faithfully, and the people are entitled to the pure word of God; to change it or withhold any of it is to sin against God and defraud the people—to steal the word of God from them. "Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith Jehovah, that steal my word every one from his brother" (Jer. 23:30). The preacher or teacher today who withholds any of God's truth from the people is as much a thief as were these false teachers of old. Jesus said, "He that sent me is true; and the things which I heard from him, these speak I unto the world" (Jno. 8:26). Again, "For I spake not from myself; but the Father that sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (Jno. 12:49). When the Jewish Council sought to restrict the teaching of the apostles, Peter and John replied: "We cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard" (Acts 4:20). Paul pronounces a curse on him who preaches any other gospel (Gal. 1).

## **MORAL AND POSITIVE COMMANDMENTS**

The difference between positive and moral commands is not stated in the Bible; but a little thought will show the difference. A moral command, or law, regulates a man's natural relationships. Some things are right within themselves and some things are wrong within themselves. The inherent relation between the creature and the Creator makes it right that we reverence God and have no other gods. In our relationship with each other certain things are inherently right and certain things wrong. Stealing, lying, murder are inherently wrong. Commands regulating us in these matters are said to be moral commands, or laws. These inherent rights and duties have always been recognized in all well ordered communities, even where they had no revelation from God. In this sense, perhaps, the Gentiles did by nature the things of the law (Rom. 2:14, 15). But it is not easy to see how some of God's commands grow out of our natural relationships. In fact, some of them seem to be contrary to these relationships. When God commanded Abraham to offer Isaac (Gen. 22), the command seemed to violate the most natural and fundamental relationship between father and son. Such commands rest for their authority

solely upon the will of the law giver. The law of the sabbath is another illustration. There is no inherent principle in man's relations to his fellows or to God to suggest such a duty. This law, then, may be called a positive law. The command to Naaman to dip in Jordan seven times and to the blind man to wash in the pool of Siloam were positive commands. So is also the command to be baptized.

## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

- How does Faith Grow?
- Foolishness of God.
- Walking by Faith.
- Relationship of Faith and Obedience.
- Fear of Punishment, and Hope of Reward.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Repeat the memory verses.
2. Define obedience.
3. What constitutes real obedience?
4. How does God test man's loyalty?
5. Is it possible to do what God says, and yet not obey him?
6. When are God's commandments a test of loyalty?
7. Is there a test of faith in doing what our reason naturally approves?
8. What is the nature of the test of loyalty?
9. Why is man's loyalty tested?
10. What is the nature of "a will"?
11. Is will force an indication of perversity?
12. Is will force sinful?
13. Name some ways in which the will early learns some lessons of obedience.
14. Why should children be taught obedience?
15. How did Jesus learn obedience?
16. What is the greatest world war?
17. What issues are involved in this war?
18. How does this war affect you?

19. Can neutral ground be found?
20. What is your natural relationship to Jehovah? To Satan?
21. How is your allegiance to your Master shown?
22. Is there any compromise between the forces of sin and righteousness?
23. Contrast the present and final results of God and Satan ruling in the heart.
24. Tell of Adam and Eve's disobedience.
25. How did God save Noah from the flood?
26. Could he have selected other ways?
27. What choice did Noah have?
28. Could Noah make any change in God's requirements?
29. What is said of Noah's obedience?
30. What sin of the Israelites is mentioned in Num. 21:4-9?
31. How did God punish them?
32. What remedy was provided for healing them?
33. What was required of the people?
34. Could they have offered a substitute?
35. What cured them?
36. Would you call it "snake salvation"?
37. Could you see any reason in doing what God required?
38. Show wherein it was a test of their faith.
39. How did this test strengthen their faith?
40. What might they have said, had some medicinal remedy been used?
41. Describe the method of taking Jericho.
42. Would reason have suggested such a method?
43. How was it a test of their faith?
44. Was Jericho given to them unconditionally?
45. Name some gifts that are conditional.
46. Name some gifts that are unconditional.
47. Who was Naaman?
48. What was his affliction? What is leprosy?
49. Tell about the Jewish maiden.
50. To whom was Naaman sent?
51. What prophet heard of this?
52. What message did he send to Naaman?
53. What did he tell Naaman to do?
54. What effect did this have on Naaman?

55. Who prevailed on him to obey?
56. Would you call it "water salvation?" If no, why?
57. How was Naaman's faith strengthened?
58. Is baptism a test of faith?
59. What did Jesus command the blind man (Jno. 9) to do?
60. Could the blind man see any reason in this? Can you?
61. What did Jesus promise him?
62. Why was this a test?
63. How did it strengthen his faith?
64. What did the water and clay have to do with curing him?
65. Tell of the conversation he had with some of the enemies of Jesus.
66. Does water have anything to do with saving folks now?
67. How do we show our confidence in Jehovah?
68. To whom is Jesus the author of eternal salvation?
69. Whose will must reign supreme in heaven?
70. What would the result be, otherwise?
71. Why must obedience be learned in this life?
72. Whose duty is it to teach?
73. What must we teach?
74. How may we steal God's word from the people?
75. Discuss "moral" and "positive" law.
76. Give some illustrations of each.



# Disobedience

---

*Lesson Text:* Heb. 2.

*Memory Verses:* Matt. 7:24-27.

*Definition:* "Neglect or refusal to obey; violation of a command or a prohibition; the omission of that which is commanded to be done, or the doing of that which is forbidden; breach of duty prescribed by authority. Non-compliance."—Webster.

## WAYS OF DISOBEYING

*Rebellion.* Refusing to obey God. In an important sense all disobedience is refusing to do what God says, but there is a kind of disobedience that openly rebels at God's authority and makes no pretense to doing his will. To this class belong the infidels and the irreligious of all classes, as well as some who profess certain forms of religion. In fact, more or less rebellion is in all classes. God said concerning his own people, "But this people hath a revolting and rebellious heart; they are revolting and gone" (Jer 5:23). Concerning his own people God said again, "For it is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of Jehovah; that say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits" (Isa. 30:9, 10). Such people rule God out of their lives, and will none of him

*Example.* Rebelliousness of heart was the cause of Israel's being carried into captivity. This spirit often manifested itself as they journeyed through the wilderness. One example in particular is quite striking. They had reached the lower borders of Canaan. Twelve spies were sent to view out the land. The report of ten of the spies was not very encouraging to the people, and the people rebelled at going on, and spoke against God. The full account of this is given in Numbers, thirteenth and fourteenth chapters, which you should read in this connection.

In Deuteronomy 1:20-46, Moses rehearsed these matters before the people. Because they refused to go Moses said, "Yet ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah your God." Moses attempted to allay their fears by reminding them of how Jehovah had always cared for them, "Yet," said he, "in this thing ye did not believe Jehovah your God." They were then reminded that they would have to wander in the wilderness till all but the younger people, excepting Caleb and Joshua, would perish. They were so grieved at this that they decided over Jehovah's protest to make the attempt. Concerning this Moses said to them. "Ye rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah, and were presumptuous." The latter part of the sin illustrates the sin mentioned in the next paragraph.

