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Introduction to this Syllabus

In this fifty-one lesson series, we will study the parables as well as some miracles, metaphors and allegories of Jesus. Although I prepared the lessons for the spiritual edification of the individual, they will also prove useful for small group study.

Most of the Spirit of Prophecy references come from three classic Christ centered books, *Christ's Object Lessons*, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing* and *The Desire of Ages*. However, a significant number of quotations come from other Ellen White sources. The table of abbreviations at the end of the syllabus will help you find these other sources. In lessons 1-44 the biblical texts are from the King James Version and in lessons 45-51 they are from the New King James Version.

In order to get the most out of the lessons, it will be necessary to prepare them in advance. First read carefully and prayerfully all the passages from Scripture which are given at the beginning of the lesson. Next, do the same with the recommended pages from the Spirit of Prophecy. Do not rush through the material. Take time to reflect upon what you read.

After you carefully read the recommended reading material, you will be ready to prepare the lesson. Please do not simply fill in the blanks. Take time to reflect upon your answers and to internalize them. Better said, make them a part of your daily life.

The lessons cover various types of material. The **spoken** parables of Jesus are those where He verbally uttered the parable. His acted parables are those where He performed **actions** where He intended to convey spiritual truth. Many of the **miracles** of Jesus fit into this category. For example, Jesus did not heal the blind, the lepers and the paralytics merely to display His ability to heal physical disease. Each one of these healings had the greater purpose of teaching deep spiritual truths.

We must understand Christ's non-healing miracles in a parabolic sense as well. Stories such as the feeding of the five thousand, the miraculous fishing expeditions and the calming of storms contain a profound spiritual dimension.

Besides the verbal and acted parables of Jesus, we will also study some magnificent allegories such as the "Rich Man and Lazarus" and "The Vine and the Branches."

Finally, we will notice that most of Christ's parables, metaphors, allegories and miracles have an end time dimension that speaks to those who live at the close of human history.

There are great gems of spiritual truth in the teachings of Jesus. Ellen White has recommended:

“Hang in memory's hall the precious words of Christ. They are to be valued far above silver and gold.” (The Faith I Live By, p. 9)

It is my wish that your journey through these lessons will fill your heart with love admiration for the Master Story Teller and that as you behold the glorious truths of the kingdom “the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.”



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #1 - Teaching in Parables

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: (COL, pp. 17-27; Matthew 13:10-13; Mark 4:11-12; Luke 8:9-10)

Today we begin a series of lessons where we will be studying fifty one parables, metaphors, allegories and miracles of Jesus. Though our trek will take us a year, we will find, in the end, that the investment of time has paid generous dividends to our spiritual life.

In order to get the most out of the lessons, it will be necessary for you prepare them in advance. Please don't simply fill in the blanks. Reflect upon your answers and internalize them, that is to say, make them a part of your daily life. There are great gems in the parables of Jesus. Ellen White has recommended: “Hang in memory's hall the precious words of Christ. They are to be valued far above silver or gold.” (FLB, p. 9.7)

Material to be Studied

1. The Pearl of Great Price (Matthew 13:45-46)
2. The Lost Sheep (Matthew 18:12-14; Luke 15:3-7)
3. The Lost Coin (Luke 15:8-10)
4. The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)
5. The Barren Fig Tree (Luke 13:6-9; Matthew 21:18-20; Mark 11:14-14; Mark 11:20-21)
6. The Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18-19)
7. The Tares and the Wheat (Matthew 13:24-30; Matthew 13:36-43)
8. The Wicked Husbandmen (Matthew 21:33-43; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19)
9. The Sower (Matthew 13:3-9; Matthew 13:18-23; Mark 4:3-20; Luke 8:5-15)
10. The Great Banquet (Luke 14:16-24)
11. The Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44)
12. New Cloth and New Wine (Matthew 9:16-17; Mark 2:21-22; Luke 5:36-39)
13. The Two Debtors (Luke 7:41-43)
14. Building a Tower; A King Going to War (Luke 14:28-33)
15. The Seven Unclean Spirits (Matthew 12:43-45)

16. The Two Sons (Matthew 21:28-32)
17. Building on the Rock and on the Sand (Matthew 7:24-27; Luke 6:47-49)
18. The Rich Fool (Luke 12:16-21)
19. The Growing Seed (Mark 4:26-29)
20. The Leaven (Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:20-21)
21. The Wedding Garment (Matthew 22:2-14)
22. The Friend Calling at Midnight (Luke 11:5-13)
23. The Insistent Widow (Luke 18:1-8)
24. Choosing Places of Honor (Luke 14:7-11)
25. The Pharisee and the Publican (Luke 18:9-14)
26. The Nobleman and the Pounds (Luke 19:11-27)
27. The Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)
28. The Dishonest Steward (Luke 16:1-9)
29. The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)
30. The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37)
31. The Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18:21-35)
32. Treasures Old and New (Matthew 13:52)
33. The Faithful Steward (Luke 12:42-48)
34. The Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13)
35. The Watchful Servant (Mark 13:34-37)
36. The Watchful Servant and Vigilant Homeowner (Luke 12:35-40)
37. Laborers of the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16)
38. The Unprofitable Servants (Luke 17:7-10)
39. The Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25:31-46)
40. The Dragnet (Matthew 13:47-50)
41. The Living Manna (John 6:48-51)
42. The Living Water (John 3:5; John 4:10; John 4:13-14; John 7:37-39)
43. Light and Darkness (Matthew 5:14-16; Matthew 6:22-23; John 1:8-9; John 3:19; John 8:12; John 9:5; John 12:35-36)
44. Healing Paralytics (John 5:1-15; Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12)
45. Healing Lepers (Matthew 8:1-4; Luke 5:12-15)
46. The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41)
47. Tempests on the Lake (Matthew 8:23-27; Matthew 14:22-33)
48. The Salt of the Earth (Matthew 5:13; Mark 9:49-50; Luke 14:34)
49. Lambs Among Wolves (Matthew 7:15; Matthew 10:16)
50. The Vine and the Branches (John 15:1-9)
51. The transfiguration (Matthew 16:13-17:6)

Study Methods and Characteristics of Jesus' Parables

1. The Greek word *parabole* means “putting things side by side.” In other words, it means “to compare one thing with another.” A parable is a symbolic story whose purpose is to convey one central lesson. The individual details of a parable are important but only insofar as they point to the central truth.
2. Many of Jesus' parables were not original with Him. The rabbis of Christ's day were actually prolific parable tellers. We shall find that Jesus occasionally employed the rabbis' stories but gave them an unusual and unexpected twist.
3. Most of the parables of Jesus are multidimensional. That is to say, his parables have a local personal dimension and a broader universal dimension. We can see two good examples of this dual meaning of parables in the story of the Good Samaritan and the parable of the Lost Sheep.
4. It is important to remember that Jesus employed three types of parables: 1) **Verbal** parables, metaphors and allegories, 2) **Acted** parables (such as the cursing of the fig tree), and 3) **Miracles**. Many fail to realize that Jesus did not perform His works of healing merely to relieve physical suffering but also to teach deep spiritual truth. We can see this, for example, in the healing of lepers, blind people and paralytics. We can also discern it in the feeding of the five thousand, three miraculous fishing expeditions and the calming of storms. The woman who touched Jesus' robe is a prime example of a physical healing with deep spiritual implications.
5. Bear in mind that we find some of Jesus' parables in more than one Gospel. In order to get the full picture, it is necessary to study the parable each time it appears.
6. It would be well to remember also that each parable has a very important historical and textual context. It is imperative to carefully study the events that transpired before and after each parable was told.
7. Don't forget that Jesus not only referred to events, people and things which surrounded Him but He also frequently picked up on themes which are found in the Old Testament. We must therefore include the Old Testament in our examination of the parables.

Jesus' Use of Parables

1. In which way was Christ's parable teaching similar to His own mission? "Christ took our _____ and dwelt among us. Divinity was revealed in humanity; the invisible _____ in the visible human form. Men could learn of the _____ through the _____; heavenly things were revealed through the _____. . . . So it was in Christ's _____ . . ." (COL, p. 17.1)
2. Which Old Testament prophecy predicted that Jesus would speak in parables? _____ (Read Matthew 13:34-35 and then check the marginal reference in your Bible. Be sure to study the entire background chapter in the Old Testament)
3. What link existed between the written Word of God and the parables of Jesus? "Natural things were the _____ for the spiritual; the things of nature and the life experience of His hearers were _____ with the truths of the written word. Leading thus from the natural to the _____ kingdom. . . ." (COL, p. 17.2)
4. Why could Jesus employ the lessons of nature so effectively? "In His teaching from nature, Christ was speaking of the things which His own _____ had made, and which had qualities and powers that He Himself had _____." (COL, p. 18.1)
5. What was the original purpose of the created order? "In their original perfection all created things were an expression of the _____ of God." (COL, p. 18.1)
6. What striking difference did the people see between Jesus' teaching and that of the Scribes and Pharisees? "And so it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were _____ at His teaching, for He taught them as one having _____, and not as the scribes." (Matthew 7:28-29)

Sin's Effect on Nature

1. How did the entrance of sin into the world affect the lessons of nature? "As soon as the holy pair transgressed the law of the Most High, the _____ from the _____ of God departed from the face of nature." (COL, p. 18.1)

Note: That is to say, sin damaged the **transmitter**. After the entrance of sin, nature spoke imperfectly about God. While it still revealed a God of love, it also revealed the contrary principle of evil.

2. Did the inception of sin totally obliterate the lessons of nature? "The earth is now

_____ and defiled by sin. Yet even in its _____ state much that is beautiful remains. God's object lessons are not _____; rightly understood, nature speaks of her Creator." (COL, p. 18.1)

Note: Creation still speaks of God. For this the reason the Psalmist could exclaim: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork." (Psalm 19:1)

3. What happened with the mind of man because of sin? "In the days of Christ these lessons [from nature] had been lost _____ of. Men had well-nigh ceased to _____ God in His works." Paul says that men "became _____ in their _____, and their foolish heart was _____." (COL, p. 18.2; Romans 1:21)

Note: Not only did sin damage the transmitter but it also damaged the **receiver**. Man's unaided sinful mind could no longer read God's lessons in nature correctly.

4. How is the veil of sin removed from nature and from humanity? "Christ sought to remove that which _____ the truth. The veil that sin cast over the face of _____, He came to draw aside, bringing to view the spiritual glory that all things were created to _____." (COL, p. 18.3)

5. What two books must we use side by side in the science of education? "The book of _____ is a great lesson book, which in connection with the _____ we are to use in teaching others of His character, and guiding lost _____ back to God." (COL, p. 24.1)

The Purpose for Parables

1. What was Jesus' intended purpose for using parables? "The veil that sin had cast over the face of _____, He came to draw aside, bringing to view the _____ glory that all things were created to reflect. His words placed the teachings of _____ as well as of the _____ in a new aspect, and made them a new revelation." (COL, p. 18.3)

2. Why did Jesus choose parables as his preferred method of teaching? "By connecting His teaching with the scenes of _____, experience or _____, He secured their _____ and impressed their hearts. _____ as they looked upon the objects that illustrated His lessons, they recalled the words of the divine Teacher." (COL, p. 21.1)

Note: So to speak, Jesus employed a live power point presentation. He knew that a picture is worth a thousand words!

3. Why did Jesus employ illustrations? "By using a _____ of illustrations, He not only presented truth in its different _____, but appealed to the different _____." (COL, p. 21.2)

4. What process did Jesus frequently follow as He told His parables? In the parable of the lilies of the field, Jesus **first** "_____ the beautiful lily. . . . **Then** followed the sweet _____ and the important _____." (COL, p. 19.1) **Finally**, He spread His hands and made a call to the multitude, uttering the well-known words found in _____. (COL, p. 19.2)

Note: It is obvious that the parables of Jesus were not only meant to inform. Their main purpose was to lead the people to make a decision in favor of His kingdom.

Concealing and Revealing

1. Why were the parables of Jesus meant to conceal as well as to reveal? "He presented truth in such a way that they could find nothing by which to bring His case before the Sanhedrin. In parables He _____ the hypocrisy and wicked works of those who occupied high positions, and in _____ language clothed truth of so cutting a character that had it been spoken in _____ denunciation, they would not have listened to His words, and would speedily have put an end to His ministry." (COL, p. 22.1)

2. What does Matthew 13:11 tell us about the revealing and concealing functions of the parables. "Because it is given unto you to know the _____ of the kingdom of heaven but to them it is not _____."

3. Since when had God concealed these mysteries of the kingdom? Jesus stated that these mysteries that He came to utter, had "been kept _____ from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 13:35)

Note: Several passages from Scripture indicate that these mysteries were directly related to the earthly ministry and mission of Jesus. Revelation 13:8 explains that Jesus is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world.

4. From whom did Jesus conceal the mysteries of the kingdom and to whom did He reveal them? God revealed these mysteries to the _____ but hid them from the _____ and _____. (Matthew 11:25; see also Matthew 13:11; Matthew 21:16; Luke 10:21; Psalm 8:2)

5. What did the apostle Paul have to say about these mysteries? Paul identified these mysteries hidden from the foundation of the world as “the _____ of Jesus Christ. . . . which was kept _____ since the world _____.” (Romans 16:25; see also, Ephesians 1:4; 1:9; 3:3; 6:19; Colossians 1:26-27; Revelation 10:7)

Nature and the Parables

1. In which three ways did Jesus seek to teach the people about God? “He taught them to behold Him as manifested in His _____, in His _____, and by His _____.” (COL, p. 22.2)

2. In what environment can truth best be taught and exemplified? “Christ taught His disciples by the _____, on the _____, in the _____ and _____, where they could look upon the things of _____ by which He illustrated His teachings.” (COL, p. 23.2)

3. What error do teachers frequently commit and how can they correct it? “Too often the minds of _____ are occupied with _____ theories and speculations, falsely called science and philosophy. They need to be brought into _____ contact with nature. Let them learn that creation and Christianity have _____ God. Let them be taught to see the _____ of the natural with the spiritual. Let _____ which their eyes see or their hands handle be made a lesson in character building.” (COL, p. 24.2)

4. What link exists between the teaching function of the nature and the Sabbath? “On the holy rest day, _____ all other days, we should study the messages that God has written for us in _____.” (COL, p. 25.1)

Note: The Sabbath, in a special sense, reminds us that God is the creator of the heavens and the earth (Exodus 20:11). The Sabbath and nature are closely bound. In fact, the Sabbath should be a special day for the contemplation of God through nature.

5. How did Jesus connect the teachings of nature with the common labors of everyday life? “In the plowing and sowing, the tilling and reaping, He teaches us to see an _____ of His work of _____ in the heart. So in every line of useful labor and every association of life, He desires us to find a lesson of _____ truth.” (COL, p. 26.1)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #2 – The Parable of the Sower

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 33-61; Matthew 13:24-30; Matthew 13:36-43; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:5-15

The Field, the Sower and the Soils

1. The field in the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares represents the _____ (Matthew 13:38).
2. The sower represents the _____ of man (Matthew 13:37).
3. The soils represent four kinds of hearts where the word of God is planted: “And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh _____, and taketh away the word that was sown in their _____.” (Mark 4:15).

The Seed

1. The seed represents the _____ of God (Luke 8:11).

Note: COL, p. 33.1 explains that Jesus’ “parable _____ itself was the seed with which the most precious truths of His grace were _____.”

2. 1 Peter 1:23 explains the meaning of the seed: “Being born again, not of corruptible _____, but of incorruptible, by the _____ of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”
3. “the same _____ that govern earthly seed sowing govern the sowing of the seeds of _____ . (COL, p. 33.1)

4. Jesus frequently told parables as the events were occurring. When Jesus told the parable of the sower, “upon _____ and _____ both sowers and reapers were busy, the one casting seed and the other harvesting the early grain”. (COL, p. 34.2)

5. The life giving power of God’s word can be discerned in the following statement: “In every _____ and in every _____ of the word of God is the _____, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realized. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very _____ and character of God.” (COL, p. 38.1)

6. It is dangerous to substitute the ideas of men for the word of God because, “Philosophical theories or literary essays, however _____ cannot satisfy the _____” (COL, p. 40.1)

7. The life changing power of God’s word is described in Psalm 119:11 : “Thy _____ have I hid in mine _____ that I might not _____ against thee.”

8. Through the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 55:11), God promises that as the seed bears fruit: “So shall my _____ be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me _____, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

9. There is grave danger in setting aside the word of God for, “When the word of God is set aside, its power to _____ the evil passions of the natural _____ is rejected. Men sow to the flesh, and of the flesh they reap corruption.” (COL, p. 41.2)

10. In many of our schools, the works of the world’s great men are placed before the young people instead of the word of God. The result is that “In turning from God’s word to feed on the writings of _____ men, the mind becomes _____ and _____.” (COL, p. 41.3)

11. Ellen White explains the psychological process whereby the mind is dwarfed and cheapened: “The understanding _____ itself to the comprehension of the things with which it is familiar, and in this devotion to _____ things it is weakened, its power is contracted, and after a time it becomes unable to _____.” (COL, p. 41.3)

12. In many of our schools the study of the Bible is considered of secondary importance. This is tragic because, “There is _____ so ennobling and _____ as a study of the great themes which concern our eternal life.” (COL, p. 42.1)

13. It is not enough to teach the theoretical truths of the word of God. Truth must be embodied. Of Christ it is said: “Christ taught the truth because He _____ the truth. His own thought, His

character, His life-experience, were _____ in His teaching.” (COL, p. 43.1)

The Seeds by the Wayside

1. “The seed sown by the wayside represents the word of God as it falls upon the heart of an _____ hearer. . . . The spiritual faculties are _____. Men hear the word, but _____ it not.” (COL, p. 44.2)

Note: The wayside represents people who have hearts of stone where it is impossible for the seed of truth to penetrate.

2. The birds which plucked the seed away represent the _____ who “taketh away the word out of their hearts lest they should _____ and be _____.” (Luke 8:12)

Note: Concerning this, Ellen White wrote: “As the birds are ready to catch up the seed from the wayside, so _____ is ready to catch away the seeds of divine _____ from the _____. He fears that the word of God may awaken the careless, and take effect upon the _____ heart.” (COL, p. 44.3)

3. Among these inattentive hearers are those who “listen to the preaching of the word of God [and] make it the subject of _____ at home. They sit in _____ on the _____ as they would on the words of a lecturer or a political speaker. . . . Often these things are spoken by _____ in the hearing of their own _____. Thus are destroyed respect for God’s _____, and reverence for their message.” (COL, p. 45.1)

4. Among the “wayside hearers” was Felix whom, after Paul had preached to him about righteousness, temperance and judgment said to him: “Go thy way for this time, when I have a _____ season, I will call thee.” (Acts 24:25). That opportunity never came!

5. Among the “wayside hearers” was also king Agrippa. After the apostle Paul preached a powerful sermon, the king replied: “_____ thou persuadest me to be a _____.” (Acts 26:27-28)

6. Among the “wayside hearers” were members of the Sanhedrin who stoned Stephen. We are told that after they heard Stephen’s message they “_____ on him with their teeth” and they “cried out with a loud voice, and _____ their ears, and ran upon him with one _____.” (Acts 7:54; Acts 7:57)

7. In the end-time, many who claim to believe the truth will be “wayside hearers”. Because they did not _____ or _____ the truth, God will send them a strong delusion that

they might believe the _____." (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12)

The Seed in Stony Places

1. There are two problems with this kind of soil. Luke 8:6 explains that this soil lacked _____ (a symbol of the Holy Spirit). Matthew 13:5-6 underlines the fact that the soil in stony places had "no _____ of earth" and therefore when "the _____ was up" the plant "was _____."