*Doing What God, Prohibits.* Adam and Eve were guilty of doing the very thing God forbade. So far as we know they had fully complied with God's requirements to dress the garden and keep it. But God had also given them one prohibition. They deliberately did what Jehovah prohibited. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" was a prohibitory commandment broken by the Hebrews on many occasions.

*Example I. The Prophet Sent to Bethel* (I Kings 13). A prohibitive command was broken by the prophet who came out of Judah to Bethel to prophesy against Jeroboam's altar. The prohibition was: "Thou shalt eat no bread, nor drink water, neither return by the way that thou earnest." As this prophet was returning by another route, an old prophet, having heard of him, overtook and brought him back; and by lying to him, succeeded in inducing him to eat. While at the table, the man God had honored by sending him to cry against the altar erected at Bethel, heard these words, "Forasmuch as thou hast been disobedient unto the mouth of Jehovah, and hast not kept the commandment which Jehovah thy God commanded thee, but earnest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place of which he said to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy body shall not come unto the sepulcher of thy father." He paid the penalty for his disobedience with his life.

*Example II. Sabbath Breaking.* (Num. 15:33-36). God forbade

work on the sabbath. A man was found gathering a supply of wood on the sabbath. He was brought to Moses and Aaron, and the congregation. "And they put him in ward, because it had not been declared what should be done unto him." No penalty had yet been declared concerning such case. However, now at God's command they stoned him to death. (Let it be remembered that Christians were never commanded to keep the sabbath—it was a commandment of the Jewish dispensation, and given to the Jews only. The Sabbath question will be fully discussed in a subsequent lesson).

*Substituting.* Substituting is disobedience. It is especially easy for religious people to disobey God by substituting something for what God has commanded. The idea that something else will do as well seems to be a fatal idea with some otherwise good people. They have not a very high regard for the sanctity and dignity of God's law. In a desperate case of sickness, if attending them was a skilled physician in whom they had confidence, they would not presume to substitute for the medicine he prescribed something which they thought would do as well, or better.

Cain and Abel each made sacrifices; Cain of the first fruits of the ground (Gen. 4:3) ; Abel, of the firstlings of his flock (Gen. 4:4). The fact that God accepted Abel's offering and rejected Cain's shows that Abel brought the sacrifice God commanded. Cain brought a substitute. God rejected the substitute.

Many now substitute sprinkling for immersion. (This will be fully discussed in a lesson to follow in this series).

God commanded the baptism of believers, and some now substitute infant baptism, the baptism of those who cannot believe. (See lesson Infant Baptism to follow in this series).

*Adding to God's Requirements.* Many are not satisfied with the simplicity of God's requirements. They revel in religious ostentation—they want a religion that is elaborate and showy. The Pharisees added an endless number of things to the law of Moses (Matt. 15 :1-9). These added things made their whole worship

vain, and by them they made void the word of God. (Read Mark 7:1-9). They added to God's commandments, though he had charged them, "What thing soever I command you, that shall ye observe to do: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Deut. 12:32). The same in substance is found in the New Testament (Rev. 22:18, 19). Presumption is at the bottom of all additions to God's word; for the one who does it presumes that God did not give us what we needed.

*Example.* "Teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Col. 3: 16). That God here commands singing, is not questioned; but some add to the command instrumental music. (Instrumental Music in the worship of the church will be discussed fully in a lesson to follow in this series).

*Leaving Off Something God Commands.* It suits man's taste sometimes to leave off some things God commands. One of the striking examples of this in the Old Testament is found in I Samuel 15:1-24. God's command to Saul was plain: "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman," and cattle. Saul with his army went against the Amalekites, and utterly destroyed them, excepting Agag and the best of the sheep and oxen. He did not come up to the full measure of God's requirements. It was not a failure growing out of misunderstanding or inability to reach an ideal, but he failed knowingly, failed when he could have obeyed, easily. Before Saul returned, God appeared to Samuel and said to him concerning Saul, "He is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments." But Saul, not knowing God's pronouncement to Samuel, returned to Gilgal in full confidence of duty well done, and announced to Samuel, "I have performed the commandment of Jehovah." But Samuel said, "What meanest then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear"? Saul tried to justify himself and insisted, "Yet, I have obeyed the voice of Jehovah." When he saw that argument was useless, he confessed, "I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of Jehovah, and thy word, because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice." It must have

been humiliating for brave King Saul to confess that he feared the people. He possessed a sufficiency of physical courage; he did not fear the people would do him physical harm; but they were his people, his beloved army, and he could not go against them—their wishes became the law for him. It was moral cowardice on Saul's part, and God rejected him. Nothing, perhaps is more needed now on the part of God's servants than moral courage—courage to serve him when others scoff, courage to preach when enemies persecute, courage to preach the truth when by so doing we lose the favor and support of some who are members of the church, courage not to suppress the truth to gain the favor of the people. Some have not this courage.

## **OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLES**

Are you conversant with Old Testament history? "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." (I Cor. 10:6). "Now these things happened unto them by way of examples; and they were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come" (I Cor. 10:11). In this chapter Paul mentions a number of sins committed by the Israelites and how, for their disobedience, they were destroyed, warning us not to be like them, and concludes, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." These examples can be of no value to us unless we acquaint ourselves with them.

*Moses and Aaron.* (Num. 20:2-12). There was no water for the congregation. They complained bitterly of their lot. "And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and assemble the congregation, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes, that it give forth its water; and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock; so thou shalt give the congregation and their cattle drink. And Moses took the rod from before Jehovah, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; shall we bring you forth water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and smote the rock with his rod twice; and water came forth abundantly, and the

congregation drank, and their cattle" (Num. 20:7-11). But Jehovah was not pleased with Moses and Aaron. They took too much glory to themselves. Moses said, "Hear now, ye rebels; shall we bring water out of this rock?" He also smote the rock twice. They took credit to themselves and did not do as Jehovah commanded; and Jehovah said, "Because ye believed not in me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them." Moses certainly believed in the existence of God, for God had just spoken to him, but for the time being his confidence, his trust, was in self more than in God, and God said, "Ye believed not in me." The only reason for any one's departing from God's way, knowingly, is lack of confidence in God.

*Nadab and Abihu.* (Lev. 10:1, 2). They were priests, and it was their duty to offer sacrifices and to burn incense. But on this occasion they went beyond what God said, "and offered strange fire before Jehovah, which he had not commanded them. And there come forth fire from before Jehovah, and devoured them, and they died before Jehovah." It is a dangerous thing to do in religion that which God has not commanded.

*Washing Hands May Be Sinful.* Jesus shows us that so essential a thing as washing hands, if imposed as a religious ceremony, becomes an act of disobedience (Mark 7).

## **MUST BE A THING PROHIBITED**

Some think they are at liberty to introduce anything into God's worship, providing God has not, in so many words, prohibited it. This is evidently a mistake. Such a plan of procedure would open the flood gates for innumerable innovations. On this principle every kind of food and drink might be brought into the Lord's supper, and the offering of animal sacrifices and burning of incense might be added to the worship. We must remember that law is inclusive and exclusive, including the things commanded and excluding all things else. This principle is too well known to need argument. Besides in religious matters God alone has the right to guide man, and when man undertakes to add forms of

service or worship not authorized by God's law, he assumes prerogatives which belong exclusively to God. He is presuming to take the office of God, and one who has proper reverence for God so regards him.

## **OLD TESTAMENT TEACHING**

In the law of Moses (Deut. 28), God sets before the Hebrews a long list of the awful consequences of disobedience—failure of crops and fruits because of drouths and pests, destruction of the sacredness of the home by moral corruption, sickness and physical ailments of all sorts, poverty and want, destruction, and oppression at home by their enemies, and final carrying away by their enemies into captivity where no rest would be found; "so thou shalt be mad"—crazed—"for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." These are the consequences of disobedience to God's law to them, and the after history shows that God will not clear the guilty (Num. 14:18), he will not be mocked, and that his threats of punishment are carried out faithfully, as are his promises of reward.

## **NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING**

In the first chapter of Hebrews Paul refers to angels through whom the former law was made known, and in the second chapter, raises the question, "For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, 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 us by them that heard." Thus it appears that the chance of escaping punishment for disobedience now is less than it was then. "A man that hath set at naught Moses' law died without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment think ye shall be judged worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the spirit of grace? For we know him that said, Vengeance belongeth to me, I will recompense. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is

a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:28-31). It is still true under the gospel dispensation that vengeance belongs to God, and it is still "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The disobedient died without mercy then: the disobedient in this dispensation will receive a "sorer" punishment.

## **DISPENSATION OF GRACE**

Some think that because we live under the dispensation of grace, we will not be held to as strict account as were the Israelites. Know, my brother, that grace to forgive the penitent, and to help him do right, is not license permitting him to trample under foot the Son of God and to count his covenant an unholy thing. They despised Moses' law when they disobeyed it as if it was not a worthy rule of conduct, and we trample under foot the Son, of God when we refuse his rule in our hearts. Paul says, "To you that are afflicted, rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus" (II These. 1:7-8). Again, "But unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil" (Rom. 8:9). Jesus says: "Every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon, the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof" (Matt. 7:26, 27).

## **SOME SOURCES OF DISOBEDIENCE**

*Infidelity.* Of course, if Satan can plant the seed of infidelity in one's heart, he has gained him. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is" (Heb. 11:6).

*Doctrine of Unconditional Salvation.* Those who hold this theory teach that man cannot obey God till he is regenerated by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Those who believe this theory, of



course, will make no effort to obey God till some such time, as they think God has regenerated them. Though God says, "Now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2), they will not heed, and by their actions, they tell him, "No, my time has not come yet." They disobey because they think they cannot obey, and because they do not believe God rewards diligent obedience (Heb. 11:6).

*Just So You Are Honest.* How many people do you find who will say, "It makes no difference what you believe, just so you are honest." Of course, such people think it makes no difference whether one believes right or wrong, and they will, of course, make no effort to know the truth that they may obey it—thereby obeying the Lord. By this deception Satan has lulled many disobedient souls to sleep with a feeling of security. People will not adopt such a foolish theory in anything but religion. (Gal. 1:13, 23; Acts 26:9-11; 23:1).

*Indifference.* The indifference of otherwise good people is alarming. Many people seem not to care whether God exists or whether there is a Bible. God and the Bible have no place in their lives. When they chance to hear preaching it makes no impression on them, they do not regard it as intended for them, and Satan easily takes the word out of their hearts (Luke 8:12).

*Moral Cowards.* Some will halt, wondering what the people will say. They cannot stand criticism or unfavorable opinion. "What will the people think" is more important with them than "What has God said?" These are the "stony ground hearers" (Lk. 8:13). Even preachers sometimes fail to teach some much needed lessons, or declare themselves clearly on some point, fearing it might interfere with their popularity. Brethren at times contribute to such cowardice by making it hard on the preacher who on all occasions dares to preach the truth. They do not realize it, but all such brethren prefer a cringing coward to a man who has the courage to preach his convictions. God give us men of courage, and a spirit of crying for the truth.

*Worldliness.* In the parable of the Sower, Jesus describes it as the

cares, riches and pleasures of this life; such chokes out the word. The world has always had its cares—some become overwhelmed with them. They know not that in Jesus they may find rest. That which should impel them to come to Jesus for relief weighs so heavily that their whole thought is given to carrying the load. The greed for riches and craze for pleasure perpetuates the disobedience of countless thousands. Some care for money only as it enables them to have fun and entertainment; others care not for fun and entertainment so greedy are they for money. All these things contribute mightily towards making us a disobedient race.

## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

- Moral and Physical Courage, and Moral and Physical Cowardice.
- Causes of the Downfall of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah.
- Wherein Christians May Disobey, and the Results.
- The Spirit of Disobedience.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Repeat the memory verses.
2. Define disobedience.
3. How do we disobey?
4. What is rebellion?
5. What did God say concerning his own people, Israel?
6. What caused Israel's downfall?
7. Discuss sending the spies into Canaan, and their report.
8. What was the result of the report on the people?
9. What is a presumptuous sin?
10. What was the nature of the sin of Adams and Eve?
11. Name some prohibitory commandments.
12. Give an example.
13. Tell of the prophet sent to Bethel, and his disobedience—the manner and cause of his disobedience.
14. Discuss sabbath breaking. Give an example.
15. What day of the week is the sabbath?

16. Should Christians "keep" the sabbath?
17. What can you say of the disposition of people to substitute?
18. Why do people substitute—is it a lack of faith, reverence, or a manifestation of egotism?
19. Discuss the sin of Cain.
20. Mention some substitutes for God's commandments today.
21. What is meant by adding to God's requirements?
22. Why do people make additions to God's requirements?
23. Has Jehovah legislated against adding to his law?
24. Name some additions to the commandments and worship of God today.
25. What was Saul's weakness?
26. Name some weaknesses today resulting in disobedience.
27. Of what use are Old Testament examples to us?
28. Who were Moses and Aaron?
29. Give an example of their disobedience?
30. What caused their disobedience?
31. Discuss the sin of Nadab and Abihu.
32. Must a thing be specifically mentioned to be prohibited?
33. Mention some things not specifically mentioned that are sinful.
34. To add a thing not specifically forbidden, leads to what?
35. What befell the Israelites because of their disobedience?
36. Is God as exacting now as in Old Testament times?
37. Discuss the bearing of Heb. 2:2, 3, and Heb. 10:28-31 on this question.
38. Does the dispensation of grace license us to sin?
39. Name some consequences of disobedience now?
40. Name some sources of disobedience.
41. Show how infidelity is a course of disobedience.
42. Show how the doctrine of unconditional salvation leads to disobedience.
43. Is our honesty the standard of right?
44. Show how indifference leads to disobedience.
45. What is the difference in moral and physical courage?
46. What is moral cowardice?
47. To what course of action does it lead?

48. Show how it leads to disobedience.
49. Show how moral cowardice may lead a preacher to suppress some truth.
50. Do you think the people's attitude toward things affects the preacher, causing him not to boldly denounce sin?
51. How is worldliness a source of disobedience?
52. Discuss the parable of the sower.
53. Name and describe the different kinds of soil.

# Grace

---

*Memory Verses:* Eph. 2:8, 9; Tit. 2:11, 12.