2. In the people represented by this soil, "_____ of the natural heart underlies the soil of their good _____ and _____." (COL, p. 46.3)

3. "This class may be easily _____ and appear to be bright converts, but they have only a _____ religion." (COL, p. 46.3)

Note: These are the people who have a form of godliness but lack the power thereof (1 Timothy 3:5). They are half-hearted Christians. They want to serve Christ and self simultaneously. They serve Christ with a divided heart and no one can serve two masters! Ellen White wrote: "Half-hearted Christians are worse than infidels; for their deceptive words and non-committal position may lead many astray. The infidel shows his colors. The lukewarm Christian deceives both parties. He is neither a good worldling nor a good Christian. Satan uses him to do a work that no one else can do." Spaulding-Magan Collection, p. 260.

4. "It is not because men receive the word _____, nor because they _____ in it, that they fall away They do not consider what the word of God _____ of them. They do not bring it [the word of God] face to face with all their _____ of life, and yield themselves fully to its control." (COL, p. 46.4)

Note: Most of the disciples of Jesus left their professions immediately to joyfully follow Jesus. However, before they did, they considered the cost. This is why Jesus told Judas to count the cost before he decided to follow Him: "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has no place to lay his head." (Luke 9:58). Judas chose to immediately follow Jesus but he did not count the cost. The end result was suicide! Ananias and Sapphira fall into this same category.

5. The scorching sun which withers the plant represents _____ and _____ which arise because of the _____. (Matthew 13:21)

Note: "Stony ground" hearers are those who enthusiastically receive Christ in the good times. They expect that Christianity will spare them from trials and tribulations. While things go well,

they appear to be good Christians but when they are required to make a sacrifice for what they believe, they fall away. In Matthew 10:34-39 Jesus warned that following Jesus involved great sacrifices yet in the end the dividends would be eternal (read Mark 10:28-31)!

6. This kind of soil represents those who “rejoice for a _____, for they think that religion will free them from difficulty and trial.” But when trials come, “they _____ beneath the fiery test of temptation. They cannot bear reproach for Christ’s sake. When the word of God points out some _____ sin, or temptation, or requires _____ or sacrifice, they are offended. It would cost them too _____ effort to make a radical _____ in their life.” (COL, p. 47.2)

7. God cannot accept half a heart. “Christ asks for an _____ consecration, for _____ service. He demands the _____ the _____, the _____, the strength. Self is not to be cherished. He who lives to _____ is not a _____.” (COL, p. 48.4)

The Seed Among the Thorns

1. When Adam and Eve sinned, the earth produced _____ and _____ (Genesis 3:18). The thorns are symbolic of sin.

2. “The thorns of _____ will grow in any soil; they need no cultivation. . . . The thorns that have been cut off but not _____ grow apace, until the soul is overspread with them.” (COL, p. 50.4)

3. “Stony ground” hearers face four dangers which are: The cares of this _____, the deceitfulness of _____, the _____ of this life and _____ of other things. (Mark 4:19; Luke 8:14).

4. Yielding to any of these four dangers brings disastrous results: “The soul ceases to draw _____ from Christ, and spiritually dies out of the _____.” (COL, p. 51.1)

5. The “cares of this world” could be described as the rat race of life. Ellen White explains: “But many become so _____ in business that they have no time for _____, no time for the study of the _____, no time to seek and _____ God.. At times the longings of the soul go out for _____ and heaven; but there is no time to turn aside from the _____ of the world to listen to the majestic and authoritative utterances of the _____ of God.” (COL, p. 51.3)

6. Jesus spoke about these kind of people who are always fretting and worrying about the cares of this life and the need to make ends meet: “Therefore I say unto you, Take no _____ for your life, what ye shall _____, or what ye shall _____ nor yet for your _____, what ye shall put on. Is not _____ more than meat, and the body than raiment?” (Matthew 6:25)

7. The “deceitfulness of riches” was manifested in the rich young ruler. He wanted _____ life but he thought the cost was too great. He went away sad because he had many _____. (Matthew 19:16-21).

8. The apostle Paul well knew the dangers of riches: “But they that will be rich fall into _____ and a _____, and into many foolish and hurtful _____, which _____ men in destruction and perdition. For the _____ of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred _____ the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” (1 Timothy 6:9-10)

9. The dangers which the rich face are described by Ellen White: “They lose the sense of their _____ upon God and their obligation to their fellow men. Instead of regarding _____ as a talent to be employed for the glory of _____ and the uplifting of _____, they look upon it as a means of serving _____.” (COL, p. 52.2)

10. The “pleasures of this life” are a real danger to the soul: “There is danger in _____ that is sought merely for self-gratification. All _____ of indulgence that weaken the _____ powers, that becloud the _____, or that benumb the _____ perceptions, are ‘fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.’” (COL, p. 53.1)

Note: It is recommended that everyone prayerfully study the following passages: 1 John 2:15-17 and Luke 21:34-36.

11. Parents face a real danger in this respect: “Many parents seek to promote the happiness of their children by _____ their love of _____. They allow them to engage in _____, and to attend _____ of pleasure, and provide them with _____ to use freely in display and self-gratification. . . . They form habits of _____ and self-indulgence that make it almost _____ for them ever to become steadfast Christians.” (COL, p. 54.1)

12. Youth who are led down this road by their parents “may see their folly and _____. God may _____ them. But they have _____ their own souls, and brought upon themselves a lifelong _____. They power of _____, which ought ever to be kept keen and sensitive to _____ between right and wrong, is in a great measure

_____.” (COL, p. 55.1)

13. Among the “lust of other things”, Ellen White identifies “The exciting sports—theatergoing, horse racing, _____, liquor-drinking, and reveling. . . . Those who learn to love _____ for its own sake open the door to a flood of _____.” (COL, p. 54.3)

The “good ground” hearers

1. The good ground hearers are described as those who have an _____ and good _____ and having _____ the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with _____.” (Luke 8:15)

2. The “good ground” hearer “has an honest heart who _____ to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. He _____ his guilt, and feels his _____ of the mercy and love of God. He has a sincere desire to _____ the truth, that he may _____ it.” (COL, p. 58.2)

3. Cornelius was this kind of hearer. When he and his friends visited the apostle Peter he said: “Now therefore are we all here present before God, to _____ all things that are commanded thee of _____.” (Acts 10:33)

4. “To those who in _____ of heart seek for divine guidance, _____ of God draw near. The Holy Spirit is _____ to open to them the rich treasures of the truth.” (COL, p. 59.3)

5. The fruit is described in the following words: “Those who, having heard the word, _____ it, will bring forth fruit in _____. The word of God, received into the _____, will be manifest in good _____.” (COL, p. 60.2)

6. The apostle Paul encourages Christians to “walk in the Spirit”. This means that they have the fruit of “love, joy, _____, gentleness, _____, faith, meekness and temperance.” (Galatians 5:22-23).

7. We are told that the word of God often “comes in _____ with man’s hereditary and _____ traits of character. . . . But the good-ground hearer, in receiving the word, accepts all its _____ and _____. His habits, customs, and practices are brought into _____ to God’s word.” (COL, p. 60.3)

8. Jesus made a beautiful promise in John 14:23 : “If a man love me, he will keep my _____ : and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our _____ with him.”

9. Rev. 1:3; Rev. 22:7 commends those who _____, hear and _____ the words of the book.

10. James warns us about being forgetful hearers of the word: "But be ye _____ of the word, and not _____ only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way and straightway _____ what manner of man he was" (James 1:22-24).

11. Fruit is not produced overnight. It is a long process which requires toil and patience: "the Christian is to wait with _____ for the fruition in his life of the _____ of God." (COL, p. 61.2)

The Soil of the Heart can be Changed

1. The soil of our heart, not matter what type, can be changed: "A new _____ also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put _____ you: and I will take away the _____ heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my _____ within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments to do them." (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

2. Saul of Tarsus was one of the ringleaders in Stephen's death (Acts 26:9-11) and yet he became the great champion of the gospel. Truly, if we consent, God can change the soil of the heart.

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #3 – Fishing for the Master

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 122-23; Matthew 13:47-50; Luke 5:1-8; Matthew 4:18-20; John 21:1-13

The Symbols of the Parable

1. What is represented by the **sea** in the Parable of the Dragnet? The sea represents the inhabitants of the _____.

2. The **net** represents the _____. (COL, p. 122.1)

3. The **act of casting** the net symbolizes the “preaching of the _____.” (COL, p. 122.2)

4. The **fish** represent the _____ who live in the world (Matthew 4:19).

5. The **good fish** in the boat represent the _____ and the **bad fish** in the boat represent false _____ in the _____. (COL, p. 122.2)

Note: The bad fish do not represent unbelievers in general but rather persons who claimed to accept the gospel. The gospel net took them in and the fishermen brought them into the boat (the church) but the separation ‘on the shore’ will reveal that they were counterfeit believers.

6. The **boat** represents the _____. (COL, p. 122.2)

7. The **fishermen** are those who preach the _____. This is made clear in Matthew 4:19 where Jesus tells his disciples: “Follow me, and I will make _____ fishers of _____.”

8. What is represented by the act of separating the good fish from the bad at the shore? “When the mission of the gospel is _____, the _____ will accomplish the work

of separation.” (COL, p. 122.2)

Note: There is a difference between hauling the fish into the boat and separating the good fish from the bad once the boat has arrived at the shore. When the fish are hauled into the boat the door of mercy is still open. But when the fish are separated at the shore, fishing has ceased. Then, after the separation on the shore has concluded, the good fish are gathered into vessels and the bad fish are thrown away.

8. The Parable of the Wheat and Tares has a similar meaning as the Parable of the Dragnet: “The wheat and the tares grow together until the _____. The good and the bad fish are together drawn ashore for a final separation. . . . (COL, p. 123.1) When the work of the _____ is completed, there _____ follows the separation between the good and the evil, and the destiny of each class is forever _____.” (COL, p. 123.2) “The tares and the wheat are to grow together until the _____; and the harvest is the end of _____ time.” (COL, p. 71.3)

Secrets of Successful Fishing

1. When Jesus commanded Peter to launch out into the deep, (Luke 5:4) he complained that he and his helpers had _____ all the night and had taken _____. (Luke 5:5)

Note: Hard work did not guarantee success in the task of fishing. Peter and his colleagues fished at the right time and in the right place. They were experienced fishermen. They knew the right **time** to fish. They used the best **techniques** and had state of the art **equipment**. And yet the secret of success was not found in any or all of these. So it is in the work of soul winning. Arduous labor, state of the art evangelistic tools, knowledge of demographics and the latest methods do not guarantee success.

2. When Peter and his fellow laborers went out that night, Jesus was not in the boat. But in the morning, Jesus “_____ one of the ships, which was _____.” (Luke 5:3)

Note: The fish were not attracted to the fishermen or to the beautiful boat or to the upbeat programming going on in the boat. They were attracted to the ONE who was in the boat. Jesus created the fish and they were simply responding to the call of their Creator!! Do you want to attract people to church? Coffee and donuts will not do it. An upbeat worship service will not cut it. A state of the art facility will not help. Programming to peoples’ “wants” will fail. True church growth comes about because Jesus is in the church. Jesus said: “Without Me ye can do **nothing**.” (John 15:5).

3. When Jesus told Peter to launch out into the deep and cast out his nets, Peter was dumfounded yet he said: “nevertheless at thy _____ I will let down the net.” (Luke 5:5)

Note: Peter was perplexed. Fishing in the daytime was unthinkable because the fish could see the nets in the clear water. Besides, Jesus was a carpenter while Peter and his colleagues were experienced fishermen! Yet in the most unlikely of circumstances, the presence of Jesus attracted the fish. It is not our role to attract the fish; it is our role to obey the Word and cast out the gospel net. Even in the most prohibitive circumstances we are to obey the Word and cast out the net. And when we obey the Word, it accomplishes what it set out to do.

4. God once said through the prophet Isaiah that when He sends forth His word, it will not return unto him _____ [empty] but shall accomplish that for which it was _____. (Isaiah 55:10-11)

Note: God’s Word has power within itself to accomplish that which it commands. Ellen White expressed it this way: “As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at his command may be accomplished in His strength. All his biddings are enablings.” (COL, p. 333.1)

5. The story of Luke 5:1-8 teaches that divine power must be combined with human effort. Jesus attracted the _____ but the disciples had to cast the _____. (Luke 5:5)

Note: The fish were attracted to the boat because Jesus was in it, but they did not jump into the boat! The fishermen had to cast out the net and pull in the fish. So it is with soul winning. Jesus promises to attract the interests through His power but we must bring them in by arduous evangelistic work.

6. The same lesson of cooperative effort is taught in Matthew 9:37-38. After deploring the fact that the harvest is abundant but the laborers are few, Jesus said: “Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth _____ into _____ harvest.”

Note: Here Jesus is not so much concerned with the power which produces the harvest as with the laborers who will bring it in. The power of God ripens the harvest but we must bring it in! Prayer attracts the fish but hard labor brings them in. There may be many souls attracted to the church by the power of prayer but if the members do not labor to cast out the net, the souls will remain “in the water”.

7. Successful “soul fishing” not only requires cooperation between God and man but also between fellow believers. This is seen in Luke 5:7 where we are told that Peter and those who were in his boat, “beckoned unto **their** _____, which were in the other ship, that **they**

should come and _____ **them.**”

Note : There is no room for rivalry among churches in the task of “soul fishing”. There are enough souls in the sea of humanity to fill each and every church. Evangelistic outreach is a cooperative effort where there is no room for competition.

8. The fishing expedition was incredibly successful because we are told that “they inclosed a great _____ of fishes: and their net _____. . . . And they came, and filled _____ the ships so that they began to _____.” (Luke 5:6-7)

9. Ellen White explains why this expedition met with success: “During that sad night on the lake, when they were _____ from Christ, the disciples were pressed hard by unbelief, and weary with fruitless toil. But His _____ kindled their faith, and brought them joy and _____. So it is with us; apart from Christ, our work is _____, and it is easy to distrust and murmur. But when He is _____, and we labor under His _____, we rejoice in the evidence of _____ power.” (DA, p. 249.2)

10. In John 21:11 we are told that after the resurrection, Peter fished _____ great fishes. Obviously, statistics were very important.

11. The spectacular success of this fishing expedition led to no boastfulness. Peter took no credit because he well knew that it was Christ’s power and not his own skill which had led to success: “When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, _____ from me, for I am a _____ man, O Lord.” (Luke 5:8)

12. In Matthew’s account, Jesus called the disciples with the following words: “Follow Me and I will _____ your fishers of men.” (Matthew 4:19)

Note: Notice that Jesus did not say: “I will show you how to fish,” or “I will exemplify how to fish.” Jesus promised “I will **MAKE** you fishers of men.” In other words, Jesus was promising to **empower** them to fish.

13. After the resurrection, Peter and his colleagues were once again fishing on the lake. They unsuccessfully toiled all night. In the morning they saw Jesus walking on the shore and he told them: “cast the net on the _____ side of the ship, and ye shall _____.” (John 21:6).

14. What was so special about the right side of the ship?

Note: Ellen White explains: “And Jesus had a purpose in bidding them cast their net on the right side of the ship. On that side **He** _____ upon the shore. That was the side of faith. If

they labored **in connection with Him**,—His divine power combining with their human effort,—they could not fail of success.” (DA, p. 810.5) Clearly, the fish were drawn to the right side of the boat because Jesus was on that side!!

15. What is it that draws people to Christ? ““And I, if I be _____ up from the earth will _____ all men unto _____.’ This He said, signifying what _____ he should die.” (John 12:32-33)

16. We are told that when Peter and his colleagues had brought their ships to land “they _____ all, and _____ Him.” (Luke 5:11)

Note: Mark this point: When they were at the peak of their prosperity, even before taking the fish to the market, they left all to follow Jesus. This teaches us a vital lesson. No matter what our occupation or profession might be, it must be subordinated to the great task of fishing men. Nothing should stand in the way of this task. Peter had launched out into the deep to catch fish and now he was to launch out into the deep to fish men. Having found the treasure, they gave up all they had. Having found the Pearl of great price, they forsook all.

17. Pentecost illustrates the various elements of the Parable of the Net. Notice the following comparison (based on Acts 1:1-26; Acts 2:1-47):

- The fishermen were the twelve _____.
- When the disciples _____, the power of the Holy Spirit was poured out without measure. (Acts 1:14; Acts 2:1-4)
- Peter then threw out the net, that is, he _____ the gospel. (Acts 2:14 ff)
- As a result, Peter caught a multitude of fish (people), _____ thousand in number. (Acts 2:41)
- These fish (people) were then brought into the boat which represents the _____.

The secret of the disciples’ success is found in Acts 4:13 : “Now when they [the multitude] saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were _____ and _____ men, they marveled, and they took knowledge of them, that they had _____ with _____.” (Acts 4:13).

Summary and Conclusion

The existence of transformers, power stations, power towers, cables, wires, switches and plugs does not guarantee that there will be electricity. In the same way, state of the art equipment, a nice building, good music, excellent “felt needs” programming, does not guarantee success in

soul winning. In order for electricity to be a reality, there must be power. In order for soul winning to meet with success the power of the Holy Spirit indispensable. Why not call upon the Lord for power today so that He can use you for the finishing of His work?



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #4 – The Rich Man and Lazarus

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 260-271, Luke 16:19-31; John 8:37-39; John 11:45-53; John 12:9-10; John 12:19; Mat.15:21-28

Introductory Matters

1. How does the story of the rich man and Lazarus begin? “There was a _____ rich man. . . .” (Luke 16:19)

Note: In the gospel of Luke, this is the common introductory formula for the parables of Jesus so there can be no doubt that the story of the rich man and Lazarus is a parable (see, Luke 10:33; Luke 12:16; Luke 13:6; Luke 14:16; Luke 15:11; Luke 16:1; Luke 19:12; Luke 20:9).

2. What was the proper name of the beggar? “And there was a certain beggar named _____.” (Luke 16:20)

Note: Some scholars have concluded that the story of the rich man and Lazarus is not a parable but rather a true-to-life story. They reason that because the parables (in the Bible as well as in rabbinical tradition) never contain proper names, this must mean that this story was an actual historical occurrence. But, as we shall find later in our study, there was a particular reason why Jesus included a proper name in this particular parable.

3. To whom was the parable of the rich man and Lazarus particularly addressed? “And the _____ also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they _____ him.” (Luke 16:14)

4. In what way were the beliefs of the Pharisees different from those of the Sadducees? “For the Sadducees say that there is no _____, neither _____, nor _____: but the Pharisees confess both.” (Acts 23:8)

Note: The Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, amplifies this contrast between the beliefs of the Sadducees and the Pharisees:

“They [the Pharisees] say that all souls are incorruptible, but that the souls of good men only are removed into other bodies,—but that the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment. But the Sadducees . . . take away the belief of the immortal duration of the soul, and the punishments and rewards in *Hades*.” (Flavius Josephus, Wars of the Jews II.14)

Josephus, who was himself a Pharisee, described the nature of *Hades* in his work *Discourse to the Greeks Concerning Hades*. There he described Hades as a subterranean region consisting of two sections. The first section contained everlasting fire. The angels took the wicked to this region upon the moment of death. The second section of *Hades* consisted of a place which was called the Bosom of Abraham. Josephus affirms that there was a great gulf fixed between the two sections so that the righteous could not pass to the fiery region nor the wicked to the Bosom of Abraham. There is no place in the Bible which even vaguely suggests such a scenario. This whole picture of *Hades* was created by the rabbis. In the parable, however, Jesus took what the Pharisees believed and gave it a surprising twist!

Can the Parable be Taken Literally?

1. According to Jesus, where do people go when they die? “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the _____ shall hear his voice” (John 5:28)

2. According to the Bible, when will the wicked be burned in the fires of hell? “As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the _____ of the _____.” (Matthew 13:40).

Note: At this point it would be well to study the following Scriptures which unequivocally teach that the wicked will be cast into the fire when Jesus comes, not at the moment of death: Matthew 25:31-32; Mark 9:43-48; John 12:48; Revelation 20:7-9; Revelation 20:11-15; 2 Peter 3:7; 2 Peter 3:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.

3. What does the story explicitly state about the rich man? “the rich man also _____ and was _____.” (Luke 16:22)

Note: The text is explicit. The rich man not only died but was also buried. Now, the Bible says that when a person dies, their body returns to the dust (Genesis 3:19; Ecclesiastes 12:7). This being the case, what is the rich man doing in hell with all his body parts? The story tells us he had eyes (Luke 16:23) and tongue (Luke 16:24). On the other hand, Lazarus is said to have fingers after he goes to the Bosom of Abraham (Luke 16:24). In Mark 9:43-48 we are told that the sinner’s whole

body will be cast into hell (see also, Matthew 5:29-30) so this cannot happen at death. The fact is that if both the rich man and Lazarus have body parts, and if the body is not cast into hell until the end of the age, then this must be describing what will happen at the end of the age and not what took place at the moment of death!

The problem of body parts in hell, has led Robert Morey, a staunch defender of the immortality of the soul and the eternal torment of the wicked at the moment of death, to confess: "Everyone understood that these parables and dialogues did not literally take place. It was understood that the rabbis used imaginative stories and dialogues as a teaching method. It was understood by all that these dialogues never took place. . . . He [Jesus] was merely using the dialogue method to get across the concept that there is no escape from torment, no second chance, and we must believe the Scriptures in this life unto salvation." (Robert Morey, Death and the Afterlife, p. 85).

So, the only passage in the Bible which **appears** to teach eternal torment at the moment of death is, admittedly, an event which **never took place!**

4. According to the Bible, where will the angels take the faithful when Jesus comes again? "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a _____ and they shall _____ together his _____ from the four winds." (Matthew 24:31)

Note: In the parable, Lazarus was taken to the bosom of Abraham by the angels but the Bible tells us that the righteous will be caught up by the angels to Jesus (see, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; John 14:1-3)

5. According to the parable, was the rich man able to communicate with Abraham after he died? "And he [the rich man] cried and said, Father _____, have mercy on me.... But Abraham _____ [to the rich man], Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things. . . ." (Luke 16:24-25)

Note: Deuteronomy 18:10-11 strictly forbids the communication between the living and the dead. Are we to believe that righteous dead people can communicate with wicked dead people? Spiritualists believe this but certainly not Christians!

6. What does the Bible explicitly teach about the dead? "For the _____ know that they shall die but the dead know not any _____." (Ecclesiastes 9:5)

7. What is meant by the expression, "the bosom of Abraham"? "Now there was _____ on Jesus' _____ one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23)

Note: The bosom, in the Bible as well as today, refers to a position of particular closeness to someone (see, Isaiah 40:11; John 1:18; Deuteronomy 13:6; Deuteronomy 28:54; Deuteronomy 28:56). We will later see that the Jewish nation claimed to be particularly close to Abraham. Yet Jesus said that spiritually there was an impassible gulf between Abraham and them. Incidentally, if the parable is to be taken literally, then the “bosom of Abraham” must also be literal! How large must that bosom then be!!

8. What indication do we have that Jesus was using satire and irony in this parable? “And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the _____ of his finger in _____, and cool my tongue.” (Luke 16:24)

Note: How much good would it do for Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water to cool the tongue of the rich man? If this were literal, the water would evaporate before it got to the rich man’s tongue. Obviously, Jesus is speaking with irony! Notice also that the rich man trusted Abraham to receive mercy instead of the Lord.

The First Application of the Parable: The Covetous Rich and the Faithful Poor

1. What is the central theme of this parable? “In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Christ shows that in this _____ men decide their eternal _____. During probationary time. . . . No _____ will be granted them.” (COL, p. 260.1)

2. What contrast is drawn in this parable? “This parable draws a contrast between the _____ who have not made God their dependence, and the _____ who have made God their dependence.” (COL, p. 260.2)

3. The story does not say that the rich man mistreated Lazarus. What, then, was the sin of the rich man? “But he [the rich man] was selfishly _____ to the needs of his suffering brother.” (COL, p. 261.1). This is not the sin of commission but the sin of omission!!

4. What is the essence of all idolatry? “All _____ is condemned as idolatry.” (COL, p. 261.3) This is corroborated in Colossians 3:5.

Note: If this litmus test for idolatry were applied in the church today, how idolaters would there be in the pews?

5. Why did Jesus use this theologically erroneous parable? “In this parable Christ was meeting the people on their _____ ground. The doctrine of a conscious state of existence between death and the resurrection was held by many of those who were _____ to Christ’s words. The Saviour knew of their ideas, and He framed His parable so as to inculcate important

truths through these preconceived opinions.” (COL, p. 263.2)

6. What did Jesus mean by the expression “a great gulf fixed”? “Thus Christ represented the _____ of looking for a _____ probation. This life is the only time given to man in which to _____ for eternity.” (COL, p. 263.3)

7. Whom did the rich man place above God? “He did not pray to God, but to _____. Thus he showed that he placed Abraham above God, and that he relied on his relationship to Abraham for _____.” (COL, p. 263.4)

8. How do our privileges relate to our responsibilities? “Man’s _____ are _____ to his opportunities and _____.” (COL, p. 265.4) Luke 12:48 corroborates this principle.

9. How can we lay up treasures beside the throne of God? “Far better might he lay up his money beside the throne of God, by _____ it to do _____. Death cannot make any man poor who thus devotes himself to seeking eternal _____. But the man who hoards his treasure for self can not take any of it to _____.” (COL, p. 266.1).

Note: See the Biblical background to this idea in Matthew 6:19-34; Matthew 7:1-29; Matthew 8:1-34; Matthew 9:1-38; Matthew 10:1-42; Matthew 11:1-30; Matthew 12:1-50; Matthew 13:1-58; Matthew 14:1-36; Matthew 15:1-39; Matthew 16:1-28; Matthew 17:1-27; Matthew 18:1-35; Matthew 19:1-30; Matthew 20:1-34; Matthew 21:1-9. What shall we be able to carry to the heavenly courts? “Money cannot be carried into the next life; it is not needed there; but the good _____ done in winning souls to Christ are _____ to the heavenly courts.” (COL, p. 266.2)

The Second Application of the Parable

1. Whom does the rich man represent? “The rich man was favored with every temporal and spiritual blessing, but he refused to _____ with God in the use of these blessings. Thus it was with the _____ nation.” (COL, p. 267.3)

Note: In the strictest sense of the word, the rich man represents the Pharisees. This is true for at least five reasons: **1)** The rich man addressed Abraham as father and Abraham addressed Lazarus as son (Luke 16:24-25; Luke 16:27; Luke 16:30). The Jews in general, but the Pharisees in particular claimed Abraham as their father (see, John 8:37-44; Matthew 3:9). **2)** The Pharisees claimed to have a special closeness to Abraham. Jesus would never have described the Gentiles as being in the “bosom of Abraham”. **3)** The rich man had five brothers. These could very well represent the other Jewish denominations of Christ’s day: The Sadducees, the Herodians, the

Scribes, the Zealots and the Essenes. **4)** It is clear that the rich man believed in the immortality of the soul because he asked Abraham to send someone to his brother from among the dead (verse 30). This is precisely what the Pharisees believed! **5)** The brothers of the rich man “had Moses and the Prophets” (verse 31). It was the Jews who had Moses and the Prophets (John 5:39-46).

2. What did Jesus teach regarding natural genetic lineage? “Christ recognized no virtue in lineage. He taught that spiritual connection _____ all natural connection.” COL, p. 268.2

3. What did Jesus say to a gentile woman who begged Jesus to heal her daughter and what did the woman say in return? “It is not meet to take the _____ bread, and to cast it to _____ . . . Truth, Lord: Yet the dogs eat of the _____ which fall from the masters’ table.” Matthew 15:26-27

Note: There are several parallel words in this passage to the parable of the rich man and Lazarus: Crumbs, dogs, table, children. This would indicate that Lazarus represents the gentiles. The Jews referred to the gentiles as “stones” (Matthew 3:9-10), “dogs” (Matthew 15:26) and “swine” (Matthew 7:6).

4. **Thought Question:** Sometimes it is important not only to read what a passage says but also what it does not say. Does this passage use any of the following words (in bold type)?

“**Immediately** after he died,” (Luke 16:22) “His **body** was buried,” (Luke 16:22) “his **soul** was in **everlasting** torments,” (Luke 16:23) “send the **soul** of Lazarus,” (Luke 16:24) “being in the **everlasting** torments of hades,” (Luke 16:23) “in this **eternal** flame,” (Luke 16:24) “his **soul** is comforted.” (Luke 16:25). The sobering fact is that the words “soul” and “everlasting” are missing!

5. What indication do we have in the parable that the rich man believed in the immortality of the soul? “Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them _____ the _____, they will repent.” (Luke 16:30)

6. Did Jesus believe a dead person could impart a message to the rich man’s five brothers? “And he [Abraham] said unto him [the rich man], If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one _____ from the dead.” (Luke 16:31).

Note: It is clear that Jesus believed in the resurrection of the dead, not the immortality of the soul. The word “rise” in this text is used repeatedly by Luke to describe the resurrection (see, Luke 18:33; Luke 24:7; Luke 24:46; Acts 26:23). It is also used by Jesus in John 11:24-25 to describe His own resurrection.

7. **Thought Question:** Why did Jesus employ the proper name “Lazarus” in this one parable? Hint: The answer to this question is found in COL, p. 265.1 _____

8. What did the Jews attempt to do to Jesus after He resurrected Lazarus? “Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to _____.” (John 11:53).

9. What did the Jews attempt to do to Lazarus after his resurrection? “But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to _____.” (John 12:10)

Note: The words of Jesus in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus were proved literally true. Lazarus went to the Jews after rising from the dead and yet they did not believe in Jesus. This is what Jesus meant when He said: “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” (Luke 16:31)

10. Was the Jewish nation “consumed” for their rejection of the Messiah? “The king. . . sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and _____ up their city.” (Matthew 22:7)

Note: The city of Jerusalem was burned up by the Romans [God’s instruments] and the Jews have been suffering fiery trials ever since (see, Luke 19:41-44) The kingdom was taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles (see Acts 13:46-47)

The Final Application of the Parable

1. To whom does the parable apply in the end-time? “Today, there is a class in our world who are _____. They are not gluttons, they are not drunkards, they are not infidels; but they desire to live for _____, not for God. He is not in their thoughts; therefore they are classified with _____.” (COL, p. 270.2)

2. What is it that fits us to dwell with Christ in heaven? “To learn of Christ means to receive his grace, which is His _____. But those who do not appreciate and utilize the precious _____ and sacred influences granted them on _____, are not fitted to take part in the pure devotion of heaven.” (COL, p. 271.1)

3. **Thought Question:** Do you suppose that this parable could have something to do with the message of Jesus to the Laodicean church? What relationship do you see? Do you think the Laodicean Church could repeat this story? _____

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables” Lesson #5 – The Widow, the Judge and the Adversary

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp 164-180; GC, pp 613-634, Luke 18:1-8)

Central Lesson and Time Frame

1. Which two central lessons did Christ teach in this parable? That “men ought _____ to pray and not to _____.” (Luke 18:1)
2. Though these two lessons apply to God’s people in all ages, they have special reference to the period just before Christ’s _____ coming. (COL, p. 164.1)
3. In the immediately preceding context of this parable, Christ had been comparing His second coming with the days of _____ and the days of _____. (Luke 17:26-37)
4. At the conclusion of the parable, Jesus asked the question: “Nevertheless, when the Son of man _____, shall he find _____ on the earth?” (Luke 18:8)

Symbols of the Parable

1. The **judge** in the parable represents _____ (Luke 18:7) “Christ here draws a sharp _____ between the unjust judge and _____.” (COL, p. 165.1)

Note: The judge symbolizes God by way of comparison and contrast. Both the judge and God meet out justice but for contrasting reasons.

2. In the Bible, a **woman** is employed as a symbol of the _____ (Ephesians 5:25-27).

3. The **widow** represents God’s _____ who cry out to Him day and night. (Luke 18:7)

Note: Scholars who have studied this parable agree that the widow's husband most likely owed a large sum of money to a certain creditor. Upon his death, the creditor confiscated all his possessions and left the widow totally destitute. She had no children, no home, no money and no friends. Ellen White comments: "The woman who entreated the judge for justice had lost her husband by death. Poor and friendless, she had no means of retrieving her ruined fortunes." (COL, p. 165.2)

4. Christ describes the **elect** as living especially in the midst of the final time of trouble: "And except those days [the time of trouble] should be _____, there should no flesh be saved: but for the _____ sake those days shall be shortened. . . . For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great _____ and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very _____." (Matthew 24:22; Matthew 24:24)

5. The parable tells us that the woman _____ to the judge for justice. (Luke 18:3)

Note: The verb "came" here is better translated "kept coming" or "continued coming." The sense of the verb is seen in verse 5 where the judge says: "I will avenge her, lest by her **continual** coming she weary me." The widow did not come once and then give up. She was perseverant, persistent and insistent. She was not about to give up.

6. The **adversary** (*antidikón*) in the parable represents _____. In 1 Peter 5:8 we are warned: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your _____ the _____, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may _____."

Note: Ellen White remarks: "Satan is their great adversary. . . . The work of Satan as an accuser began in heaven. This has been his work on earth ever since man's fall, and it will be his work in a special sense as we approach nearer to the close of this world's history." (COL, p. 166.2, COL, p. 167.1).

7. The judge **delayed** in answering the widow's pleas. We are told that "he would not for a _____." (Luke 18:4) Likewise, God will delay in answering the pleas of His elect: "And shall not God _____ his own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though he bear _____ with them?" (Luke 18:7)

Note: The expression, "though he bear long with them" is variously translated. The New International Version reads: "Will he keep **putting them off**?" The Jerusalem Bible has it: "even when he **delays** to help them?" The Weymouth translation states: "although he **delays** vengeance on their behalf?" It is clear that God will delay in delivering His people!! Yet the contrast between God and the judge is clear. The judge capriciously delays to answer the widow's pleas but finally does so to get her off his back. In contrast, God delays to answer his elect because

He loves them.

The End Time Fulfillment of the Parable

1. We have seen that the judge represents _____, the adversary is the _____, and the widow symbolizes the _____. Though this parable applies generally to all ages, it applies especially to those who will go through the time of trouble.

2. The widow woman represents God's afflicted people: "The beloved of God pass _____ days, bound in chains, shut in prison bars, sentenced to be slain, some apparently left to die of starvation in dark and loathsome dungeons. No _____ ear is open to hear their moans; no human hand is ready to lend them _____." (GC, p. 626.1)

3. The adversary represents Satan: "As _____ accuses the people of God on account of their sins, the Lord permits him to try them to the _____. Their confidence in God, their faith and firmness, will be _____ tested." (GC, p. 618.3)

4. Like the widow, the faith of God's people will not waver in spite of the delay: "Their faith does not fail because their prayers are not _____ answered. Though suffering the keenest anxiety, _____ and distress, they do not _____ their intercessions." (GC, p. 619.3)

5. The expression "cry out" in the parable translates the Greek word *βοαο*. This is a very intense word which describes a person crying out in agony. It is used in Acts 8:7 where the evil _____ cried out as they were cast out by the apostles. It is also used in Luke 9:38 where the _____ cried out to Jesus for healing. In Matthew 27:46 we find Jesus crying out " My God, My God, Why hast thou _____ Me."

6. The following paragraph from The Great Controversy, pp. 630-631 (GC, p. 630.2) explains the reason for the delay: "Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ's patience. With sympathizing tenderness, angels have witnessed their _____ and have heard their prayers. They are waiting the word of their Commander to snatch them from their peril. But they must _____ yet a little longer. The people of God must drink of the cup and be baptized with the baptism. The very _____, so painful to them, is the best answer to their petitions. As they endeavor to wait trustingly for the Lord to work they are led to exercise faith, hope, and patience, which have been too little exercised during their religious experience. Yet for the _____ sake the time of trouble will be _____. "Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him? . . . I tell you that He will avenge them speedily." (Luke 18:7-8).

7. The agonizing prayers of God's people and the delay can be illustrated with the experience of _____ in Genesis 32:1-32. When his brother was coming to destroy him, Jacob poured out his heart to God and struggled with Him all night. Finally, in the morning, God _____ him and changed his _____ (Genesis 32:28-29).

8. The story of Job also illustrates the plight of God's people in the time of trouble. Job lost all he had—servants, children, wife, friends, possessions, health. He was accused by _____ before the heavenly courts. He pleaded with God for an explanation of his sufferings and God delayed to answer. Yet Job exclaimed: "Though He _____ me, yet will I _____ in Him." (Job 13:15). In the end, God answered Job's pleas and his cause was vindicated!

9. Perseverant prayer is also illustrated by the story of the woman of _____. In spite of the fact that Jesus kept putting her off, she boldly continued coming. Finally, Jesus said: "O woman, great is thy _____." (Matthew 15:21-28)

10. The time of delay in the time of trouble is described in Isaiah 54:7-8 : "For a small _____ have I forgotten thee; but with great _____ will I gather thee. In a _____ wrath I _____ my face from thee for a _____; but with everlasting kindness will I have _____ one thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer."

The Unanswered Question is Answered

1. This parable ends with a question which is left unanswered: "Nevertheless, when the Son of man _____, shall he find _____ on the earth?" (Luke 18:8).

2. This question is answered in Revelation 14:12 : "Here is the _____ [better, "perseverance"] of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the _____ of Jesus."

3. What is the 'faith of Jesus'? All the elements of this parable are present in the passion of Jesus in the Garden and on the cross. The adversary who tortured Jesus was _____. (Luke 22:53) Jesus had nothing on earth to lean upon. His _____ forsook him (Matthew 26:56). He did not even have any _____ on His back. (Matthew 27:35) He begged His Father to take away the _____. (Matthew 26:39-44) Yet the answer did not appear to come, it was delayed. Jesus felt _____ of His own Father. (Matthew 27:46) Yet in the end He was vindicated.

4. Hebrews 5:7 describes the perseverant faith of Jesus: "Who in the days of his _____, when he had offered up _____ and _____ with strong _____ and _____ unto him that was able to _____ him from death,

and was _____ in that he feared..”

Why the Delay?

1. Notice the reason for the trials of Jesus: “Though he were a _____, yet he _____ by the things which he _____.” (Hebrews 5:8)

2. Job explained the benefit of his trials: “When he [God] hath _____ me, I shall come forth as _____.” (Job 23:10) This can be illustrated by the three young men who were thrown into the fiery furnace. When they came forth, their characters were composed of pure gold.

3. Ellen White explains that all “_____ must be consumed that the _____ of Christ might be _____ reflected.” (GC, p. 621.1)

4. The apostle Peter explained the reason why God allows trials: “Wherein ye greatly _____, though now for a _____, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations. That the _____ of your faith, being much more precious than of _____ that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. . .” (1 Peter 1:6-7; read also James 5:7-8; Hebrews 10:37-39; Luke 21:16-19)

5. “The Lord _____ trials in order that we may be _____ from earthliness, from _____, from harsh, _____ traits of character.” (COL, p. 174.3)

The Prayer Life of Jesus

1. The prayer life of Jesus is described in Mark 1:35 : “And in the _____, rising up a great while _____ day, he went out, and departed into a _____ place, and there prayed.”

Note: Jesus did not utter **long public** prayers. His prayer life was defined by a one on one conversation with His Father. So it must be with us.