Grace is favor, sometimes defined as unmerited favor. It must be embodied in some benefit supplying some need. To be of any benefit a gift must be usable. To throw a drowning man a deed to a diamond mine in South Africa would not supply his needs, for he could not use it; and, in no sense, would it be grace to him. And to offer the sinner a salvation that he is unable to appropriate is not grace, or favor. **GRACE CAME BY CHRIST**

"The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (Jno. 1:17). This does not mean that no sort of grace, or favor, was ever extended to anyone before Christ came. "Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah" (Gen. 6:8). "It shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear, for I am gracious" (Exodus 22:27). "And Jehovah passed by before him, and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in loving kindness and truth" (Ex. 34:6). "For thou wilt bless the righteous; O Jehovah, thou wilt compass him with favor as with a shield" (Psalms 5:12). "A good man shall obtain favor of Jehovah" (Prov. 12:2). But Christ brought grace to the world in a pre-eminent sense—his is specially a dispensation of grace. In him God's grace is manifested to the world in the supreme degree. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rome. 5:8).

## **SOME MANIFESTATIONS OF GRACE**

Wherever God has supplied man's needs, that is God's favor, God's grace to man. God supplied man's greatest need when he sent his Son to die for man. Without this, man's estate was utterly hopeless. He could provide no means of escape from his own sins and their consequences. But man needed to know of God's love and his wonderful sacrifice, and he needed to know how to appropriate the benefits of this sacrifice. And as "it is not in man

that walketh to direct his steps," he needed to know how to live so as to escape the follies and sins about him, and finally to enter in through the gates into the city of God. In the church God has supplied man's need of a spiritual home. Here his need for spiritual training, growth and development is met. In the Bible we have a revelation of all these things. Thus the Bible, supplying some of man's urgent needs, is itself a manifestation of God's grace. In it God reveals himself and the origin and nature of man, gives man the true philosophy of life, shows him how to be saved from his sins, and points the way to life eternal. The world is too much inclined to regard the Bible as something that God has imposed upon the world. This is because we fail to realize man's condition and real needs. No greater favor could be bestowed on a lost man than to show him the way out. Man was hopelessly lost in the wilderness of sin, and God's commands point the way out. Hence, God's commands meet man's need for guidance, and are a manifestation of his favor towards man. Of course, the greatest exhibition of God's grace is seen in the gift of his Son, Jesus Christ; but, next to that, his greatest favor to man is seen in the very command he has given for man's guidance. God's commands grow out of man's needs, and every command of God is full of God's grace. Therefore, to set aside God's commands as of no consequence is to repudiate a part of God's grace.

## **SALVATION CONDITIONAL**

The idea that salvation by grace frees one from the necessity of performing any conditions thereunto has become so thoroughly embedded in the hearts of some that it is hard for them to see that salvation may be by grace and yet conditional; but that salvation is conditional is clearly taught in the Scriptures. Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." There can be no salvation out of the kingdom of heaven, and only those who do the will of God can enter the kingdom. The doctrine of conditional salvation runs through the entire Bible. "But if the wicked turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezek. 18:21). "For

I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord Jehovah: wherefore turn yourselves, and live" (Ezek. 18:32). The sinner is dead in his sins. The question of all ages has been, "How can we live?" Israel of old raised that question: "Our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we pine away in them; how then can we live" (Ezek. 33:19). "You can do nothing," say some; but the Lord answers, "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn away from his way and live" (Ezek. 33:11). But what is the doctrine of Jesus? A certain man asked him, Teacher, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" This man understood salvation to be conditional, and Jesus did not rebuke him for so thinking. He confirmed the idea by saying, "If thou wouldst enter into life, keep the commandments." See Matt. 19:16, 17. The same principle holds good now, for Paul affirms that Jesus "became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9). If you do not obey Jesus, he is not the author of your salvation; and without him there is, there can be, no salvation. Heathen though he was, the Philippian jailer understood that he had to do something to be saved. "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul did not try to show him he was wrong in so thinking, but replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house" (See Acts 16:29-31).

Numerous other passages teach that men are lost on account of their wickedness. Now, no man can prove conditional damnation, and unconditional salvation. If one is unconditional, so is the other; the converse is also true. If men are lost because of a certain course of life, then the opposite course would bring salvation, for the simple reason that the cause of their damnation would not exist. If disobedience brings death, then the absence of disobedience, which is obedience, would bring life. In fact, Jesus so teaches in the contrast which he gives in Matt. 7:24-27: "Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine and doeth them shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon the rock. And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his

house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof." The same fact is present in Paul's contrast in Rom. 2:4-11.

## **SOME OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED**

*Grace and Works.* But the following scriptures are relied on to prove that salvation is unconditional:

"But if it is by grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. 11:6). "Now to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but as of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness" (Rom. 4:4, 5). One thing is certain, namely, Paul is not here condemning faithful obedience to God; neither is he condemning salvation by works as a thing sinful, for he plainly affirms that the works of which he speaks bring salvation as a debt. But what does he mean? We will not understand him if we do not catch the purpose and trend of his argument. The Jew claimed salvation on the grounds of his adherence to the law of Moses; some of the Gentiles, especially the Greeks, claimed that adherence to moral laws and philosophies was sufficient. Both depended on works apart from any system of grace. Paul's argument is intended to convince them of their need of Christ. Depending on their works, as they were, they could see no need of Christ, nor of the grace of God offered through him.

To be saved by works apart from grace, works must be perfect; there must be no sin needing God's forgiving grace. If a man never committed a sin of any sort, if no guilt ever attached to him, he would go to heaven by right on the grounds of perfect works and without grace. Having committed no sin, he could not be condemned; and his works being perfect, he would merit justification, and God would grant him salvation as a debt. This is what Paul contemplates when he speaks of salvation by works without grace. But his argument is that no one has so lived, that all, both Jew and Gentile, have sinned. The moment one sins, he is condemned. If he is ever saved it will not be because God owes it



to him as a debt. Defective works mixed with sinful practices can never bring salvation as a debt. All have sinned, all need forgiveness, and works cannot forgive, neither does law. Having sinned a man forfeits all rights to heaven; if he is ever saved, it must be an act of favor on the part of God, for God owes him nothing. This grace, this favor, which we all need, can be obtained only through Christ, through faith in him. Whether there be one condition of salvation or a dozen required as a means of testing our faith and proving our willingness for God to rule in our hearts has nothing to do with Paul's argument; for no amount of works that a condemned sinner can perform will ever bring salvation to him as a debt. The sinner who believes and is baptized (Mark 16:16) is saved by grace.

*Faith and Works.* To some there seems to be a conflict between Paul in the passages under consideration and James (2:14-26). Even Luther so thought. But there is no conflict. Paul is showing that, our works being imperfect, we can be saved only through the forgiveness offered in Christ; and James is showing that our faith in Christ is imperfect and incapable of justification unless it leads to works. Paul shows that works without faith in Christ will not save, and James shows that even this faith in Christ will not save unless it works. "Faith apart from works is barren." "Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith."

*Grace and Baptism.* "Not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). The thought here is much the same as in Rom. 4:4-5. Our salvation is not due to the righteousness of our works, but to the mercy and grace of Jehovah. Favor is extended to the needy; mercy, to the criminal. We are both needy and criminal; needy, because we are criminal. And our salvation is not due to the perfection of our works. But some have used this verse in an effort to prove that salvation does not depend on our being baptized. But Paul is not here talking about the condition upon which God in his mercy proposes to forgive the sinner. If he were, what he says would come nearer militating against faith and repentance than against baptism; for he says these works of which he speaks and

by which we are not saved are things "which we did ourselves." In believing and repenting the sinner is active—these are things he does himself—but in baptism he is passive—it is something done to him. "Believe on the Lord Jesus," "Repent," so run the commands; the sinner is active in both. He himself believes and repents, but he is commanded to "be baptized." Baptism is something done to him; in it he is passive. Baptism is not something a man does himself; it is something done to him. But who does it? What saith the Scriptures? "When therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples, he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee" (Jno. 4:1-3). Here we learn that Jesus made and baptized disciples), yet in person he baptized no one, but his disciples did. His disciples as his agents did the baptizing, and a person is said to do what he does through his agents. The administrator now is the Lord's agent; and every one who is baptized in obedience to the Lord's command is as truly baptized by the Lord as were those spoken of in John 4:1-3. Hence, baptism, even should you call it a work of righteousness, is not a work of righteousness "which we do ourselves," but which the Lord did through his agents for us. "The washing of regeneration" is baptism. Instead, therefore, of antagonizing the doctrine that baptism is a condition of salvation, Paul here affirms that we are not saved by works of righteousness which we did ourselves, but, according to God's mercy, we are saved by baptism, or the washing of regeneration.

## **GRACE RECEIVED IN VAIN**

Cor. 6:1. "And working together with him we entreat also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." No one could receive the grace of God in vain if it accomplishes its purpose without conditions on our part. Besides, if grace saves us without our cooperation, why should Paul exhort them not to receive it in vain? No one has anything to do with receiving anything that comes to him unconditionally. But, and let us speak it reverently, God's grace is powerless to accomplish anything for you without your co-operation.

I Cor. 15:10. "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not found in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." God's grace made Paul what he was, because it was not bestowed upon him in vain; and it was not bestowed upon him in vain because he labored, cooperated with God's grace in his own conversion and in the growth and development of his own character. Should a benevolent man of means find a poor, homeless boy, ragged and dirty, and take him to his own home, bathe and clothe him, feed and educate him, he would be bestowing his grace upon the boy. When the boy makes a successful and useful man he could look back to his benefactor and say of him, "By his grace I am what I am." But had the boy been unruly and refused to study, the man's grace would have been bestowed on him in vain.

## **GRACE COMES TO ALL**

If people are saved by grace without conditions on their part, why are not all saved? Grace comes to all. "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world" (Tit. 2:11, 12). The grace of God comes to all teaching us. Some refuse the teaching; hence grace has no opportunity to confer upon them the salvation it brings to all. God's grace provided the means of our salvation, brings salvation to us and teaches us how to appropriate it. The next move is ours. This is illustrated by the event of Pentecost (Acts 2). God had provided salvation, and through Peter made it known to the people, and graciously taught them how to obtain the remission of sins. The issue then rested with the people. The next move was theirs. But so much was at stake Peter earnestly exhorted them to make that move, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation" (Acts 2:40). They could save themselves only by performing the conditions upon which salvation was so graciously offered. They were too anxious about their salvation and too intelligent to hesitate and argue that obedience on their part would eliminate grace. They felt the guilt of sin so heavily that they knew that any means of escape offered

them was a matter of great favor, great grace to them. Hence they made no delay in being baptized.

*An Illustration.* Two small boys, walking along a railway near a country village in Tennessee, discovered a broken rail. They knew the passenger train was about due, and their hearts went out in sympathy for all on the train. They rushed up the track, and as the train came in sight one of the boys began manfully to wave his red handkerchief. This was his only means of teaching the engineer that danger was ahead. The engineer stopped the train and saved himself and all on board. Their grace appeared, bringing salvation by teaching the engineer. He gave heed and saved the train from wreck, but had he refused to heed the teaching and plunged on into destruction, the grace of the boys would all have been in vain. By their grace on the one hand, and through the engineer's faith in them on the other, the train was saved. Hence, I think we can easily see how we are

## **SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH**

"For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory" (Eph. 2:8, 9). Grace provided salvation and teaches how to appropriate its benefits; and we, through our faith, lay hold of the salvation offered. On Pentecost (Acts 2), the people were saved by grace through faith, simply because their confidence in God led them to perform the conditions announced to them.

*Divine and Human Sides of Salvation.* There are two sides to the matter of salvation, the divine and the human; and there are two principles of operation, grace and faith. On the divine side grace performed the necessary conditions to bring salvation to man; and on the human side faith must perform the necessary conditions to appropriate the blessings provided by grace. Hence we are saved by grace through faith. Grace on the part of God made Naaman's cure possible ; faith that led Naaman to carry out God's stipulated conditions made the cure a reality.

*Other Illustrations.* Noah found favor with God, and God saved

him from the flood. But there were two sides to his salvation, the divine and the human, grace and faith. Grace made his salvation possible, and faith, active faith, prepared the ark (Heb. 11:7). He was, therefore, saved by grace through faith. Jesus looked with favor on the blind man (John 9). Having anointed his eyes with clay, Jesus commanded him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. By faith he went and washed, and came seeing. He was cured by grace through faith.

Salvation is the free gift of God; but it takes two to perfect a gift, one to make the offer and another to accept. That which is thrust on us without our consent is, in no sense, a gift. God gave Israel Jericho (Josh. 6), but they had to do certain things to come into possession of the gift. He gave them the land of Canaan, but they had to subdue it. Both gifts came to them by grace through faith.

*The Marriage Feast.* Read Matt. 22:1-14. The feast was prepared, and the announcement was made: "All things are now ready: come to the marriage feast." Note carefully the expression: "All things are now ready." The feast was fully prepared and ready for the people, and they were invited to enjoy its bounties. The next move was theirs. And Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is like this. This was a free feast, graciously prepared for the people; but many of them did not eat. The feast was not crammed down unwilling throats, and the kingdom of heaven is like this.

## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

- God's grace manifested in his commands.
- Man's inability to save himself.
- Man's ability to save himself.
- What it is to be justified by law or works apart from grace.
- The divine side and the human side in temporal and spiritual affairs.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Repeat the memory verses.

2. Define grace.
3. How must it be embodied, or manifested?
4. Through whom did grace come?
5. Give some statements about grace in the Old Testament.
6. How then can it be said that grace came through Christ?
7. What is the supreme manifestation of grace?
8. What was man's greatest need?
9. Why could not man provide his own salvation?
10. Show how man needed teaching and how God met his need.
11. Show how God's commands are a manifestation of grace.
12. Show how we repudiate God's grace by refusing to obey his commands.
13. Who shall enter the kingdom of heaven?
14. In what condition is the sinner?
15. How may he live?
16. What did one ask Jesus concerning eternal life?
17. What did Jesus say?
18. To whom is Jesus the author of eternal life?
19. What was the Philippian jailer's question?
20. Give Paul's reply.
21. What did Jesus say of those who hear and do his sayings?
22. What of those who hear and do not?
23. What does Paul teach in Romans 2:4-11?
24. What does Paul say about grace and works?
25. If one never sinned would he be justified by grace or works?
26. Why cannot a sinner be saved by works without grace?
27. How may grace be obtained?
28. What is the difference between conditional salvation and salvation by works?
29. Show that there is no conflict between Paul and James.
30. Quote Titus 3:5.
31. To what work does Paul here refer?
32. Is a person active or passive in believing and repenting?
33. Is he active or passive in the act of being baptized?
34. Is baptism something a person does to himself?
35. How did the Lord baptize people?