2. It is vital for us to learn to pray before the final crisis. Ellen White has stated: “The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger- -a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time. Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God's promises, as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not

obtain it. Wrestling with God--how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God. "Those who exercise but little faith now, are in the greatest danger of falling under the power of satanic delusions and the decree to compel the conscience. And even if they endure the test they will be plunged into deeper distress and anguish in the time of trouble, because they have never made it a habit to trust in God. The lessons of faith which they have neglected they will be forced to learn under a terrible pressure of discouragement. We should now acquaint ourselves with God by proving His promises. Angels record every prayer that is earnest and sincere. We should rather dispense with selfish gratifications than neglect communion with God. The deepest poverty, the greatest self-denial, with His approval, is better than riches, honors, ease, and friendship without it. We must take time to pray. If we allow our minds to be absorbed by worldly interests, the Lord may give us time by removing from us our idols of gold, of houses, or of fertile lands." GC, pp. 621-622

3. Let us always remember that ""Prayer moves the _____ of _____." (COL, p. 172.4)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #6 – The Barren Fig Tree

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp 212-218; DOA, pp 97-108; 580-588; Matthew 21:18-20; Mark 11:12-14; Mark 11:21; Matthew 3:2; Matthew 3:7-12; Revelation 3:14-21

In this lesson we will study the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree. We are told by the Spirit of Prophecy that this was an “acted parable” (DA, p. 582.4). In order to understand this parable, it will be necessary to study two other “tree passages”. One is found in Matthew 3:7-12 and the other in Luke 13:1-9. Let’s delve right into our study.

The Message of John the Baptist

1. In Isaiah 61:3 God’s plan for Israel is compared with a fruitful tree: “That they might be called _____ of righteousness, the _____ of the Lord, that He might be _____.”
2. What symbol did John employ to represent the Israel of his day? _____ Matthew 3:10.
3. Present when John preached were the _____ and the _____. These people felt rich and increased with goods because they were sons of _____ Matthew 3:7; Matthew 3:9.

Note: John’s message was imparted to a nation which professed great piety and laid claim to the special favor of God. They were like a tree with abundant leaves but no fruit!

4. John rebuked the Jewish nation because they were like trees without _____ Matthew 3:8

Note: “Not by its name, but by its fruit, is the value of a tree determined. If the fruit is worthless, the name cannot save the tree from destruction. John declared to the Jews that their standing

before God was to be decided by their character and life. Profession was worthless.” (DA, p. 107.1)

5. John encouraged the Jewish people to _____ and bear fruits which flow from repentance Matthew 3:8.

Note: John’s call to repentance must have been a great surprise to the Jewish religious leaders. After all, were they not children of Abraham? Were they not keepers of the law? Did they not fast, pay tithe and keep the Sabbath? What were they to repent of?

6. There were other groups of people present when John preached. The parallel account in Luke (Luke 3:10; Luke 3:12; Luke 3:14) tells us that the people, the _____ and the _____ asked John what they should do.

Note: John the Baptist told the religious leaders that God could produce children of Abraham from stones. Notice that John was not speaking of literal stones: “As He called Abraham out from a heathen people, so He could call others to His service. Their hearts might now appear as lifeless as the _____ of the desert, but His Spirit could quicken them to do His will, and receive the fulfillment of His promise.” (DA, p. 106.4).

7. John told the people to share their _____ and food. He told the publicans to _____ no more than what was appointed to them and he exhorted the soldiers to not use _____ or accuse _____ and to be content with their _____ (Luke 3:10-14)

Note: All these exhortations given by John had to do with human relations. This is the fruit which God expected the Jewish nation to produce. A broader description of the fruit is found in Galatians 5:22-26.

8. John’s message was one of judgment. He warned that every tree which did not produce fruit would be _____ down and thrown into the _____ Matthew 3:10. He warned that this judgment process would be executed by the Messiah who would have his _____ in His hand to thoroughly _____ his floor. He would gather the _____ into his barn but would burn the _____ with unquenchable fire Matthew 3:12.

Note: The chronology of John’s message is important. He began his preaching six months before Jesus began His ministry.

The Parable of Luke 13

1. This parable is addressed to those who felt better than the _____ whom Pilate slaughtered and the eighteen upon whom the tower in _____ fell. (Luke 13:1-4)
2. The vineyard in this parable represents the _____.
3. The owner of the vineyard symbolizes God the _____. (COL, p. 216.1)
4. The dresser of the vineyard represents _____ (COL, p. 216.1)
5. The fig tree represented the “_____ to whom the Savior had come. . .” (COL, p. 214.2)

Note: “Israel was a cumberer of the ground. Its very existence was a curse; for it filled the place in the vineyard that a fruitful tree might fill. It robbed the world of the blessings that God designed to give. The Israelites had misrepresented God among the nations. They were not merely useless, but a decided hindrance. To a great degree their religion was misleading, and wrought ruin instead of salvation.” (COL, p. 215.2) She adds: “That barren tree, flaunting its pretentious foliage in the very face of Christ, was a symbol of the Jewish nation. The Savior desired to make plain to His disciples the cause and certainty of Israel’s doom.” (DA, p. 582.4)

6. The fig tree obviously had leaves. To the outward look it appeared to be healthy but it was devoid of _____ (Luke 13:6).

Note: The Jewish nation was high on externals. They tithed, “kept” the Sabbath, fasted, practiced health reform, etc., but their lives were devoid of practical godliness. We might say that they appeared fine outside but they were rotten inside (see Matthew 23:23-28). Ellen White remarks: “The Jewish religion, with its magnificent temple, its sacred altars, its mitered priests and impressive ceremonies, was indeed fair in outward appearance, but humility, love and benevolence were lacking.” (DA, p. 582.4)

7. Jesus called upon that generation to _____ or they would perish (Luke 13:1-3).
8. Most scholars agree that this parable was told by Jesus two and a half years into His ministry. This would mean that three years had passed since John had begun to preach. This would explain why the owner of the vineyard came looking for fruit for a period of _____ years and found none (Luke 13:7).

9. The dresser of the vineyard begged the owner to allow the fig tree to remain for yet another _____ (Luke 13:8).

Note: During the last year of His ministry Jesus dedicated special attention to the Jewish nation in the hopes that they would repent and bear fruit.

10. The parable of Luke 13:1-9 ends in suspense: “. . . if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt _____ it _____. (Luke 13:9). Why don't we know at this point whether the tree bore fruit or not?

Note: “Jesus did not in the parable tell the result of the gardener's work. At that point His story was cut short. Its conclusion rested with the generation that heard His words. To them the solemn warning was given. "If not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." Upon them it depended whether the irrevocable words should be spoken. The day of wrath was near. In the calamities that had already befallen Israel, the owner of the vineyard was mercifully forewarning them of the destruction of the unfruitful tree.” (COL, p. 216.2)

The Fig Tree Withers

1. On the Tuesday before His death, Jesus saw in the distance a fig tree with _____ but when He arrived it had no _____ (Matthew 21:19)

Note: The fig tree first produces fruit and then leaves come out announcing that the tree has fruit. In other words, if the fig tree had leaves it should have had fruit as well! Ellen White remarks: “. . . “one tree appeared to be in advance of all the others. It was already covered with leaves. It is the nature of the fig tree that before the leaves open, the growing fruit appears. Therefore this tree in full leaf gave promise of well-developed fruit.” But she adds that the tree “was a mass of pretentious foliage, nothing more.” (DA, p. 581.4)

2. There were other fig trees in the orchard that day but they had no _____. These trees represented the _____ (DA, p. 583.1)

Note: “All the trees in the fig orchard were destitute of fruit; but the leafless trees raised no expectation, and caused not disappointment. By these trees the _____ were represented. They were as destitute as were the Jews of godliness; but they had not professed to serve God. They made no boastful pretensions to goodness. They were blind to the works and ways of God. With them the time of figs was not yet.” (DA, p. 583.1)

3. Jesus cursed the fig tree with the following words: “Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for _____ (Matthew 21:19).

4. The next day when Jesus and the disciples passed by the place where the fig tree had stood, it had dried up by its _____ and had _____ away. (Matthew 21:20; Mark 11:20)

Note: If the fig tree represents the Jewish nation and the tree dried up by its roots and withered away, then God's plan for the Jewish nation is finished. Then the reestablishment of the Jewish nation in 1948 has not prophetic significance whatsoever!! Ellen White solemnly warns: "The heart that does not respond to divine agencies becomes hardened until it is no longer susceptible to the influence of the Holy Spirit." (COL, p. 218.3)

5. This warning given to the Jewish nation not only applies to them: "The warning sounds down along the line to us in this _____." (COL, p. 216.3) "The warning is for all _____. Christ's act in cursing the tree which His own power had created stands as a warning to all _____ and to all _____." (DA, p. 584.1)

Note: It is highly suggested that the student of these lessons carefully review Christ's message to the Laodicean church in preparation of this lesson because Laodicea is repeating the history of ancient Israel. More on this in class!!

6. What is represented by the hunger of Jesus? "He had come to _____ hungering to find in them the _____ of righteousness. He had lavished on them His gifts, that they might bear fruit for the _____ of the world." (DA, p. 583.2)

7. Why did the Jewish nation bring ruin upon itself? "They brought ruin upon themselves by refusing to _____ to others. The treasures of truth which God had committed to them, they did not give to the _____." (DA, p. 583.2)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #7 – The Wheat and the Tares

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 70-75; Matthew 13:24-30; Matthew 13:37-43

The Cosmic Setting of the Parable

1. According to John 1:1-3 the Word of God _____ all things and the Word of God was _____.
2. When Jesus created the world he saw that everything which He had made was very _____
Genesis 1:31
3. When this world was created, Satan had already been cast out from heaven. Satan was jealous of _____ in heaven and was determined to get revenge against Him on earth. (See PP, p. 35.3)
4. While Adam and Eve _____ (let the guard down) Satan came and introduced evil into Christ’s good world.
5. The first example of wheat and tares growing together was in the story of _____ and _____. Both claimed to worship God, both brought an offering, both raised up an altar but _____ was like the wheat and _____ was like the tares. The evil eventually became so clearly distinguished from the good that God uprooted evil by sending a worldwide _____.

The Symbols of the Parable

1. Even though Jesus did not explain who the householder represents, who do you suppose he symbolizes? _____ (Matthew 13:27)

Note: The word “householder” is a translation of the Greek word *oikodespotes*. This word literally means, “the lord of the house.”

2. Who is the **sower** of the parable? “He that soweth the good seed is the _____ of man.”
Matthew 13:37

3. What does the **field** represent? “the field is the _____.” (Matthew 13:38)

4. More precisely, the field represents the _____.

Note: Ellen White perceptibly explains: “‘The field,’ Christ said, ‘is the world.’ But we must understand this as signifying the _____ of Christ in the world. . . The parable is a description of that which pertains to the _____ of God, His work of salvation of men; and this work is accomplished through the church.” (COL, p. 70.2)

5. What does the **good seed** symbolize? “the good seed are the children of the _____”
(Matthew 13:38)

6. What do the **tares** represent? “the tares are the children of the _____ one” (Matthew 13:38)

Note: The Greek work for tares here is *zizania*. The reference here is probably to the *lolium temulentum*. “This common Palestinian plant grows about 2 ft. tall. In its earlier stages it is indistinguishable from wheat. Only when the plant matures and the seeds of the darnel turn black is it easy to tell the difference. These seeds are poisonous, and if eaten, produce violent nausea, diarrhea, convulsions, and sometimes death.” (5BC, p.407).

7. The tares more specifically represent false believers in the church: “By bringing into the _____ those who bear Christ’s _____ while they deny his _____, the wicked one causes that God shall be dishonored, the work of salvation misrepresented, and souls imperiled.” (COL, p. 71.1)

8. Who is the **enemy** who sowed the tares? “the enemy that sowed them [the tares] is the _____.” (Matthew 13:39)

Note: The enemy’s sowing of tares was an act of revenge: “In the East, men sometimes took revenge upon an enemy by strewing his newly sown fields with the seeds of some noxious weed that, while growing, closely resembled wheat. Springing up with the wheat, it injured the crop and brought trouble and loss to the owner of the field. So it is from enmity to Christ that Satan scatters his evil seed among the good grains of the kingdom.” (COL, p. 71.1)

9. When does the **harvest** occur? “the harvest is the end of the _____.” (Matthew 13:39)

Note: In Greek there are two main words which are translated in the King James Version as “world”. The first is *kósmos* which refers to the world in its material composition. The second is the word *aión* which describes the world within its temporal framework. The word which is used in Matthew 13:39 is *aeon* and a better translation of it would be “the end of the age” (see also, Matthew 28:20 where the same word is used. Ellen White remarks: “The tares and the wheat are to grow together until the harvest; and the harvest is the end of probationary time.” (COL, p. 71.3)

10. Who are the **reapers** of the parable? “the reapers are the _____.” (Matthew 13:39)

11. **Thought Question:** Although Jesus did not directly interpret who the servants represent, who do you suppose they symbolize? _____

12. **Thought Question:** What do you think is represented by the sleeping of the servants?

13. In terms of the book of Revelation, what do you think is represented by the act of binding up the tares in bundles to be burned? (**Hint:** Revelation 14:9-11, 14-18)

14. What is meant by the expression “wailing and gnashing of teeth”? Who are those who will wail and gnash their teeth, unbelievers or professed believers? Matthew 13:41-43. To answer these questions study the following passages: Psalm 112:10; Matthew 13:50; Matthew 22:13; Matthew 24:51; Matthew 25:30; Luke 13:28 _____

15. What parallel text refers to God’s people shining in the kingdom? “And they that be _____ shall _____ as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the _____ for ever and ever.” (Daniel 12:3)

The Central Lessons of the Parable

1. **Thought Question:** Why must the wheat and the tares be allowed to grow together until the harvest? _____

2. Does the teaching of the parable of the wheat and the tares make church discipline unnecessary? “Christ has plainly taught that those who persist in _____ sin must be separated from the _____, but He has not committed to us the work of judging character and _____. . . . Should we try to uproot from the church those whom we _____ to be spurious Christians, we should be sure to make mistakes. Often we regard as _____ subjects the very ones whom Christ is drawing to Himself.” (COL, p. 71.3)

3. There were two dangers in trying to uproot the tares before the right time: “There was danger of disturbing the roots of the _____, and destroying the young blades, if the weeds were rudely pulled from among them; besides this, the tares so closely _____ the grain, while growing, that it was hard to distinguish the one from the other.” (2SP, p. 247.3)

4. Regarding the first of these dangers, Ellen White remarks: “As the tares have their roots closely intertwined with those of the good grain, so false _____ in the _____ may be closely linked with true disciples. The real character of these _____ believers is not fully manifested. Were they [false believers] to be separated from the church, others might be caused to _____, who but for this would have remained _____.” (COL, p. 72.1)

Living Examples of the Tares

5. How does this parable illustrate the way in which God has dealt with the heavenly angels?

(COL, p. 72.2)

6. How does this parable illustrate the way in which Jesus dealt with Judas? (Read DA, p. 563.2) What would have happened if Jesus had uprooted Judas from the very beginning of His ministry?

7. What other unworthy persons in the early church illustrate the lessons of this parable? Reflect seriously upon the experience of each of these persons. (COL, p. 72.3)
a) _____ b) _____ c) _____

8. In what way did the church of the Dark Ages try to uproot what it thought to be tares? “Notwithstanding Christ’s warning, men have sought to uproot the tares. To punish those who were _____ to be evildoers, the church has had recourse to the _____ power. Those who differed from the _____ doctrines have been imprisoned, put to torture and death, at the instigation of men who _____ to be acting under the sanction of Christ. But it is the spirit of _____, not the Spirit of Christ, that inspires such acts.” (COL,

The Final Judgment

9. When will the clear difference be seen between the wheat and the tares? “Sinners who make a pretension of _____ mingle for a time with the true followers of Christ, and the _____ of Christianity is calculated to _____ many; but in the harvest of the world there will be no likeness between the good and evil. Then those who have _____ the _____, but who have not joined _____, will be made manifest.” (COL, p. 74.3)

10. What is of critical importance in determining each person’s destiny? “_____ is as nothing in the scale. It is _____ that decides destiny.” (COL, p. 74.4)

11. What can be said about those who wish to cleanse the church from sin and sinners before the close of probation? “Has God no living church? He has a church, but it is the church _____, not the church _____. We are sorry that there are defective _____, that there are tares amid the wheat. . . . Although there are evils existing in the _____, and will be until the end of the world, the church in these _____ days is to be the light of the world that is polluted and demoralized by sin. The church, enfeebled and defective, needing to be reprovved, warned, and counseled, is the _____ object upon earth upon which Christ bestows His _____ regard.” (TM, p. 45.1, TM, p. 49.1)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #8 – The Prodigal Son

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 198-211; Luke 15:11-32

The Symbols and Purpose of the Parable

1. Though the parable does not overtly identify the meaning of each symbol, what do you think each of the following symbols represents?

The father represents _____. (Hint: John 16:27)

The younger son represents the _____ and the _____. (Hint: Luke 15:1)

The older son represents the _____ and _____. (Hint: Luke 15:2)

The killing of the fatted calf represents the death of _____. (Hint: Leviticus 9:2-3)

The owner of the swine symbolizes _____. (Hint: Revelation 18:2-3)

The best robe represents “the robe of _____.” (Isaiah 61:10)

The father’s house symbolizes the _____ (Hint: 1 Timothy 3:15)

2. Christ’s central purpose in teaching this parable was to illustrate the matchless love of God and to condemn the self-righteous and condemnatory spirit of the _____ and _____ (Luke 15:1-2)

Note: It is ironic that Jesus, who was holy, blameless and undefiled, attracted the most vile and filthy of sinners to Himself. The “scum of the earth” was attracted to the purest being in the universe. On the other hand, those who were undefiled in their own estimation, felt very uncomfortable in the presence of Jesus. The Pharisees and Scribes knew they were cherishing sin on the inside and tried to cover it up on the outside. This is why they felt so uncomfortable in the presence of Jesus. They knew He could read them like a book. On the other hand, the publicans and sinners recognized that they were sinners and had nothing to hide from Jesus so they felt comfortable in His presence.

The Younger Son's Early View of His Father

1. Why did the younger son ask for his inheritance and leave home? "This younger son had become weary of the _____ of his father's house. He thought that his _____ was restricted." "In his restless youth the prodigal looked upon his father as _____ and _____." COL, 198.4, (COL, p. 204.2)

Note: The younger son felt restricted by the laws of his father house. He looked upon his father as a taskmaster and himself as a slave. He wanted freedom and independence to live his life as he saw fit.

2. How does the younger son's view of his father describe the view of the sinner toward God? "They [unrepentant sinners] regard Him as watching to _____ and condemn, as unwilling to receive the sinner so long as there is a _____ excuse for not helping him. His _____ they regard as a _____ upon men's happiness, a burdensome _____ from which they are glad to escape." (COL, p. 204.2)

3. How did the younger son view the present as compared with the future? "He is bent on _____ enjoyment, and cares not for the _____." (COL, p. 199.1)

Note: The spirit of the younger son at this stage is very similar to that of Esau, Jacob's older son (see, Hebrews 12:15-17) but with a different ending. Esau did not care about the birthright, he only cared for his present moment of hunger! The younger son lives for the here and now, not for the sweet by and by.

4. With what words did the younger son display his spirit of selfishness? "Father, _____ me the portion of goods that falls to me." (Luke 15:12)

The Younger Son Leaves Home

1. Why do you suppose the younger son went into a "far country"? (Luke 15:13) _____

Note: The father knew that reasoning with his son was fruitless because the son was full of self-sufficiency. The father did not force his son to stay; he gave him the freedom of choice to leave home.

2. What attitude did the younger son have upon his departure from home? "With money in plenty, and _____ to do as he likes, he _____ himself that the desire of his heart is reached. There is no one to say, Do not do this, for it will be an injury to yourself; or, Do

this, because it is right.” (COL, p. 199.2)

3. What kind of lifestyle did the younger son live while he was away from home? He “wasted his substance with _____ living.” (Luke 15:13).

Note: For a while things went well. He had fun partying and playing around. He had loads of friends. He felt free and unrestricted to do his own thing. At last no rules or regulations! “The wealth which he has selfishly claimed from his father he squanders upon harlots. The treasure of his young manhood is wasted. The precious years of life, the strength of intellect, the bright visions of youth, the spiritual aspirations—all are consumed in the fires of lust.” (COL, p. 199.3)

The Enslavement of the Younger Son

1. What happened to the younger son after he squandered his father’s goods? “And when he has spent all, there arose a mighty _____ in that land; and he began to be in _____.” (Luke 15:14)

Note: When we separate ourselves from God and his family (church), we lose our freedom and dignity and become slaves of sin. The young man had thought that freedom from the father’s law meant joy and happiness but he now found out that it brought bitterness and pain!

2. Where did the younger son end up when calamity struck? “And he went and _____ himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed _____.” (Luke 15:15)

Note: The expression “joined himself” in the Greek means “to glue together”. That is to say, he was bound to another as by glue. His freedom came to a screeching halt and he now became the slave of the “citizen of that country.”

3. How does Ellen White describe the younger son’s bondage? “To a Jew this [working with swine] was the most menial and degrading of employments. The youth who has boasted of his _____, now find himself a _____. He is in the worst _____ ‘holden with the cords of his sins.’ The glitter and tinsel that enticed him have disappeared, and he feels the burden of his _____.” (COL, p. 200.1)

4. Which two commandments did the younger brother especially break? (See Exodus 20:12; Exodus 20:14) _____

5. What did the father mean when he said: “For this my son was _____, and is _____ again.” (Luke 15:24; Ephesians 2:12-13). In what sense was the son dead while _____

he was away from home? _____. In what sense was the son alive when he came home? _____.

6. Who do you suppose is represented by the “citizen of that country?” (Luke 15:15 in the light of Revelation 18:2 and Mark 5:12-13) _____.

The Return Home

1. What happened when the younger son hit rock bottom? “He came to _____.” (Luke 15:17)

Note: While he was away from home, he was “out of it.” “The deceptive power that Satan had exercised over him was broken.” (COL, p. 202.1) Now, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, he regained his senses and began thinking straight. While he was in the “far country” he was not himself because he was the slave of another.

2. What is it that wooed the younger son to come home? “How many hired servants of my father’s have _____ enough and to _____, and I perish with hunger?” (Luke 15:17)

3. Ellen White describes the drawing power of the father: “Miserable as he was, the prodigal found hope in the conviction of his father’s _____. It was that love which was _____ him toward home.” (COL, p. 202.1)

4. In Romans 2:4 the apostle Paul assures us that the “_____ of God leads us to _____.”

5. How does the son’s prepared speech reveal that his repentance was genuine? “I have _____ against heaven and before thee and am no more _____ to be _____ thy son.” (Luke 15:18-19)

6. Notwithstanding the drawing power of his father’s love, the younger brother has a stunted view of that love. How do we know this? “And [I] am no more worthy to be called thy _____: make me as one of thy hired _____.” (Luke 15:19)

Note: Whereas when the son left home he manifested his selfishness by saying to his father, “give me,” he now shows a spirit of humility by saying to his father, “make me.”

7. What indication do we have that the father was anxiously awaiting for the return of his son? “But when he was yet a _____ way off, his father _____ him.” (Luke 15:20)

Note: Ellen White beautifully remarks: “If you take even _____ step toward Him [God] in repentance, He will hasten to enfold you in his arms of _____ love. . . . The very _____ reaching out of the heart after God is known to Him. Never a _____ is offered, however faltering, never a _____ shed, however secret, never a sincere _____ after God cherished, however feeble, but the Spirit of God goes forth to meet it. Even _____ the prayer is uttered or the yearning made known, grace from Christ goes forth to _____ the grace that is working upon the human soul.” (COL, p. 206.1)

8. **Thought Question:** Why do you suppose (in contrast to the shepherd in the parable of the lost sheep) the father did not seek his son in the faraway place?

9. How did the father reveal his love for the reckless son? He “had _____, and _____, and fell on his _____, and _____ him.” (Luke 15:20)

10. Is there any indication that the father rebuked his son or put him on probation? _____

Note: “In the parable there is no taunting, no casting up to the prodigal of his evil course. The son feels that the _____ is forgiven and forgotten, blotted out _____.” (COL, p. 204.3). The son’s behavior deserved the sternest rebuke yet the father received him with open arms. This is grace—unmerited favor!

11. What blessings did the father bestow on his wayward son?

To satisfy his hunger the father killed the fatted _____ (Luke 15:23)

For his tired feet the father provided new _____ (Luke 15:22)

To replace his filthy, smelly garments the father provided the best _____ (Luke 15:22)

For his ragged hands, the father provides his very own signet _____ (Luke 15:22)

12. What is represented by the son’s filthy rags and the father’s best robe? (Carefully study Isaiah 64:6; Genesis 3:21; Isaiah 61:10; Zechariah 3:1-5; Revelation 7:13-14; Revelation 19:7-8)

13. What is represented by the killing of the fatted calf? “And he said unto Aaron, ‘Take thee a young _____ for an _____ offering.” (Leviticus 9:2).

14. The son had carefully prepared the speech he would make when he got home. Which part of his speech was cut short? _____ (Luke 15:18-19; Luke 15:21)

Note: “No opportunity is given him to ask a servant’s place. He is a son, who shall be honored with the best the house affords, and whom the waiting men and women shall respect and serve.” (COL, p. 203.2)

15. How did the household react when the younger son returned home? “Let us eat and be _____ And they began to be _____. . . . he heard _____ and _____.” (Luke 15:23-25; Luke 15:29).

Note: The Greek word for music is *symphonia* and the word for dancing is *xoron*. That is, the father called out the symphony and the choir!

The Riddle of the Older Son

10. Whom does the older son symbolize? “By the elder son were represented the unrepentant _____ of Christ’s day, and also the _____ in _____ age, who look with contempt upon those whom they regard as _____ and sinners.” (COL, p. 209.3)

11. How did he older brother show his disdain for both his father and his younger brother? He did not address his father as “father” (Luke 15:29-30) and he referred to his brother as “_____ son.” (Luke 15:29).

12. How did the older son reveal his arrogance and self-sufficiency? “Lo, these _____ years do I _____ thee, neither transgressed I at _____ time thy _____: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends.” (Luke 15:29)

Note: The older son refused even to enter the house (Luke 15:28). He had served his father, not because he loved him but because he wanted his father’s recognition and reward. He was the consummate legalist. He was a son with a servant’s mentality. He thought he had to earn his father’s inheritance by his hard work. The older brother was lost at home as many legalists are lost in church!

13. What two things characterize a legalist? The older son dwelt “upon his _____ life in his father’s house as a round of unrequited service, and then places in mean _____ the favor shown to the son just returned.” (COL, p. 207.3)

Note: This is the most deadly of all sins. How can God help someone who feels like he needs none? This sin characterized the rich young ruler (Matthew 19:16-22), the workers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-12), the Pharisee (Luke 15:9-14) and the Laodicean church (Revelation 3:14-21).

14. When we truly repent from sin, what will be the result? “When you see yourselves as sinners

saved only by the love of your heavenly Father, you will have tender _____ for others who are suffering in _____." (COL, p. 210.3)

Note: The older son complained to his father: "You killed the fatted calf for that sinful son of yours but you never even killed a kid in recognition of my loyalty to you." What the older son is saying is this: "You have done the maximum to reward a sinner while you have not even done the minimum to reward a righteous person like me."

15. Why are we not told in the story how the older son reacted to his father's logic? "Did the elder brother repent of his jealousy and hardheartedness? Concerning this, Christ was _____. For the parable was still _____, and it rested with His hearers to determine what the outcome should be." (COL, p. 209.2)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #9 – The Parable of the Leaven

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 95-102; Matthew 13:33; Leviticus 23:17; Matthew 16:6; Matthew 16:11-12; Exodus 12:19; Exodus 13:7; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8

In this lesson we will study what Jesus had to say about leaven. We will find that Jesus employed this symbol in several different ways.

1. In order for the individual to grow spiritually, the Holy Spirit (symbolized by leaven) must be implanted in the heart.
2. In order for the church to grow spiritually it must have within it the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit.
3. Sin (symbolized by leaven) must be expelled from the life.

First Application: The Internal Work of Grace in the Heart

1. According to COL, p. 95.1, what led Jesus to tell the parable of the leaven?

2. How much power does a person have to transform himself? “But man cannot transform himself by the exercise of his _____. . . . The leaven—something wholly from _____ must be put into the meal before the desired _____ can be wrought in it.” (COL, p. 96.2)

3. How can a sinner’s life be truly transformed? “As the leaven, when mingled with the meal works from _____ outward, so it is by the renewing of the _____ that the grace of God works to transform the life.” (COL, p. 97.1)

4. Can we change our lives by merely correcting bad habits? “There are many who try to _____ by correcting this or that bad habit, and they hope in this way to become Christians, but they are beginning in the _____ place. Our first work is with the _____.” (COL, p. 97.1)

5. What is the difference between a “profession of faith” and the “possession of truth”? “The mere _____ of truth is not enough. We may possess this, but the tenor of our thoughts must be changed. The _____ must be converted and _____,” (COL, p. 97.2)

6. Is mere obligation a correct motivation for obedience to God? “The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of _____ merely—because he is _____ to do so—will never enter into the _____ of obedience. He does not _____ obey. . . . True obedience is the _____ of a principle within.” (COL, p. 97.3)

7. What is the essence of all true righteousness? “The essence of all righteousness is _____ to our Redeemer. This will lead us to do right because it is _____ — because right doing is _____ to God.” (COL, p. 97.3)

8. Jesus once spoke to a great religious leader who was outwardly righteous but had not been inwardly renewed. Who was this leader and why did Jesus speak to him as He did? (John 3:1-36).
_____.

9. What similarity is there between the symbol of “wind” in John 3:8 and the symbol of “leaven” in Matthew 13:33? Jesus said: “The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot _____ where it comes from and where it goes” (John 3:8). “The leaven hidden in the flour works _____ to bring the whole mass under its leavening process: so the leaven of truth works secretly, _____, steadily to transform the soul.” (COL, p. 98.3)

10. Why do the lives of Christians so frequently reveal the same evil traits of character as the worldlings? “The reason is that they are not _____. They have not hidden the leaven of truth in the _____.” (COL, p. 99.1)

11. What is the great agency in the transformation of character? “The _____ are the great agency in the transformation of character. . . . If studied and _____ the word of God works in the heart, subduing every _____ attribute.” (COL, p. 100.1)

12. What relationship exists between the Holy Spirit and the Word of God? “The _____ of the Spirit is the _____ of God.” (Ephesians 6:17)

13. How did the Psalmist explain the transforming power of the Word of God? “Thy word have I hid in mine _____ that I might not _____ against Thee.” (Psalm 119:11)

14. What did Jesus say is the secret of the sanctified life? “Sanctify them through Your _____: Your _____ is truth.” (John 17:17)

15. According to Paul, how can the church reach the condition of not having a spot, wrinkle or any such thing? God cleanses and sanctifies the church with the _____ of the water by the _____.” (Ephesians 5:26)

16. How does the world look upon a person who has been transformed by the internal work of the Holy Spirit and why is the world not able to understand such a man? “The world regards as a _____ the man who is imbued with this _____. . . . Such a man the world cannot _____; for he is keeping in view eternal realities” (COL, p, 101.2)

17. What will be the evidence that the work of grace has transformed the heart? “The _____ is changed. Christ abiding in the heart _____ out in the faces of those who love Him and keep His commandments. Truth is written there. The _____ peace of heaven is revealed. There is expressed a _____ gentleness, a _____ than human love.” (COL, p. 102.2)

SECOND APPLICATION: THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

1. In the Parable of the Leaven Jesus said: “The _____ of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and _____ in three measures of _____, till the whole [loaf] was leavened.” (Matthew 13:33)

2. In 1 Corinthians 10:17 the apostle Paul compared the church to a loaf of _____.

3. On the Day of Pentecost, the church was filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). As a result, three _____ persons were added to the church that day. A few days later five _____ persons were added to the church.

Note: The secret of church growth is not found in gimmicks but rather in the presence of the Holy Spirit. The church is not to be grown by using external methods that appeal to the carnal heart. The church is to grow from inside out through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

4. On the Feast of Pentecost, the bread was to be made with _____ (Leviticus 23:17)

Note: As we shall see shortly, on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the leaven was a symbol of sin. However, on the Day of Pentecost the leaven was a symbol of church growth.

Third Application: The Need To Expel Sin From The Life

1. In Matthew 16:6; Matthew 16:11-12 Jesus warned His disciples to “beware of the _____ of the Pharisees and of the _____.”

2. In Exodus 12:15; Exodus 12:19; Exodus 13:7 we are informed that Israel had to expel every vestige of _____ from the house before the Feast of _____.

3. According to the apostle Paul, what does the leaven symbolize? “Therefore let us keep the feast not with _____ leaven, neither with the old leaven of _____ and _____; but with the _____ bread of _____ and truth.” (1 Corinthians 5:8)

Note: It is well known that leavened bread spoils much quicker than unleavened bread. By the process of fermentation leavened bread becomes moldy and spoils. So it is with the leaven of sin. When sin permeates the life, it corrupts and spoils spiritually.

4. The unleavened bread of the Passover represented the broken body of Jesus. We are told concerning Jesus: “in Him [Jesus] is no _____.” (1 John 3:5) .

5. What two things happened with the manna when it was saved from one day for next? “It bred _____ and _____.” (Exodus 16:20)

Note: Remarkably, these very two things take place when a human body begins to decompose.

6. When Friday’s manna was saved for Sabbath, what happened? “And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not _____, neither was there any _____ therein.” (Exodus 16:24)

7. Who was represented by the manna which came from heaven? Jesus said: “I am that _____ of life. Your fathers did eat _____ in the wilderness and are _____. This is the bread which cometh down from _____, that a man may eat thereof, and not _____.” (John 6:48-50)

8. On which day of the week did Jesus die? “And that day was the _____ and the Sabbath drew on.” (Luke 23:54)

9. What marvelous messianic prophecy pointed forward to the rest of Jesus in the tomb? “Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will _____ in hope. 10 For You will not leave my soul [me] in Sheol [the grave], nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.” (Psalm 16:9-10)

10. When Jesus rested in the tomb on the Sabbath day, did His body experience corruption? According to Peter on the Day of Pentecost, when Jesus rested in the tomb, God did not allow His body to see _____.” (Acts 2:27; see also, Acts 13:34-37)

Note: It becomes very clear that Exodus 16:1-36 was a messianic prophecy. As the manna picked up on Friday did not spoil on the Sabbath, so Jesus died on Friday but his body saw no corruption on the Sabbath. And the reason why the body of Jesus did not corrupt is because in Him there was no leaven of sin!!

11. After asking the Galatians who kept them from obeying the truth Galatians 5:7), the apostle Paul warned them: “A little leaven leavens the _____ lump.” (Galatians 5:9.)

Note: Here the apostle Paul compares leaven in a lump of dough with disobedience in the life of the Galatians. Cherished sin not only corrupts the person individually but also the church!

12. What is the secret of a victorious Christian life? “The _____ that I speak to you, they are _____ and they are _____.” (John 6:63).

The Final Manna Test

1. Why did God give Israel the Manna? “Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may _____ them, whether they will walk in my _____, or no.” (Exodus 16:4)

Note: God gave Israel Manna as a test to see if they would keep His law. He taught them this lesson in the wilderness for forty years.

2. Where did Aaron place a pot of Manna? “And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of _____ therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations. 34 As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the _____, to be kept.” (Exodus 16:33, 34)

According to the Apostle Paul, what was inside the Ark of the Covenant? “. . . Wherein was the golden pot that had _____, and Aaron's _____ that budded, and the _____ of the covenant.” (Hebrews 9:4)

Is the pot of Manna in the heavenly Ark of the Covenant? “In the ark was the golden pot of _____, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of stone which folded together like a book. Jesus opened them, and I saw the Ten Commandments written on them with the finger of God.” (EW, p. 32)

What distinguished the Fourth Commandment from all the rest? “On one table were four, and on the other six. The four on the first table shone brighter than the other six. However, the fourth, the Sabbath commandment, _____ above them all; for the Sabbath was set apart to be kept in honor of God's holy name. The holy Sabbath looked glorious--a _____ of glory was all around it.” (EW pp. 32, 33)

Note: What basis did Ellen White have to write that the Sabbath commandment stood above all the rest? The simple fact is that the Sabbath commandment in the ark receives double emphasis. First, it is located in the center of the Ten Commandments and second, it is highlighted by the pot of Manna.

Will the Sabbath once again be the final test for God’s people? “God has given men the Sabbath as a sign between Him and them, as a _____ of their loyalty. Those who, after the light regarding God's law comes to them, continue to disobey and exalt human laws above the law of God in the great crisis before us will receive the mark of the beast.” (Ev, p. 235.3) “The Sabbath will be the great _____ of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final _____ shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not.” (GC p. 605)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #10 – The Good Samaritan

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 376-389; DA, pp. 497-505; Luke 10:25-37; Matthew 19:16-22; Mark 10:17-22; Matthew 5:43-48; Luke 6:27-36)

Introductory Matters

1. Was the story of the good Samaritan created by Jesus? “This was no imaginary scene but an _____ occurrence, which was known to be _____ represented. The _____ and the _____ who had passed by on the other side were in the company that listened to Christ’s words.” (DA, p. 499.1)

2. What are the two dimensions of the parable?

First dimension: “In the story of the good Samaritan, Jesus gave a picture of _____ and _____ mission.” (DA, p. 503.6)

Second dimension: Jesus said to the young lawyer: “Go, and do _____ likewise.” (Luke 10:37)

3. What is the central lesson of the parable? “In the story of the good Samaritan, Christ illustrates the nature of true _____. He shows that it consists not in _____, creeds, or titles, but in the performance of loving _____, in bringing the greatest _____ to others, in genuine goodness.” (DA, p. 497.1)

4. What great question did a young lawyer ask Jesus? “Master, what shall I _____ to inherit eternal _____?” (Luke 10:25)

Note: The word “lawyer” denotes an expert in matters relating to the writings of Moses. We might say that he had a PhD in theology. On another occasion a rich young ruler asked Jesus a similar question.

The Rich Young Ruler

1. What question did a rich young ruler ask Jesus? “Good Master, what good thing shall I _____, that I may have eternal _____?” (Matthew 19:16)

Note: The rich young ruler asked the same question as the lawyer. They both wanted to know what they needed to do to inherit eternal life.

2. How did Jesus answer the rich young ruler’s question? “If you will enter into [eternal] _____, keep the _____.” (Matthew 19:17)

Note: This answer would certainly have made many Seventh-day Adventists happy. After all, Are we not the people “who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus”? (Revelation 12:17)

3. When the rich young ruler asked which commandments, Jesus quoted each of the commandments on the second table of the law except one (Matthew 19:18-19). Which one did He omit? _____ (the answer is in Exodus 20:17). Which one did Jesus include instead and why? _____ (the answer is in Leviticus 19:18)

4. What indication do we have that the rich young ruler considered himself an exemplary moral person? He answered Jesus: “All these things [the second table of the law] I _____ from my youth up: what _____ I yet?” (Matthew 19:20)

Note: The rich young ruler would have made a fine church member. He “kept” the Sabbath, faithfully tithed, fasted twice a week and kept all the health laws. Perhaps he would have made an outstanding church leader!