36. Does he baptize people now? How?
37. What is the washing of regeneration?
38. According to what and by what does Paul say we are saved?
39. How may we receive the grace of God in vain?
40. Why was not God's grace bestowed upon Paul in vain?
41. How may we co-operate with God's grace?
42. Give an illustration and show its application.
43. To whom does grace come?
44. What does it teach?
45. Why are not all saved?
46. Show how the events of Pentecost (Acts 2) illustrate the truth in Titus 2:11, 12.
47. Give an illustration.
48. Show how we are saved by grace through faith.
49. What is the divine side and the human side in salvation?
50. How do they apply in the case of Naaman?
51. Show how grace and faith co-operated in the salvation of Noah.
52. Show the same in the cure of the blind man.
53. What is involved in a free gift?
54. Is a thing a gift if no one receives it?
55. Prove that God gave Jericho to Israel.
56. What did they have to do to possess that gift?
57. Prove that God gave Israel the land of Canaan.
58. What did they have to do to possess the gift?
59. Tell us about the marriage feast mentioned in Matt. 22: 1-13.
60. Show its application to the principles of this lesson.
61. If the feast was free, why did not some enjoy it?

# The Lord's Supper

---

*Memory Verse:* Heb. 10:25.

The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ at the last Passover observed under the law of Moses. Hence, some familiarity with the Passover feast will help us to better understand some things connected with the Lord's Supper.

The Passover (Ex. 12:1) was peculiarly a Jewish feast, commemorating their deliverance from the destroying angel when he passed through the land of Egypt to destroy the firstborn. The Hebrews who sprinkled the blood of the lamb on the door posts and lintels of their houses escaped the destroying angel. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." This lamb was to be secured on the tenth day of the first month, killed near the close of the fourteenth day, and eaten the following night, which, according to their method of counting, would be the night of the fifteenth. Not a bone of the lamb was to be broken; they were to roast it whole and eat it with bitter herbs. If one family could not eat the lamb, two families joined in the feast. If any remained, it was to be burned. Toward the close of the fourteenth day of the month they put away all leaven, and ate unleavened bread till the evening of the twenty-first. This month, Abib or Nisan, became the first month of their religious year. And this feast became a yearly feast. Great throngs attended this, the most solemn of the Jewish feasts. It is said that the Hebrews living in Jerusalem made great preparation to entertain their visiting brethren who came from all parts of the country to attend the feast.

Twelve Jewish months did not make a full year. To keep the year balanced with the seasons, another month was added every two or three years. It will be seen, therefore, that, although the Passover came on the same day of the first month every year, it varied somewhat as to the season.

The Passover was typical as well as commemorative. Jesus is



called "our Passover" (I Cor. 5:7). Also John says, "For these things came to pass, that the scriptures might be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken" (John 19:36). This was written concerning Christ only in the sense that it was written of the Paschal lamb, a type of Christ. See Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12.

*The Lord's Last Passover Prepared.* Lk. 22:1-30. Jesus and his disciples had come to Jerusalem about a week before the Passover. During this week he taught in Jerusalem during the day and spent the night at Bethany. On the first day of unleavened bread, the day on which the Passover was sacrificed, the disciples asked, "Where wilt thou that we go and make ready that thou mayest eat the passover?" Peter and John were sent to make ready. "Behold, when we *are entered into the city.*" After Jerusalem became the capital city of the Jews, the passover was eaten inside the city of Jerusalem. The lamb was slain at the tabernacle or temple, and his blood was sprinkled on the altar. "*Shall meet you a man.*" Probably Jesus had already arranged with this man to furnish them a room. "*Bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.*" It was an unusual thing for a man to be seen in that country carrying water. Women were usually the water carriers. "*And his disciples went forth and came into the city.*" Evidently they went from Bethany where they had spent the night. Here Jesus remained till later. What emotions must have filled his heart during this day of waiting! "*And found as he had said unto them.*" It must have strengthened their faith to find things just as Jesus had said they would. "*And they made ready the passover.*" The lamb had to be slain and roasted, unleavened bread prepared, and bitter herbs and wine procured. "*In the evening he cometh with the twelve.*" Peter and John must have returned to Bethany after due preparation had been made for the Passover. The twelve, Judas included, were present.

## INCIDENTS AT THE PASSOVER

*"And as they sat and were eating."* Special directions were given for the first observance of the passover in Egypt: "Thus shall ye eat: with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand" (Ex. 12:11). They were to eat it in haste, and in

readiness to depart on a moment's notice. But when they were settled in their own land they ate the feast with more leisure. They did not sit at the tables as we do, but reclined on low couches or mats. In this way their faces were brought near the table. *"One of you shall betray me."* To that peaceful assembly that must have been a startling announcement. *"They began to be sorrowful."* They could not doubt his word, but that one of them should turn out to be so base as to betray him whom they adored was cause for inexpressible sorrow. Judas, of course, must pretend sorrow. *"And to say unto him one by one, Is it I?"* They knew not, of course, that he meant immediate betrayal, nor did they know in what way the betrayal would take place. They knew not what time and change might bring, but the thought of possible betrayal even in the remote future brought anxiety and sorrow to all but Judas. None seemed to be suspicious of another, but every one was anxious about himself. They knew they were in the presence of him whose all-seeing eye penetrated the remotest secrets and weakness of their hearts. It is astonishing that Judas was so blind by sin and his selfish plans that he thought his secrets were not known to the Master. *"He that dippeth with me in the dish."* A sort of sweet sauce was prepared into which they dipped the bitter herbs. A small group might use one dish of the sauce; in large groups, where all could not reach one dish, other dishes were prepared. This was perhaps the case here, and the reply of Jesus, while limiting the traitor to his group, did not specifically point him out. At Peter's request John asked Jesus who the traitor was, and Jesus gave him a sign that did not reveal the traitor at all. *"The son of man goeth, even as it is written of him."* See Ps. 41:9; Isa. 53. *"But woe unto the man through whom the Son of man is betrayed."* Blessings or woes are but the harvest of a life of righteousness or wickedness. Jehovah never made a good man bad, nor has he ever by the concurrence of events forced, a well-disposed man to do an evil thing; but there are instances where he used wicked men to accomplish his purposes. But even then he does not interfere with their freedom of will.

## THE LORD'S SUPPER INSTITUTED

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and

brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.—Matt. 26:26-29.

And as they were eating, he took bread, and when he had blessed, he brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take ye: this is my body. 23 And he took a cup and when he had given thanks, he gave to them; and they all drank of it. 24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured put for many. 25 Verily I say unto you, I shall no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.—Mark 14:22-25.