5. When the ruler asked what he lacked, Jesus answered: “If thou wilt be _____, go and _____ that thou hast, and give to the _____, and thou shalt have treasure in _____: and come and follow Me.” (Matthew 19:21)

Note: Notice that we must be perfect to inherit eternal life. We usually think of perfection as “ceasing to do evil” or as “gaining the victory over sin” or even as “perfect obedience to the commandments of God.” But perfection entails much more than this. It is far more than an external legal observance to the commandments. The apostle Paul explained that “Love is the fulfilling of the law (Romans 13:10). According to Matthew 22:34-40, love is the hinge of the law. The parallel account in Mark 10:21 provides additional details about this episode. Mark explains that Jesus **loved him**. He also tells us that Jesus said to the ruler: “One thing you lack.” (Mark

10:21). Putting Matthew and Mark together, Jesus said: “One thing you lack to be perfect and thus to enter into eternal life.” In Mark’s account we also find Jesus adding the words: “**take up the cross**, and follow me.” (Mark 10:21)

6. What was the young man’s response to the words of Jesus? “But when the young man heard that saying, he went away _____: for he had great _____.” (Matthew 19:22)

Back to the Good Samaritan

1. Why do you suppose Jesus insisted on having the lawyer answer his own question? (Luke 10:26) “He required the answer from the _____ himself. . . COL, p. 377.1 They [the religious leaders] could not _____ Him for sanctioning that which had been advanced by an _____ of the law.” (COL, p. 377.3)

2. Did the lawyer give the correct answer to his own question? Jesus said to the lawyer: “Thou hast answered _____: this do, and thou shalt live [eternal life].” (Luke 10:28). Did the lawyer give the same answer that Jesus had given to the rich young ruler’s question? _____.

3. Was the lawyer practicing what he preached? “But he, willing to justify _____, said unto Jesus, And who is my _____? (Luke 10:29)

The Cosmic Application of the Parable

1. In the cosmic application of the parable, what is represented by the thieves? “The thief cometh not, but for to _____, and to kill, and to _____: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more _____.” (John 10:10)

2 . Who is represented by the man who was robbed, stripped and wounded? “Man had been deceived, _____, robbed, and ruined by _____, and left to perish.” (DA, p. 503.6)

3. Before man sinned he was covered with a glorious robe of light. What did this garment represent? “He hath covered me with the _____ of _____.” (Isaiah 61:10). In what sense, then, did Satan strip man? _____
(see also, DA, p. 504.3)

4. The man in the parable was left half dead. In what way does this parallel our condition? “Even when _____ were _____ in sins.” (Ephesians 2:5)

5. **Thought Question:** Who do you suppose is represented by the priest and the Levite? _____

(Hint: The priest and Levite were both religious leaders in Israel)

Note: The priest was the most calloused of the two. He saw the wounded man from a distance and didn't even approach him. The Levite, on the other hand, came to where the man was and looked upon him and then passed him by. Both priest and Levite made great claims to piety. They were religious people. They were morally righteous outwardly and claimed to keep God's law. But they had no love and thus were transgressors of the very law they claimed to keep.

6. What commands in the law of Moses were the priest and the Levite ignoring? (Write down the references) _____ (DA, p. 500.1)

7. Who is represented by the Good Samaritan? We are told that Jesus "left His glory, to come to _____ rescue. He found _____ ready to die and he undertook our case. He _____ our wounds. He covered us with His _____ of righteousness. He opened to us a refuge of safety, and made complete provision for us at His own charges. He died to redeem us." (DA, p. 503.6)

8. Why was it so revolutionary for the good Samaritan to help a Jew? John tells us that the "Jews have no _____ with the Samaritans" (John 4:9). When the Jews wanted to offend Jesus they said: "Thou art a _____ and hast a devil." (John 8:48)

Note: As it was unthinkable for a Samaritan to even touch a Jew, so it is unfathomable that the pure and holy Jesus would condescend to come in contact with sinners such as us. The Samaritans were enemies of the Jews and yet the good Samaritan saved the Jew. In the same way we are enemies of Jesus but He came to save us. Romans 5:10 The good Samaritan had no vested interests in helping the wounded man. He practiced disinterested benevolence. He helped simply because the man was in need.

9. What remedies were applied for the healing of the wounded man? "And [the Samaritan] went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in _____ and _____." (Luke 10:34)

10. What does the wine represent? Jesus said about the wine: "this is my _____ of the new testament, which is shed for many for the _____ of sins." (Matthew 26:28).

11. What does the oil represent? "Not by might, nor by power, but by my _____, saith the Lord of hosts." (Zechariah 4:6)

12. **Thought Question:** Who do the inn and the innkeeper represent? _____
_____ (Hint: Revelation 22:12)

13. What is represented by the financial resources that the good Samaritan gave to the innkeeper for the care of the wounded man? “And he [Jesus] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; _____ the _____ of the saints, for the work of the _____, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:11-12)

14. What is represented by the departure of the Good Samaritan? “He [Jesus] was _____ up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.” Acts 1:9) What is represented by the good Samaritan’s return? Jesus said: “I will come _____.” (John 14:3)

15. The good Samaritan said to the innkeeper: “When I _____ again, I will _____ thee.” What will Jesus bring for his faithful people when he comes again? “And, behold, I _____ quickly; and my _____ is with me, to give to every _____ according as his work shall be.” (Revelation 22:12)

The Second Application of the Parable

1. After telling the parable, Jesus exhorted the lawyer with the following words: “Go, and do thou _____.” (Luke 10:37) We are all to be “good Samaritans”.

2. The apostle John affirms: “He that saith he abideth in him [Jesus] ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” (1 John 2:6)

3. According to Ellen White, who is our neighbor? “It has no reference to _____, color or _____ distinction. Our neighbor is every person who needs our _____. Our neighbor is every soul who is wounded and bruised by the _____. Our neighbor is every one who is the _____ of God.” (COL, p. 376.2)

4. Is profession of the truth enough to save us? “Our profession may be as high as heaven, but it will _____ neither ourselves nor our fellow men unless we are _____. A right example will do more to benefit the world than all our _____.” (COL, p. 383.2)

5. What is true gospel religion? “The _____ of the soul by the working of the Holy Spirit is the implanting of Christ’s nature in humanity. Gospel religion is _____ in the life—a living, active principle.” (COL, p. 384.1)

6. What is the basis of godliness and how can it be obtained? “_____ is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. But we can never come into possession of this spirit by _____ to love others. What is needed is the love of Christ in the _____. When self is merged in Christ, love

_____ forth spontaneously.” (COL, p. 384.2)

7. How should we approach people who consider us enemies because our religion is different than theirs? “Where _____ of feeling exists because of difference in religion, much good may be done by personal _____. Loving ministry will break down _____, and win souls to God.” (COL, p. 386.4)

8. How important is this matter of personal service to others? “By accepting this work of ministry we place ourselves in His _____, to be fitted for the courts of God. By rejecting it, we reject His instruction, and choose eternal _____ from His presence.” (COL, p. 388.3)

9. How does loving our neighbor relate to loving God? “If a man _____, I love God, and hateth his _____, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath _____, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” (1 John 4:20)

Christian Perfection and the Good Samaritan

1. Jesus said to the rich young ruler “If thou wilt enter _____,” He then said: “If thou wilt be _____.” Matthew 19:17; Matthew 19:21). The inescapable conclusion is that we must be perfect in order to enter into life. But what is perfection?

2. According to Jesus, how is perfection revealed? Jesus told the rich young ruler: “Keep the _____. He later stated: “Go and sell that thou hast, and _____ to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.” Matthew 19:17; Matthew 19:21)

Note: By comparing these two statements we clearly discern that keeping the commandments is revealed in the act of selling all and giving to the poor.

3. In the story of the good Samaritan, the true neighbor was the one who “showed _____” towards the man who was wounded. (Luke 10:37). Don’t forget the word “**mercy**” in this text because we will come back to it momentarily!

4. In Matthew 5:48 Jesus commanded: “Be ye therefore _____, even as your heavenly Father is _____.”

5. Examine the preceding context (verses 38-47) of Matthew 5:48. How does this passage help us comprehend what it means to be perfect?

6. It is clear that Luke 6:27-36 is parallel to Matthew 5:38-47. According to Matthew 5:48 Jesus commanded his followers to be _____. But according to Luke (Luke 6:36) Jesus commanded His followers to be _____. The conclusion is perfection means to be merciful as our Father in heaven is merciful!!

7. In Matthew 25:31-46 we have the scene of the sheep and the goats. Jesus said to His followers: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, _____ the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34)

8. Why did the sheep inherit the kingdom? "For I was hungered and ye gave _____ meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave _____ drink; I was a stranger, and ye took _____ in; naked and ye clothed _____; I was sick and ye visited _____; I was in prison, and ye came unto _____." (Matthew 25:35-36)

Note: Notice that the righteous did not do these things directly for Jesus. They did them for Jesus in the person of His followers. This is indicated by the Jesus' words: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the _____ of these my brethren, ye have done it unto _____." (Matthew 25:40)

9. What was the great sin of the goats? "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the _____ of these, ye did it not to _____." (Matthew 25:45) The sin of the goats was not the sin of commission but rather the sin of omission. We will not only be judged by the wrong we did but also by the good we should have done and didn't!



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #11 – Healing the Lepers

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: DOA, pp 262-271; Leviticus 13:1-59; Leviticus 14:1-57; Matthew 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-42; Luke 5:12-13; Mark 2:1-28

Introductory Matters

As we begin this lesson it would be well to remember that the miracles of Jesus were frequently acted parables. This can be seen, for example, in the cursing of the fig tree, the feeding of the five thousand, the miraculous fishing expedition, the healing of the blind man, the healing of the paralytic, the calming of the storm, etc. Each of the miracles of Jesus taught a deep spiritual truth. When Jesus cleansed lepers, He not only relieved their physical suffering; He also sought to teach truths about the consequences of sin and how it could be cleansed.

A word about leprosy. The microbe which causes leprosy was discovered by Hansen in 1871. With the advent of antibiotics, leprosy has lost its terror because it can be cured by multi-drug therapy in 6-12 months. But in Biblical times it was an incurable degenerative disease which filled peoples' hearts with horror.

Leprosy in Ancient Israel

1. When Miriam was afflicted with leprosy, Moses pleaded with God: “Let her not be as one _____, of whom the flesh is half _____ when he cometh out of his mother’s womb.” (Numbers 12:12)

Note: In Biblical times leprosy was a contagious, mutilating, desensitizing and incurable disease. It is a slowly degenerative disease which affects the skin and the nerves. In advanced stages it caused the leper to totally lose feeling in the limbs and the face. It is reported that fingers and noses simply fell off the hands and faces of lepers. Ellen White well remarks: “Of all diseases known in the East the leprosy was most dreaded. Its incurable and contagious character, and its

horrible effect upon its victims, filled the bravest with fear.” (DA, p. 262.1)

2. What relation could a leper sustain with society? “All the days wherein the _____ shall be in him he shall be _____, he is unclean: he shall dwell _____, without the _____ shall his habitation be.” (Leviticus 13:46)

Note: In Israel, the leper was separated from both God and man. He had no access to the city and he was barred from the sanctuary. If perchance he was cleansed, the priest had to come **outside** the encampment to pronounce him clean. There was actually a hill outside Jerusalem called *Garab* where lepers congregated (Jeremiah 31:40). The word *Garab* “hill of scraping”. The name is significant because the very same root word is used for Job when he scraped his boils with a potsherd.” (Job 2:8) Significantly, Job became an exile both from God and man!

3. What other laws applied to the leper? “And the leper in whom the plague is, his _____ shall be rent, and his _____ bare, and he shall put a covering over his upper lip, and shall cry, _____, unclean.” (Leviticus 13:45)

Note: Rabbinical law and practice adds information to the way in which lepers were perceived and treated. According to the rabbis, if a leper entered a house, it became defiled from the floor to the beams and everything in it became unclean. People were ordered to come no closer than six feet to a leper if there was no wind and at least one hundred feet if the wind was blowing in the direction of the person who was well. Most people fled in horror when they heard that a leper was near!

4. Were the leper’s garments also defiled by his leprosy? “If the plague be spread in the _____, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in a skin, or in any work that is made of skin; the plague is a fretting leprosy; it is _____.” (Leviticus 13:51)

5. What was the worst type of leprosy which could be contracted? “Then the priest shall look upon it [the leprosy] and, behold, if the rising of the sore be white reddish in his bald head or in his bald _____, as the leprosy appeareth in the skin of the flesh; He is a _____ man, he is unclean: the priest shall pronounce him _____ unclean; his plague is in his _____.” (Leviticus 13:43-44)

6. What was the only way in which leprosy could he cleansed? “And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, ‘Am I _____, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to _____ a man of his leprosy?’” (2 Kings 5:7)

Note: This exclamation of the king of Israel indicates that he believed that only God could cleanse a leper. That is to say, leprosy could only be healed by a direct miraculous intervention of God. There is no case in the Bible of a leper being healed by natural means. All healings were miraculous as can be seen in the cases of Naaman, Moses, Miriam and those whom Jesus healed.

7. What evidence do we have of the link between leprosy and sin? When Miriam committed the sin of murmuring against the leadership of Moses, she “And the anger of the _____ was kindled against them [Aaron and Miriam]; and he departed. And the cloud _____ from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became _____, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was _____.” (Numbers 12:9-10)

Note: The rabbis called leprosy “the finger of God” or “the stroke of God”. In the Old Testament, leprosy is repeatedly called the **plague** of leprosy (it is so called 59 times in Leviticus 13:1-59; Leviticus 14:1-57. The word “plague” in Hebrew means “stroke” or “to smite” and is used to describe a physical blow or punishment which an overlord meets out on a subject.

The Cleansing Ritual

1. When a person developed the symptoms of leprosy what was he to do? “When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or a bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh like the _____ of leprosy, then he shall be brought unto Aaron the _____, or unto one of his sons the _____.” (Leviticus 13:2)

Note: The priest’s role was to **diagnose** the disease and **pronounce** the person unclean.

2. When a person was healed from leprosy by a miracle of God, what role did the priest play? “and he [the priest] shall _____ him _____.” (Leviticus 14:7)

Note: The priest not only **examined** the leper diagnosing the disease and pronouncing the sentence of doom. He also examined the leper after his miraculous healing and pronounced him clean!

3. What two animals did the priest use in the cleansing ceremony? “Then shall the priest command to take _____ him that is _____ be cleansed two _____ alive and clean.” (Leviticus 14:4)

4. What was to be included with the two birds? “Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and _____ wood, and _____ and _____.” (Leviticus 14:4)

5. What was to be done with the first bird? “And the priest shall command that one of the birds be _____ in an _____ vessel over running _____.” (Leviticus 14:5)

6. What was to be done with the second bird? “As for the _____ bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall _____ them and the living bird in the _____ of the bird that was killed over the running water: and he shall sprinkle upon him that is _____ be cleansed from the leprosy _____ times, and shall _____ him clean and shall let the living bird _____ in the open field.” (Leviticus 14:6-7)

Note: The seven times the blood was sprinkled brings to mind the seven times that Naaman submerged himself in the river Jordan to be cleansed from his leprosy.

Christ Heals the Leper

1. How does Luke 5:12-13 describe the leper who approached Jesus for healing? “And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man _____ of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” (Luke 5:12) Mark 1:41 explains that Jesus was moved with _____ for the leper.

Note: Ellen White vividly describes the spectacle: “He is a **loathsome spectacle**. The disease has made **frightful inroads**, and his **decaying body is horrible to look upon**. At sight of him the people fall back in terror. They crowd upon one another in their eagerness to escape from contact with him. Some try to prevent him from approaching Jesus, but in vain. He neither sees nor hears them. Their expressions of loathing are lost upon him. He sees only the Son of God. He hears only the voice that speaks life to the dying. Pressing to Jesus, he casts himself at His feet with the cry, “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.” (DA, p. 263.2)

Ellen White also describes the steps the man took in seeking out Jesus. The man **felt his need**, **believed** that Jesus could heal him, **came** to Jesus and **pleaded** for His healing touch.

2. How did Jesus break the conventions of his day with respect to the leper? “And Jesus put forth his _____ and _____ him.” (Matthew 8:3)

Note: There is no indication in the law of Moses that the priest actually touched the leper. Jesus could have merely **pronounced** the leper clean. But Jesus actually **touched** him. I guess we could say that Jesus gave him the personal touch! What Jesus did was unthinkable in the mind of the crowd. Whoever touched a leper was also considered unclean.

3. **Thought Question:** Jesus once said: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” (John 14:8-9). In the light of this statement, what lesson do you think Jesus trying to teach the crowd when

He touched the leper and cleansed him? (**Hint:** The people considered leprosy the curse of God)

4. For what purpose did Jesus cleanse the leper? “The work of Christ in cleansing the leper from his terrible disease is an _____ of His work in cleansing the _____ from sin.” (DA, p. 266.1)

5. How does Ellen White describe the healing of the leper? “Immediately a _____ passed over the leper. His flesh became _____, the nerves _____, the muscles _____. The rough, scaly surface peculiar to leprosy _____, and a soft glow, like that upon the skin of a healthy _____, took its place.” (DA, p. 263.4)

Note: Ellen White’s comment reminds us of the healing of Naaman. We are told in 2 Kings that after Naaman submerged himself in the Jordan river seven times “his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a **little** child, and he was clean.” (2 Kings 5:14)

6. Why did Jesus grant the leper’s request immediately? “When we pray for _____ blessings, the answer to our prayer may be _____, or God may give us something other than we ask, but not so when we ask for deliverance from _____.” (DA, p. 266.2)

7. What did the leper do after he was healed by Jesus? “ But so much the more went there a _____ abroad of Him: and great _____ came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their _____.” (Luke 5:15)

Note: Even though Jesus forbade the leper from telling others about his healing, the leper proclaimed it “from the rooftops”. Ellen White states: “It would indeed have been impossible to conceal it, but the leper published the matter abroad.” (DA, p. 264.4)

A Picture of the Human Race

1. The whole world is “_____ in trespasses and sins.” (Ephesians 2:1).

Note: As leprosy was a polluting, infectious, intrusive and humanly incurable disease, sin has permeated the human race. Notice that in this text the apostle Paul speaks of those who are physically alive but spiritually dead at the same time. As leprosy causes one to lose the physical sense of touch, Satan intended that sinners should lose the sensibility of God’s touch.

2. To how many has Adam transmitted the leprosy of sin? “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon _____ men, for that _____ have sinned” (Romans 5:12)

Note: So to speak the whole world has become a gigantic leprosarium. The world has is quarantined in the midst of the universe of God. Its only hope is in a divine miracle of healing.

3. How is the condition of humanity described in Isaiah 1:5-6? “The whole head is _____, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but _____, and bruises, and _____ sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with _____.”

4. What is represented by the defiled garments of the leper? “But we are all as an _____ thing, and all our _____ are as filthy _____.” (Isaiah 64:6)

5. Who is represented by the priest in the healing of the leper? _____ (Hebrews 4:14)

6. Who is the great detector of sin? “For the Word of God [Jesus]. . . is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the _____; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his _____: but all things are naked and opened unto the _____ of him with whom we have to do.” (Hebrews 4:12-13; see also, Revelation 1:14)

7. **Thought Question:** Who do you think is represented by the first bird which was killed in the cleansing ceremony? _____.

8. What is represented by the living, flowing water? “Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this _____ shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water _____ up into everlasting life.” (John 4:13-14; John 7:37-39)

9. What is represented by the earthen vessel? The apostle Paul spoke of the glory of the gospel in our frail humanity as God’s glory in “earthen _____.” (2 Corinthians 4:7)

10. What is represented by the cedar wood, the scarlet and the hyssop? (The answer to this question is found in Isaiah 1:18; Psalm 51:7. Notice the emphasis on the color red).