19 And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. 20 And the cup in like manner, after supper, saying. This cup is the New Covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you. 21 But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. 22 For the son of man indeed goeth, as it hath been determined: but woe unto that man through whom he is betrayed! 23 And they began to question among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.—Luke 22:19-23.

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 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.—I Cor. 11:23-30.

The Lord's Supper was instituted at the close of the Passover feast. The leaders of the Jews had been planning his death, and Judas had already bargained for his betrayal. None of them knew the emotions surging in their Master's bosom, nor did they know what he was about to do. Before he left the supper table, "he took bread," the unleavened bread of the Passover feast; no other was allowed. "When he had blessed." He did not bless the bread, as some suppose. Luke says, "*When he had given thanks.*" Paul says the same. "*He brake it.*" He first took some for himself, and then gave to his disciples. "*The cup.*" Read what each writer says. "This is my blood of the covenant"—Matthew and Mark. "This cup is the new covenant in my blood"—Luke and Paul. The literal cup was not meant, but by a figure of speech the container was put for the thing contained.

*The Roman Catholic Dogma.* The Roman Catholic Church teaches the doctrine of "consubstantiation" and "transubstantiation." They contend that when Christ said, "This is my body," "This is my blood," the bread and fruit of the vine were the actual body and blood of Christ, and that when the priest "blesses" the bread and wine they become the literal body and blood of Christ. But any one of intelligence knows in his heart that the bread is still bread with no change in its nature, and that the wine still contains the same elements and properties.

When Christ said, "I am the vine; ye are the branches" (John 15:5), he did not teach that he was a literal vine and his disciples literal branches. When he said, "I am the door" (John 10:7), "I am the way" (John 14:6), he did not teach that he was either a literal door or road. Earlier in his earth-life Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35, 48). Was he at that time a literal loaf of bread? Of Hagar and Sarah, Paul says, "These women are two covenants" (Gal. 4:24). Was Hagar literally the old covenant and Sarah the new? "This Hagar is mount Sinai." Was she a literal mountain?

Not even a Catholic so believes. In interpreting the dreams of two fellow-prisoners, Joseph said, "The three branches are three days" (Gen. 40: 12); "The three baskets are three days" (verse 18). In interpreting Pharaoh's dream Joseph said, "The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years" (Gen. 41:26). These expressions are as positive as the statement of Jesus, "This is my body"; but not even a Catholic would argue that these were not figurative expressions. When Jesus said, "I am the bread of life," the Jews and many of his disciples made the same blunder as do the Catholics in taking his words ("This is my body") literally; and the Jews said, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" and "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (see John 6:41-66). Jesus said, "This cup is the new covenant." Will the Catholic say that is literal? If so, he believes that the literal cup in the hand of Jesus was actually the New Testament. The Catholics are compelled to admit this is figurative, and in this admission they lose their point.

When Jesus said concerning the bread in his hand, "This is my body," had he disappeared and the bread remained, his disciples might have believed in transubstantiation, but this did not occur—his body remained at the table with no change in form, and in his hand he held the bread. When the disciples ate, they ate bread and not flesh. Paul says, "As often as ye eat this bread," "Whosoever shall eat the bread," "So let him eat of the bread." It is, therefore, expressly stated that in the communion we eat bread, not flesh. And that the fruit of the vine was still the fruit of the vine when they drank it is clear from the Savior's own words: "I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25).

*"My blood of the covenant."* Animal blood was the blood of the old covenant (Heb. 9:19-22). But the blood of Christ is the blood of the new covenant. *"Which is poured out for many."* The term *many* is not used in contradistinction from *all*, for we know by explicit statements in other passages that Jesus died for every man (Heb. 2:9; II Cor. 5:14, 15). It is used here as in Romans 5:15, 19, where the context shows that it means all. When the persons

included are contemplated individually, the term many is employed on account of the vast number of them; for no man can number the individuals for whom Christ died. But when they are contemplated under the feebler conception of the whole, the term *all* is employed.—McGarvey.

*"I shall no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."* The literal use of wine is not here meant; for Jesus does not literally drink wine with his disciples in the kingdom, as it now is, nor will he do so in the eternal kingdom. The term drink, therefore, is used figuratively for that communication which Jesus had with his disciples while they are drinking the wine of the Lord's Supper. The term *new* is more naturally understood as modifying wine, but as the wine of the supper is not necessarily *new* wine, I think it rather indicates the *new method* of drinking wine just indicated."—McGarvey.

## **PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

*Commemorative.* "This do in remembrance of me"; not in order to remember me, but do it because you remember me; and those who cherish his memory in their hearts will gladly show it in faithfully keeping this sacred feast. We are not to eat the supper simply in memory of his death, as some think, but, "This do in remembrance of me." Do it in memory of HIM, remembering his birth, his life, teaching, obedience, and good deeds, as well as his death.

The world builds monuments to her great men of the most durable material, and engraves on them records of their valorous deeds; but, even when not destroyed by man, the relentless mill of time grinds them to powder. But the Lord's Supper, builded of such perishable material, has endured through the centuries and is as fresh today as when builded. It is the Lord's monument. Let skeptics account for its existence. It is not enough that they tell us we keep it because of tradition. Let them tell us how it began; let them tell us why the first group ate their supper. If it celebrates a myth, let them tell us who fooled the first group into sitting down to the table to celebrate that which never existed. How was such a

thing possible? Let them explain why a new word was coined to point out the peculiar relation of this supper to the Lord. It is called the Kuriakos supper. This word, not found in Greek literature previous to this, is defined: "*Of or belonging to the Lord; relating to the Lord.*"— Thayer.

*Declarative.* "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come again." It is a powerful means of preaching to the world. In its observance we proclaim the fact of his death. And in its observance we look forward to his coming again, and proclaim our faith in the certainty of that glorious event.

*It is a means of spiritual nourishment.* "Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in yourselves. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed." (John 6:53-55). The Lord does not here refer directly to the supper, for a faithful observance of all his commands is a means of eating his flesh and drinking his blood. It is also true that eating the Lord's Supper is distinctly commanded, and in its faithful observance as well as in any other duty discharged, we are feasting our souls on his spiritual food.

## **WHO SHALL EAT THE SUPPER?**

It is the Lord's Supper, the Lord's table, and all who are his have a right to partake of the feast. It is in his kingdom: "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom" (Luke 22:29-30). Some contend that the church and the kingdom are distinct institutions, that the Lord's table is in the church, and that those who are born into the kingdom have no right to the supper till they are baptized into the church. But the Lord says plainly that the table is in the kingdom. Certainly all the citizens have a right to all the blessings and privileges of the kingdom. It seems absurd that any one should argue that some of God's children, some who have been born again, born into his family, have no right to sit down at

his table. The effort to show a difference between the church and the kingdom here in this world is unscriptural and hurtful.

The table of the Lord is for those in his kingdom, for those who cherish him in their hearts and who believe in his sacrificial death. Others should not presume to eat.

*Self Examination.* "Let a man examine himself." So Paul admonishes those who are citizens of the kingdom. But let each examine himself, not another. Let a man examine himself to see whether he be in the faith, whether his heart is right with God, and whether he properly esteems the sacredness of the institution. You are at the place of worship, and the hour has come— why are you there? Would your heart disturb you if you had neglected to come? What does it all mean to you? Do you cherish any sin in your heart? "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Jehovah, my rock and my redeemer" (Ps. 19:14).

## **EATING AND DRINKING UNWORTHILY**

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (I Cor. 11: 27). The church at Corinth had corrupted the Lord's Supper till it was no longer the Lord's Supper. It was a common meal; each took his own supper. Some were full, others were hungry. For this reason Paul said, "When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper" (I Cor. 11:20). They were eating and drinking in an unworthy manner. It is not likely now that any will imitate their excesses, but it is yet possible to commit the same sin, possible yet to eat in an unworthy manner. In their eating they failed to discern the Lord's body—they made no difference between this eating and a common meal. May we not eat the bread and drink the cup with no thought of its significance, not discerning in them the representations of his body and his blood? "For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body" (I Cor. 11:29). Do you eat and drink in a light, flippant way? If so, you eat and drink in an unworthy



manner.

Perhaps you feel unworthy to engage in such sacred and holy worship. Even that feeling is a worthy preparation of heart. Remember Paul is talking about the manner of eating and drinking, and not your feelings of unworthiness. On account of our imperfections every devout worshiper must approach the sacred feast with a feeling of unworthiness. Such an one is not to eat and drink in an unworthy manner. His humility and reverence is a safeguard against unworthy conduct.

## **OPEN OR CLOSE COMMUNION**

Self-examination must eliminate the idea that any man or set of men has the right to sit in judgment and determine who shall and shall not eat the supper. The Lord has not conferred police powers on any one to stand guard over his table, and to beat off those who may be judged as unworthy. It is a communion with the Lord, not with each other. (I Cor. 10:16).

## **HOW OFTEN**

By what rule shall we decide? Is every church left to formulate its own laws? Is the individual left to decide for himself? Should there be any regularity about it? If so, who has the authority to regulate? No man or set of men has a right to regulate another man's religious conduct. If God has indicated no special time for its observance, by what authority do churches observe it annually, semi-annually, quarterly, monthly, or weekly? If God has set no time for its observance, the one who eats and drinks once in a lifetime would be as scriptural as any one else.

## **THE FIRST DAY**

*The Pre-eminence of the First Day:* In olden times God demanded the first-fruits and the firstlings of the flocks and herds. It is true that they rested the seventh day, the last day of the week, but that day, strictly speaking, was not given to God; it was for man and his beasts. It was, therefore, no exception to the general rule that

God required the FIRST of everything. It is significant to us who live under the new order of things, that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week, "the first-fruits of them that slept," that he appeared to his disciples on the first day of the week, that the Holy Spirit came on the first day of the week, that the church had its beginning on the first day of the week, that the first gospel sermon under the Great Commission was preached on the first day of the week, and that the first-fruits of the Christian harvest was presented to God on the first day of the week. It is the national day of the kingdom of Christ.

"Not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh" (Heb. 10:25). Some could not establish a "custom" of staying away from meetings unless there was a "custom" of meeting. The church had a regular time to meet; some had a habit of staying away. Paul exhorts all not to forsake this assembling. Had Paul said, "when the church decides to assemble for worship, let all attend," the case would have been different. Expressions used by Paul in the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians indicate they had a regular meeting. "Ye come together," "when ye come together," "when therefore ye assemble yourselves together." His charge concerning the contribution for the poor saints shows when that regular meeting occurred: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come" (I Cor. 16:1, 2). It will not do to say that each one on the first day of the week was to separate his money and put the Lord's part to itself at home. The contributions were to be made in such a way that no collections would have to be made when Paul arrived. Had each one set aside his amount at home, the collecting would have had to be made after Paul's arrival, the very thing he was seeking to forestall. The collection was to be made on the first day of the week. To do this there had to be a common treasury in which all contributions were placed. The churches, therefore, met on the first day of the week.

"And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered

together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow" (Acts 20:7). The manner of speech here employed indicates that the first day of the week was the regular day for meeting. If some one in a foreign land should read a news item like this: "On the fourth of July, when the banks closed to celebrate the Declaration of Independence," etc., would he not conclude that on that day they regularly closed to celebrate. And in reading the foregoing verse would not any unbiased person conclude that the church at Troas regularly met on the first day of the week? It is useless to argue that Paul ate before midnight, for the text says they met on the first day of the week to break bread. Paul's prolonged discourse, evidently after the supper, and his anticipated journey on the morrow made it necessary for him to take refreshments. The Greek text indicates that Paul alone ate this meal. Certainly he did not eat the Lord's Supper alone.

## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION**

- The Passover.
- For whom did Christ die?
- The blood of Christ.
- Preparation of heart necessary to make the Lord's Supper of most value to me.
- How to prepare the loaf.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Repeat the memory verse.
2. When was the Lord's Supper instituted?
3. Give the origin of the Passover.
4. In what month did it come?
5. What season of the year?
6. Describe the manner of preparation and observance of the Passover.
7. How often did it come?
8. Why did it vary somewhat as to season?
9. What did the passover lamb typify?
10. Did Jesus attend the passover feasts?

11. How did he spend the week preceding the last passover?
12. Where did he and his disciples eat the passover?
13. Who prepared it?
14. Tell what directions Jesus gave them that they might find the place.
15. What preparation was necessary?
16. How were the Hebrews to eat the first passover?
17. Was this method always followed?
18. At this feast what startling announcement did Jesus make?
19. What effect did it have?
20. Was the traitor fully made known to them?
21. What did Jesus say of him?
22. Did God make Judas a bad man?
23. What writers tell of the institution of the Lord's Supper?
24. Describe the manner of procedure at this first observance.
25. Define "consubstantiation" and "transubstantiation."
26. What is the Roman Catholic theory?
27. If you do not believe their theory, disprove it.
28. What was the blood of the old covenant?
29. What is the blood of the new covenant?
30. For whom was Christ's blood poured out?
31. How does Jesus drink the fruit of the vine in the kingdom of God?
32. Explain the expression, "This do in remembrance of me."
33. Remember what?
34. What argument can you make that the Lord's Supper proves that Christ lived and died?
35. In eating the supper, what do we proclaim?
36. How long shall this continue?
37. How is it a means of spiritual nourishment?
38. Where is the Lord's table?
39. Who has a right to it?
40. Who is to determine?
41. Whom are we to examine?
42. What guilt attaches to those who eat unworthily?
43. Tell how the Corinthians corrupted the supper.
44. Is it possible now to eat the supper unworthily?

45. How may we eat unworthily?
46. Is Paul talking about our feelings or the manner of eating the supper?
47. What is your conclusion as to "open" or "close communion"?
48. By what rule shall we decide how often to eat the supper?
49. Who has the right to say?
50. Why would it not be sufficient to eat the Lord's Supper just once in a life-time?
51. What of their products belonged to God in olden times?
52. Give some things that distinguish the first day of the week.
53. What does Paul say in Heb. 10:25?
54. What custom did some have?
55. What custom, therefore, must the others have had?
56. Give some other expressions indicating they had a regular meeting.
57. How does I Cor. 16:1, 2 indicate such meeting?
58. Quote Acts 20:7.
59. Why did they meet?
60. On what day?
61. Is that your custom?
62. Or is it your custom to forsake the assembly?