11. What is represented by the dipping of the second bird in the blood of the first bird? “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have _____ their robes, and made them _____ in the _____ of the lamb. . . the blood of Jesus Christ his son, _____ us from all sin.” (Revelation 7:14; 1 John 1:7)

12. **Thought Question:** Why do you think the blood of the dead bird was sprinkled on the leper seven times? _____

13. What is represented by the bird that was allowed to go free in the open field? “If the Son therefore shall make you _____, ye shall be free _____.” (John 8:36)

14. Naaman and the leper whom Jesus healed had the skin of a little child. What happens when we have received Jesus as our Savior? “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a _____ creature: _____ things are passed away; behold, all things are become _____.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

15. What will we do when we have been cleansed from the power of Satan? “Go home to thy _____, and tell them how _____ things the Lord hath done _____ thee, and hath had compassion on thee.” (Mark 5:19)

16. According to the Mosaic law, anyone who touched a leper was himself made unclean. Why wasn't Jesus made unclean when He touched the leper? “But in laying His hand upon the leper, Jesus received no _____. His touch imparted life-giving power. The leprosy was cleansed. . . . Jesus, coming to dwell in humanity, receives no _____. His presence has _____ virtue for the sinner.” (DA, p. 266.1)

Note: The Jewish convert to Christianity, Alfred Edersheim in his monumental work, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* quotes some ancient rabbis as calling the future Messiah “the leprous one.” This is probably because we are told that Jesus bore “took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” Matthew 8:17). It is remarkable that the Hebrew word that is translated “plague” 59 times in Leviticus 13:1-59; Leviticus 14:1-57 is the same word that is translated “stricken” and “smitten” in Isaiah 53:4; Isaiah 53:8. In fact, Jerome’s Latin Vulgate translates Isaiah 53:4 : “We thought him to be a leper smitten by God.” In other words, Jesus took our leprosy upon himself though He had no leprosy of His own!

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #12 – Things Old and New

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp 124-134; Matthew 13:51-52; 2 Corinthians 3:13-18

The parable we will study today reads like this: “Therefore, every **scribe** which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an **householder**, which **bringeth forth** out of his **treasure** things **new** and **old**.” What is represented by the householder? What is symbolized by the treasure? What is meant by the act of “bringing forth” the treasure? What are the new and old things which are brought forth?

The Householder

1. In a limited sense, who is represented by the householder? “The faithful householder represents what every _____ of the children and youth should be.” (COL, p. 131.1)
2. In a broader sense, who is represented by the householder? “Through endless ages will the faithful _____ bring forth from _____ treasure things new and old.” (COL, p. 134.1)

The Treasure

1. What is represented by the treasure? “The great storehouse of _____ is the _____ of God.” (COL, p. 125.2)
2. In what three ways does God speak to us? “The great storehouse of truth is the word of God—the _____ word, the book of _____, and the book of _____ in God’s dealing with human life. Here are the _____ from which Christ’s workers are to draw.” (COL, p. 125.2)

3. Which is the only way we can grasp and appreciate the sciences of the natural world? “If the follower of Christ will _____ His word, and _____ it, there is no science in the natural world that he will not be able to grasp and appreciate.” (COL, p. 125.3)

4. Which is the most reliable means to gain a knowledge of God? “But it is in the _____ word that a knowledge of God is most _____ revealed to fallen man. This is the treasure house of the _____ riches of Christ.” (COL, p. 126.1)

Sharing the Treasure

1. The householder felt compelled to bring forth his treasures. What will happen when we receive the gospel treasure into our heart? “All who receive the gospel message into the heart will long to _____ it. The heaven-born love of Christ _____ find expression.” (COL, p. 125.1)

2. What will happen as we make known the treasures of Christ’s grace? “And as they make known the rich treasures of God’s grace, _____ and still more of the grace of Christ will be _____ to them.” (COL, p. 125.1)

Things Old and New

1. What is represented by the things **old**? “Christ as manifested to the _____, as symbolized in the _____ service, as portrayed in the _____, and as revealed by the _____, is the riches of the Old Testament.” (COL, p. 126.3)

2. What is represented by the things **new**? “Christ in His _____, His _____, and His _____, Christ as He is manifested by the Holy _____, is the treasure of the New Testament.” (COL, p. 126.3)

3. How do the truths of the Old Testament compare with those of the New? “The word of God includes the Scriptures of the Old Testament as well as of the New. One is not _____ without the other. Christ declared that the truths of the Old Testament are as _____ a those of the New.” (COL, p. 126.2)

4. What relationship exists between old and new truth? “The old truths are all _____; new truth is not _____ of the old, but an _____ of it. It is only as the old truths are _____ that we can comprehend the new.” (COL, p. 127.4)

Two Dangerous Errors

The First Error: Claiming to believe in the Old Testament while rejecting the New

1. What grave mistake did the Jews commit in the days of Christ? “There are those who profess to believe in the _____ Testament, while they reject the _____. But in refusing to receive the teachings of Christ, they show that they do not _____ that which patriarchs and prophets have spoken.” (COL, p. 128.1)

2. What did Jesus say to the Jews after healing the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda? “Ye search the _____; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of _____. And ye will not come to _____, that ye might receive life.” (John 5:39-40)

Note: Irony of ironies, the Jews were searching for eternal life in the Scriptures yet they rejected the life giver Who inspired the Scriptures!

3. What did Jesus say to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus on the evening of the resurrection? “O fools, and slow of _____ to believe all that the prophets have spoken: _____ not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his _____?” (Luke 24:25-26)

Note: Make sure to study Luke 24:31-32. Was it only their physical sight that was opened? Why did their hearts burn within themselves as Jesus opened unto them the very same Scriptures that they had studied many times before?

4. How did Jesus prove to these two disciples that He was the Christ? “And beginning at _____ and all the _____, he expounded unto them in all the _____ the things concerning _____.” (Luke 24:27).

5. What did Jesus say to His disciples later on in the Upper Room? “These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be _____ which were written in the law of _____, and in the _____, and in the _____, concerning _____.” (Luke 24:44).

6. The apostle Paul spoke of a veil that the Jews had upon their hearts. What does this veil represent? “But their _____ were **blinded**: for until this day there remaineth the same veil in the reading of the _____ Testament.” (2Corinthians 3:14).

Note: Reading the Old Testament without discerning Christ means to have a veil of unbelief upon the heart and mind.

7. What was the only way in which this veil could be removed? “Which veil is _____ away in Christ. . . . Nevertheless, when it [better: “they”] shall _____ to the Lord, the veil shall be _____ away.” (2 Corinthians 3:14-16)

Note: This exposition by the apostle Paul draws upon the experience of Moses in Exodus 34:28-34. When Moses came down from Mt. Sinai, the congregation of Israel refused to see the glory on his face. Paul, picking up on this, states that the Jews of his day were committing the same mistake. They searched the writings of Moses but failed to see the glory of Christ in them. In other words, they were reading the writings of Moses but were blinded to the fact that Christ was at the very center of them . It was in this sense that they had a veil upon their hearts and their eyes were blinded.

8. What was Stephen’s appearance when he was brought before the Jewish Council? “And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his _____ as it had been the face of an _____.” (Acts 6:15)

Note: The face of Stephen shone just like the face of Moses had some fifteen centuries earlier.

9. Who was at the very center of Stephen’s sermon before the Jewish Council? “Which of the prophets have not _____ fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which shewed _____ of the coming of the _____ One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and _____.” (Acts 7:52)

10. **Thought Question:** Saul of Tarsus was the ringleader at the stoning of Stephen. Did Saul have the veil over his heart at this point? In what sense?

11. When Saul’s eyes were opened, how did he look upon his past advantages as a Jew? “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but _____ for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus _____ Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of _____ things, and do count them but _____, that I may win _____.” (Philippians 3:8)

The Second Error: Claiming to believe in the New Testament while rejecting the Old

1. What is said about those who claim to accept the New Testament but reject the Old? “In rejecting the Old, they virtually _____ the New; for both are parts of an inseparable _____. No man can rightly present the _____ of God without the gospel, or the _____ without the law.” (COL, p. 128.2)

Note: Many people today claim to be “**New Testament** Christians.” They accuse Seventh-day Adventists of being “**Old Testament** Christians.” Are they right in their assessment?

2. **Thought Question:** What do you think Ellen White meant when she said: “The law is the gospel embodied, and the gospel is the law unfolded?”

God’s Treasure House of Truth

1. How much may we grasp of God’s treasure house of truth? “The work of our Redeemer on this earth is and _____ will be a subject that will put to the _____ our highest imagination. Man may _____ every mental power in the endeavor to fathom this mystery, but his mind will become _____ and _____. The most diligent searcher will see before him a boundless, _____ sea.” (COL, p. 128.4)

2. How may we best comprehend God’s compassion? “We shall understand God’s _____ just in proportion as we appreciate His _____ for us.” (COL, p. 129.2)

3. What does the heart become when it receives the word of God? “The heart that receives the word of God is not as a pool that _____, not like a broken cistern that loses its _____. It is like the mountain stream fed by unending springs, whose cool, sparkling waters leap from rock to rock, _____ the weary, the thirsty, the heavy laden.” COL, p. 130.1

4. What happens to the minister when he is in constant contact with God’s treasure house? “The minister will not preach over and _____ the same set discourses. His mind will be open to the _____ illumination of the Holy Spirit.” (COL, p. 130.2)

5. What else does Ellen White say about ministers who make the word of God their constant study? “There will not be a fund of _____, oft-repeated ideas. The tame, dull _____ will cease. The old truths will be presented, but they will be seen in a new _____. There will be a new _____ of truth, a clearness and a power that all will discern.” (COL, p. 130.4)

6. How will the children and youth look upon the word of God when the teacher brings out treasures from it? “Under a _____ instructor the word will become more and more _____. It will be as the bread of life, and will never grow _____. Its freshness and beauty will attract and _____ the children and youth.” (COL, p. 132.1)

7. What does Ellen White say about the hidden treasures of the Jewish economy? “The significance of the Jewish economy is not yet _____ comprehended. Truths _____ and _____ are shadowed forth in its rites and symbols. The _____ is the key that unlocks its mysteries.” (COL, p. 133.1)

8. What other jewels of God’s treasure house must be brought forth in the last days? “As we near the close of this world’s history, the _____ relating to the last days _____ demand our study. The last book of the New Testament scriptures is full of truth that we _____ to understand.” (COL, p. 133.2)

9. For how long will Christ bring out new treasures from His treasure house? “The themes or redemption will employ the hearts and minds and tongues of the redeemed through the _____ ages. . . . Forever and _____ new views of the perfection and glory of Christ will appear. Through _____ ages will the faithful Householder [*notice the capital “H”*] bring forth from His treasure things new and old.” (COL, p. 134.1)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #13 – The Lost Sheep is Found

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 185-192; Luke 15:1-7; John 10:1-18; John 10:25-29; Psalm 23:1-6; Ezekiel 34:1-31; 2 Peter 5:1-8

Introduction

Luke 15:1-32 contains a triplet of parables which we will call “God’s Lost and Found.” These parables have three things in common: 1) Something was lost; 2) What was lost was found; 3) There was rapturous joy when it was found. Even though the parables are similar, they are also different. We shall find that they illustrate three types of lost people. The **sheep** represents people who are aware that they are lost, want to return to the fold but do not know how. The **coin** represents people who must be sought because they are lost but do not know it. The lost **son** represents people who have gone astray and must be drawn back to the household by the love of God.

The Setting and Purpose of these Parables

1. Why did Jesus tell these particular parables and to whom? “Then drew _____ unto him all the publicans and sinners for to _____ him. And the Pharisees and scribes _____, saying, this man receiveth sinners, and _____ with them.” (Luke 15:1-2)

2. What perplexed the Pharisees and scribes about Jesus? “The scribes and Pharisees felt only _____ in that pure presence [of Jesus]; how was it, then, that publicans and sinners were _____ to Jesus?” (COL, p. 186.1)

3. What attracted the publicans and sinners to Jesus? “The Pharisees had only _____ and condemnation for them; but Christ greeted them as _____ of God, estranged indeed from the Father’s house but not forgotten by the Father’s _____.” (COL, p. 186.2)

4. Did Jesus take his audience and the geographical setting into account when he told the parable of the Lost Sheep? “He appealed to the witness of their own _____. . . . In the company about Jesus there were _____, and also men who had _____ invested in flocks and herds, and all could appreciate His illustration.” (COL, p. 186.4)

The Old Testament Background

1. Who was perceived as the model shepherd in the Old Testament? _____ (1 Samuel 16:11-13; 1 Samuel 17:34-37) When David was anointed king, he became the shepherd of _____.

2. In Ezekiel 34:1-31 we find a description of the unfaithful shepherds of Israel after the death of David. Who rebuked these unfaithful shepherds? “And the word of the _____ [YWHH] came unto me saying: ‘Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel.’” (Ezekiel 34:1-2)

3. What were these shepherds doing to the sheep? “Ye eat the _____, and ye clothe you with the _____, ye _____ them that are fed: but ye _____ not the flock.” (Ezekiel 34:3)

4. What else were the shepherds failing to do? “The _____ have ye not strengthened, neither have ye _____ that which was sick, neither have ye _____ up that which was broken, neither have ye brought _____ that which was driven away, neither have ye _____ that which was _____; but with force and with cruelty ye have _____ over them.” (Ezekiel 34:4)

5. In what condition were the sheep as a result of the unfaithfulness of the shepherds? “My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was _____.” (Ezekiel 34:6)

6. To whom did these sheep really belong? “As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because _____ flock became a prey, and _____ flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was _____ shepherd, neither did _____ shepherds search for _____ flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not _____ flock.” (Ezekiel 34:8)

7. What did the LORD promise to do for His scattered sheep? “I, even I, will both _____ my sheep, and _____ them out.” (Ezekiel 34:11)

8. What else did the LORD promise to do for His sheep? “I will _____ my flock, and I will cause them to _____ down, saith the Lord God.” (Ezekiel 34:15)

9. What task did the LORD promise to perform with His flock? “I _____ between cattle and cattle, between _____ and the he _____.” (Ezekiel 34:17)

Note: There were not only **false shepherds** in Israel, but there were also **false sheep**. This is why the LORD needed to separate the sheep from the goats. (See Matthew 25:31ff)

10. Whom did the LORD promise to send to shepherd Israel? “And I will set up _____ shepherd over them, and he shall _____ them, even my servant _____, he shall feed them and he shall be their _____. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant _____ a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it.” (Ezekiel 34:23-24)

Note: This cannot be speaking about literal David because he had been dead for over 300 years. The New Testament identifies Christ as the fulfiller of this prophecy.

11. Who is the flock over which David was to rule? “Thus shall they know that I the LORD their God am with them, and that they, even the house of _____, are my _____, saith the Lord God. And _____ my flock, the flock of my pasture, are _____, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.” (Ezekiel 34:30-31)

Jesus, the Good Shepherd

1. What evidence do we have that David knew that he was not the **real** shepherd? “The _____ [YHWH] is my shepherd; I shall not _____.” (Psalm 23:1)

2. What condition was the flock of Israel in when Jesus came? “But when he saw the _____, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were _____ abroad, as _____ having no _____.” (Matthew 9:36; see also Mark 6:34)

Note: Obviously, the leaders of Israel had become the false shepherds of Ezekiel 34:1-31. This necessitated the coming of Jesus to gather Israel, and to lead and feed them.

3. Who is the good shepherd that the LORD promised to send to Israel? Jesus said: “_____ am the Good Shepherd.” (Ezekiel 34:1-31; John 10:11; see also, Hebrews 13:20; 2 Peter 2:25)

4. What are some of the characteristics of Jesus, the Good Shepherd?

- The sheep recognize his _____ and _____ him. (John 10:3-4)
- He _____ His sheep and they follow Him because they know his _____ (John 10:4)

- He owns the sheep and defends them from the jaws of the _____ (John 10:12)
- He lays down his _____ for his sheep (John 10:11; John 10:15)
- He is the _____ that leads to green _____. (John 10:9)
- He knows his sheep individually by _____ (John 10:3; John 10:14)
- No one is able to _____ them out His hand (John 10:28)

5. In John 10:1-42 Jesus was speaking to literal Jews. What did Jesus say to them?

“But ye _____ not, because ye are _____ of my sheep, as I said unto you.” (John 10:26)

Note: It is remarkable that Jesus should tell the Jews that they were not his sheep. His words were revolutionary. He was stating that the leaders of Israel were not His shepherds and that the people of Israel were not His sheep. It is clear that the Bible defines a true Israelite as one who has a personal relationship with Christ!

6. What condition must be met in order to be one of Jesus’ sheep? “My sheep _____ my voice, and I know them, and they _____ me.” (John 10:27)

Note: A true Israelite is not defined by ethnicity, nationality, race, color, social rank or gender. **To be true Israel means to obey Jesus!!**

7. Who gave Jesus charge over the sheep? “My _____, which gave them to me, is greater than all; and no man is able to _____ them out of my _____ hand.” (John 10:29)
Both David and Jesus cared for their fathers’ sheep.

8. **Thought Question:** Who are “the other sheep” that Jesus referred to in John 10:16?

9. **Thought Question:** Who do you think Jesus was referring to when he spoke about the strangers, the thieves, the robbers and the hireling shepherds? (John 10:4; John 10:8; John 10:10; John 10:12-13; the clue is in verse 6)

Application #1: Christ's Love for the Individual Sinner

1. According to Isaiah 53:6, by what act would the Messiah save His straying sheep? "All we like _____ have gone _____; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on _____ the iniquity of _____ all."

2. How does the prophecy of Zechariah 13:7 express the same idea? "Awake, o sword, against my _____, and against the man that is my _____, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the _____, and the sheep shall be _____."

3. How and when was this prophecy of Zechariah 13:7 fulfilled? (Study Mark 14:27) _____
_____.

4. Who is represented by the lost sheep? David said: "_____ have gone astray like a _____ sheep; _____ thy servant." (Psalm 119:176)

5. For how many would Christ have given His life? "So if there had been but _____ lost soul, Christ would have _____ for that one." (COL, p. 187.2)

6. When Adam and Eve sinned, did they seek God or did God seek them? Genesis 3:8-9 _____
_____.

Regarding this, Ellen White states: "God has made the _____ advance." (COL, p. 188.3)

7. In what sense is the sinner's sense of orientation similar to that of a lost sheep? "The sheep that has strayed from the fold is the most _____ of all creatures. It must be _____ for by the shepherd, for it cannot find its way back. So with the _____ that has _____ away from God; he is as helpless as the lost sheep, and unless divine _____ had come to his rescue he could never find his way back to _____." (COL, p. 187.3)

8. How does Ellen White describe the shepherd's search expedition? "With what relief he hears in the distance its first faint _____. Following the sound, he climbs the steepest _____, he goes to the very edge of the _____, at the risk of his own _____. Thus he searches, while the cry, growing fainter, tells him that his sheep is ready to _____." (COL, p. 188.1)

9. How does the shepherd treat the sheep once he has rescued it? "Then he does not _____ it because it caused him so much _____. He does not drive it with a _____. He does not even try to _____ it home. In his joy he takes the _____ creature upon his _____, if it is bruised and wounded,
_____.

gathers it in his arms, pressing it close to his _____, that the warmth of his own heart may give it life.” (COL, p. 188.1)

10. What erroneous view did the Jews of Christ’s day entertain? “In their view, repentance is a _____ by which men _____ the favor of heaven.” (COL, p. 189.1)

11. How does the parable of the lost sheep correct this erroneous concept? “But in the parable of the lost sheep, Christ teaches that salvation does not come through our _____ after God but through _____ seeking after us. . . . We do not repent in order that God may _____ us, but He reveals to us His love in _____ that we may repent” (COL, p. 189.1)

12. What other false view did the rabbis hold? “The rabbis had a saying that there was rejoicing in heaven when one who has _____ against God is _____.” (COL, p. 190.1)

13. How do many today share the same spirit as the rabbis? “When one who has wandered far in sin seeks to _____ to God, he will encounter _____ and distrust. There are those who will doubt whether his repentance is genuine, or will whisper, ‘He has no stability; I do not believe that he will hold out.’ These persons are doing not the work of God but the work of _____, who is the _____ of the brethren.” (COL, p. 190.2)

Application #2: Christ’s Love for the World

1. In the wider meaning of this parable, what is meant by the lost sheep? “The one _____ that has apostatized and has been _____ by sin.” (COL, p. 190.3)

2. In the broader meaning, what is represented by the ninety nine sheep who were left safe in the fold? “This little _____ world—the one lost sheep—is more precious in His sight than are the ninety nine that went not _____ from the fold. . . . For this [lost world] He left the _____ worlds on high, the ninety nine that loved Him, and came to this earth.” (COL, p. 190.3)

3. In the cosmic setting of the parable, what is meant by the shepherd leaving the fold? “Christ, the loved Commander in the heavenly courts, _____ from His high estate, laid aside the _____ that He had with the Father, in order to save the _____ lost world.” (COL, p. 190.3)

4. Did Jesus risk His own existence to save the one lost world? “He [the Father] permitted Him [Jesus] to meet life’s peril in common with every human _____, to fight the battle as every _____ of humanity must fight it, at the risk of _____ and eternal _____”

_____.” (DA, p. 49.1)

5. When the lost sheep was brought to the fold there was an explosion of joy in the household. When will this be fulfilled with God’s people? “I beheld, and, lo, a great _____, which no man could _____, of all nations, and kindreds, and people and tongues, stood before the throne. . . . And cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb.’” (Revelation 7:9-10)

6. How do we know that this will be the final fulfillment of the parable of the lost sheep? “For the **Lamb** which is in the midst of the throne shall _____ them, and shall _____ them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” (Revelation 7:17; see also the explosion of praise in Revelation 19:6-7)

Note: The shepherd/sheep terminology is clear in this passage. Jesus will **feed** His sheep and **lead** them to the still waters (Psalm 23:1-2) Paradoxically, Jesus is both the Shepherd and the Sheep in Revelation 7:9-10. The same paradox is seen where Jesus is the Shepherd and the door in John 10:1-18.

Application #3: We Should all Rescue Lost Sheep

1. According to the apostle Peter we should also be faithful under-shepherds in the service of the Chief Shepherd (2 Peter 5:4). How should we care for God’s flock? “_____ the flock of God which is among you, taking the _____ thereof, not by _____, but willingly; not for filthy _____ but of a ready mind. Neither being _____ over God’s heritage, but being _____ to the flock.” (2 Peter 5:2-3)

2. What is the role of every member of the church? “Every soul whom Christ has _____ is called to work in His name for the saving of the _____. This work had been neglected in Israel. Is it not neglected today by those who profess to be Christ’s followers? (COL, p. 191.1)

3. Are there lost sheep even within our own congregations? “In _____ assembly for worship, there are souls _____ for rest and peace. They may appear to be living _____ lives, but they are not insensible to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Many among them might be won for Christ.” (COL, p. 191.2)

4. How do angels look upon these precious souls? “Angels _____ these wandering ones. Angels _____, while human eyes are _____ and hearts are closed to pity.” (COL, 191.3)

5. Were the words of Christ in this parable lost upon deaf ears? “The Pharisees understood Christ’s parable as a rebuke to _____. . . . Now many rejected Christ’s reproof; yet to

_____ His words brought _____. Upon these, after Christ's ascension to heaven, the Holy Spirit came, and they _____ with His disciples in the very work outlined in the parable of the lost sheep." (COL, p. 192.2)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #14 – The Lost Coin

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp 192-197; Luke 15:8-10; Psalm 119:72; Psalm 119:105; Jeremiah 6:2; Deuteronomy 4:12-13; Exodus 31:12-18

Introduction

In this lesson we will study the parable of the Lost Coin. Our study will show us that this parable has three dimensions. First, it describes the search for those who are lost in our own literal immediate household. Second, it applies to the search for those who are lost in God’s great household—the world. Lastly, it denotes the search for the Sabbath commandment which has been lost by the Christian world. Before we study these three dimensions, let’s deal with some introductory matters and try to decipher the symbols.

The Symbols in the Parable

1. What does the **woman** represent in the parable of the lost coin? “I have _____ the daughter of _____ to a comely and delicate _____.” (Jeremiah 6:2)
2. What metaphor does Paul use to illustrate the relationship between God and His people? “Husbands, love your _____, even as Christ also loved the _____.” (Ephesians 5:25)

Note: The woman in this parable represents the church and the husband represents Jesus. As we shall see in the next question, the coins symbolize the marriage portion which Jesus has entrusted to His church’s care.

3. What do the **ten coins** represent and why would finding one which was lost lead to such a great celebration? “The wife’s _____ portion usually consisted of pieces of _____, which she carefully preserved as her most cherished possession to be

_____ to her own _____. The loss of one of these pieces would be regarded as a serious _____, and its recovery would cause great rejoicing, in which the neighboring women would readily share.” (COL, p. 193.1)

Note: Precious souls have been entrusted by Christ to His church. They are to be carefully preserved, and if one is lost in Christ’s household, no effort is to be spared to find them! In the parable it was the woman [the church] who lost the coin—she was responsible!!

4. In what sense is a lost soul similar to the lost coin? “The coin, though lying among the dust and rubbish, is a piece of silver _____. Its owner seeks it because it is of _____. So every soul, however degraded by sin, is in God’s sight accounted _____. As the coin bears the _____ and superscription of the reigning power, so man at his creation bore the image and superscription of God; and though now _____ and dim through the influence of _____, the traces of this inscription remain upon every soul.” (COL, p. 194.3)

Note: Ellen White describes the value of a soul: “The wealth of earth dwindles into insignificance when compared with the worth of a single soul for whom our Lord and Master died. He who weigheth the hills in scales and the mountains in a balance regards a human soul as of infinite value.” (AG, p. 173.5)

5. What does the **lamp** represent? “Thy _____ is a lamp unto my feet, and a _____ unto my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

6. Why would it be so difficult to find a lost coin in the houses of Biblical times? “In the East the houses of the poor usually consisted of but one _____, often windowless and _____. The room was rarely _____, and a piece of money falling on the floor would be speedily _____ by the dust and rubbish.” (COL, p. 192.4)

7. **Thought Question:** Using a little “sanctified logic,” what do you think is represented by the act of **sweeping away** all the rubbish from the house? (**Hint:** Mark 7:7-9) _____

The Narrowest Meaning: Lost at Home

1. What is the difference between the lost sheep and the lost coin? “But the two parables represent different classes. The lost sheep knows that it is _____. It has left the shepherd and the flock, and it cannot _____ itself. . . . The lost coin represents those who are lost in trespasses and sins, but who have no _____ of their condition. They are _____ from God, but they know it not. Their souls are in _____, but they are unconscious and _____.” (COL, p. 193.3)

2. What is the first dimension of the parable of the lost coin? “This parable has a lesson to _____. In the household there is often great _____ concerning the souls of its _____.” (COL, p. 194.2)

3. What should be done in the home when one child is unconscious of its sinful state? “If there is in the family one _____ who is unconscious of his sinful state, parents should not _____. Let the candle be lighted. Search the _____ of God, and by its light let everything in the home be diligently examined, to see why this child is _____.” (COL, p. 195.1)

4. What is the first duty of fathers and mothers? “There are fathers and mothers who long to labor in some _____ mission field; there are many who are active in Christian work _____ the home, while their own children are _____ to the Savior and His love. . . . The education and training of their children to be _____ is the _____ service that parents can render to God.” (COL, p. 195.2)

5. What joyous words will be uttered to God by parents who have worked for the salvation of their children? “Behold, I and the _____ whom the Lord hath _____ me.” (Isaiah 8:18)

The Broader Meaning: The World is God’s Household

1. What is the broader meaning of the “**household**” in the parable of the lost coin? “God’s great human _____ embraces the _____, and none of its members are to be passed by with _____.” (COL, p. 196.2)

2. In the broader sense of the parable, what is meant by the **lost coin**? “Day by day we meet with those who take no _____ in religious things [the secular person]; we talk with them, we visit among them; do we show an _____ in their spiritual welfare? Do we present _____ to them as the sin-pardoning Savior?” (COL, p. 196.3)

3. Will God hold us accountable for the loss of these **secular** people? “If we do not [tell them about the love of Christ], how shall we _____ these souls–lost, _____ lost–when with them we stand before the _____ of God?” (COL, p. 196.3)

Note: In the parable, the woman represents the church and the church is responsible for the salvation of those who have no interest in religious things. God will hold us accountable for the eternal loss of those whom we could have witnessed to and didn’t.

4. How can we estimate the value of a human soul? “For our redemption, heaven itself was _____. At the foot of the cross, remembering that for _____ sinner Christ

would have laid down His life, you may _____ the value of a soul.” (COL, p. 196.4)

5. What will we do if we are in communion with Christ? “If you are in communion with Christ, you will place His _____ upon every human being. You will feel for others the same deep _____ that Christ has felt for you. Then you will be able to _____, not drive, to _____, not repulse, those for whom He died.” (COL, p. 197.1)

6. Though secular people are hard to reach, what assurance does God give us as we work for them? “Angels will _____ you to reach the most _____ and the most _____. And when one is brought back to God, all _____ is made glad; seraphs and cherubs touch their golden harps, and sing praises to God and the Lamb for their _____ and loving-kindness to the children of men.” (COL, p. 197.2)

A Third Dimension of the Parable

1. What kind of covenant did Jesus establish with Israel at Mt. Sinai? Jesus said: “I was an _____ unto them” (Jeremiah 31:32)

Note: It is clear that Jesus married Israel at Mt. Sinai. Christ was the husband and Israel was His bride (see Jeremiah 6:2). This is the reason why Israel was called a harlot when she fell in love with the gods of other nations (see Ezekiel 16:1-63; Ezekiel 23:1-49). The prophets were actually God’s lawyers in divorce court!

2. What did Jesus give Israel as its marriage portion? “And he declared unto you his _____, which he commanded you to perform, even _____ commandments, and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.” (Deuteronomy 4:13)

3. Was the Sabbath understood to be a sign of the marriage covenant relationship between Christ and His people? “Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual _____. It is a _____ between me and the children of Israel for _____: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he _____ and was _____.” (Exodus 31:16-17)

Note: In the parable of Jesus the marriage portion consisted of **ten** silver coins. In the covenant of Christ with Israel the marriage portion consisted of **ten** commandments.

4. To what is the law of God compared? “The _____ of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of _____ and _____.” (Psalm 119:72)

Note: Significantly, the value of God's ten commandments is compared to the value of pieces of silver and gold.

5. Was there any particular danger that God's people would lose sight of one of the ten commandments? "_____ the Sabbath day to keep it _____." (Exodus 20:8)

6. Did Israel actually lose sight of the Sabbath? "Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, 'What evil thing is this that ye do, and _____ the _____ day? Did not your _____ thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the _____.' (Nehemiah 13:17-18)

Note: The Old Testament testimony clearly indicates that Israel repeatedly forgot the Sabbath and profaned it. The Gospels add that the Jews of Christ's day had lost the profound meaning of the Sabbath!

7. **Thought Questions:** Has the Christian world today lost sight of the Sabbath? _____ What must be done in order to recover it? The church must light the _____ [the Bible], sweep the house of the rubbish of human _____, and diligently _____ for the lost commandment. The church must then joyously _____ to everyone that it has retrieved what was lost!

Repairers of the Breach

1. What did Nebuchadnezzar do to the wall of Jerusalem when he destroyed the city? "And they burnt the house of God, and _____ down the _____ of Jerusalem. . . ." (2 Chronicles 36:19)

2. After the Babylonian captivity, who undertook the task of rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem? _____. (Nehemiah 1:1-3)

3. What did Nehemiah encourage the people to do? "Let us build up the _____ of Jerusalem, that we be no more a _____." (Nehemiah 2:17)

4. What was the people's response when Nehemiah encouraged them to rebuild the wall? "So built we the _____; and all the wall was _____ together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to _____." (Nehemiah 4:6)

5. When God's people seriously undertook the work, what did their enemies do? "But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the

Ashdodites, heard that the _____ of Jerusalem were made up, and that the _____ began to be stopped, then they were very _____." (Nehemiah 4:7)

6. What was a great obstacle in the rebuilding of the wall? "And Judah said, 'the strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is so much _____; so that we are not able to build the _____.'" (Nehemiah 4:10)

7. What are we told about the wall when it was finished? "There was no _____ therein." (Nehemiah 6:1)

8. How long did it take to rebuild when all the people worked together? "So the wall was _____ in the twenty and fifth day of the month of Elul, in _____ and _____ days." (Nehemiah 6:15)

9. What is symbolized by the breach in the Jerusalem wall? "In the time of the end every divine institution is to be restored. The _____ made in the law at the time the Sabbath was changed by man, is to be _____. God's remnant people, standing before the world as reformers, are to show that the _____ of God is the foundation of all enduring reform and that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to stand as a memorial of creation, a constant reminder of the power of God." (PK, p. 678.2)

10. What Biblical foundation does Ellen G. White provide to sustain her view as expressed in the previous question? _____. (PK, p. 678.1)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #15 – The Parable of the Ten Virgins – Part 1

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp 405-421; GC, pp 393-403; Matthew 25:1-13

Introduction

In the next two lessons we will study the parable of the Ten Virgins. A careful analysis of this story within the framework of history, indicates that it has already met a partial fulfillment in the Millerite Movement of 1843-1844 (please study GC, p. 391.1 to GC, p. 408.1 to prepare the present lesson). Yet the Millerite Movement did not exhaust its meaning. As we shall see in our next lesson, it will meet its greatest fulfillment with the remnant people who will live upon the earth shortly before the second coming of Jesus. Let’s begin our study by decoding the meaning of some of the symbols of the parable.

Decoding the Key Symbols

1. What indication do we have that the parable of the ten virgins must be studied within the context of the second coming of Christ? “_____ shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins.” (Matthew 25:1)

Note: The word “then” in Matthew 25:1 is a temporal one. It links the parable of the ten virgins with the immediately preceding context and the immediately preceding context is dealing with the second coming of Jesus.

2. What is represented by the lamps in the parable of the ten virgins? “Thy word is a _____ unto my feet and a _____ unto my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

3. What is symbolized by the ten virgins? “For I am jealous over you [the Corinthian church] with godly jealousy: for I have _____ you to one _____, that I may present you as a chaste _____ to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 11:2)

4. What does the symbol of oil represent? “Not by might, nor by power, but by my _____ saith the Lord.” (Zechariah 4:6)

Going Forth to Meet the Bridegroom

1. What is illustrated by the story of the **ten virgins**? “The parable of the ten virgins of Matthew also illustrates the experience of the _____ people.” (GC, p. 393.2)

2. What was represented by the **coming of the bridegroom**? “The coming of _____, as announced by the first angel’s message, was understood to be represented by the coming of the bridegroom.” (GC, p. 393.4)

3. What is represented by the virgins “**going forth**” to meet the bridegroom? “The widespread _____ under the proclamation of His _____ coming, answered to the going forth of the virgins.” (GC, p. 394.4)

4. What is symbolized by the virgins **taking their lamps**? “All had taken their lamps, the _____, and by its light had gone forth to _____ the bridegroom.” (GC, p. 393.4)

Note: All the Millerites had the Bible and claimed to believe its promises of a soon coming Savior. But most of them had a merely theoretical knowledge of the Bible and not a deep personal Spirit filled experience with Jesus.

Wise and Foolish Millerites

1. What type of religious experience did the **wise Millerites** have? They “ had received the _____ of God, the regenerating, enlightening power of the Holy Spirit, which renders His word a lamp to the feet and a light to the path. In the fear of God they had studied the Scriptures to learn the truth, and had earnestly sought for _____ of heart and life. These had a _____ experience, a faith in God and in His word, which could not be overthrown by _____ and delay.” (GC, p. 393.4)

2. In contrast, what type of religious experience did the **foolish Millerites** have? “They had moved from _____. Their fears had been excited by the solemn message, but they had depended upon the faith of their _____, satisfied with the flickering light of good _____, without a thorough understanding of the truth or a genuine work of grace in the heart. These had gone forth to meet the Lord, full of hope in the prospect of _____ reward, but they were not prepared for _____ and disappointment. When _____ came, their faith failed, and their lights burned dim.” (GC, p. 393.4)

The Tarrying Time

1. What is represented by the **tarrying of the bridegroom**? “By the tarrying of the bridegroom is represented the _____ of the time when the Lord was expected, the _____, and the seeming _____.” (GC, p. 394.1)

Note: The Millerites expected Jesus to come in the spring of 1843. When Jesus did not come as expected, there was a deep disappointment. The bridegroom had delayed His coming longer than they expected.

2. How did the Millerites face this time of delay and disappointment? “ In this time of _____, the interest of the superficial and _____ soon began to waver, and their efforts to relax; but those whose faith was based on a _____ knowledge of the Bible had a rock beneath their feet, which the waves of disappointment could not _____ away.” (GC, p. 394.1)

3. Did both the wise and the foolish Millerites slumber in the same manner? “‘They all slumbered and slept,’ one class in _____ and abandonment of their faith, the other class patiently _____ till clearer light should be given. Yet in the night of trial the latter seemed to lose, to _____ extent, their zeal and devotion.” (GC, p. 394.1)

4. In what sense could the wise Millerites not **share their oil** with the foolish ones? “The halfhearted and _____ could not lean upon the _____ of their brethren. Each must stand or fall for _____.” (GC, p. 394.1)

5. What appeared among the Millerites during the time of delay and slumbering? “About this time, _____ began to appear. Some who had professed to be zealous believers in the message _____ the word of God as the one infallible _____ and, claiming to be led by the Spirit, gave themselves up to the control of their own _____, impressions, and _____.” (GC, p. 395.1)

The Appearance of Fanaticism

1. When did the fanaticism especially appear among the Millerites? “These [fanaticism and division] appeared in the _____ of _____, when Adventists were in a state of doubt and perplexity concerning their real position.” (GC, p. 398.2)

2. **Thought Questions:** Is the presence of fanaticism in a movement a clear evidence that the movement is not of God? Why does Satan plant fanaticism in movements which are led by God? What examples does Ellen White present from Christian church history? (**Hint:** GC, p. 395.1 to

GC, p. 397.1) _____

3. What was Satan’s strategy in introducing fanaticism? “Thus the greater the number whom he [Satan] could crowd in to make a _____ of faith in the second advent while his power controlled their hearts, the greater advantage would he gain by calling attention to them as representatives of the whole _____ of believers.” (GC, p. 395.2)

4. What was the real reason why the Millerites were denounced by the churches of their day? “These persons were actuated by prejudice and hatred. Their peace was _____ by the proclamation of Christ at the door. They feared it might be _____, yet hoped it was not, and this was the _____ of their warfare against Adventists and their faith.” (GC, p. 397.1)

The Midnight Cry

1. How was the **midnight cry** fulfilled in the Millerite movement? “In the summer of 1844, _____ between the time when it had been first thought that the 2300 days would end, and the autumn of the same year, to which it was afterward found that they extended, the message was proclaimed in the _____ words of Scripture: ‘Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!’” (GC, p. 398.3)

Note: The Millerites originally thought that Christ would come in the spring of 1843. When their hopes did not materialize, they entered a period of delay and slumbering. This period was broken in the summer of 1844 when a renewed study of prophecy indicated that Christ would come on October 22, 1844.

2. Which two great Old Testament prophecies led to a realization that the 2300 days would end in the fall of 1844 rather than in the spring of 1843? (GC, p. 398.1 to GC, p. 400.2)

A. _____

B. _____

3. What does Ellen White say about the fulfillment of the spring feasts (Passover, Unleavened Bread, First-fruits, Pentecost) of the Hebrew calendar? “These types were _____, not only as to the event, but as to the _____.” (GC, p. 399.3)

4. What does Ellen White say regarding the fulfillment of the fall feasts (Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles) of the Hebrew calendar? “In like manner the _____ which relate to the second advent must be fulfilled at the _____ pointed out in the symbolic

service.” (GC, p. 399.4)

5. How did the Millerites awaken from their slumber under the midnight cry? “Like a tidal wave the movement _____ over the land. From city to city, from village to village, and into remote country places it went, until the _____ people of God were fully _____.” (GC, p. 400.2)

6. What happened with fanaticism under the midnight cry? “Fanaticism _____ before this proclamation like the early _____ before the rising sun. . . . The work was free from those _____ which are ever manifested when there is human _____ without the controlling influence of the _____ and Spirit of God.” (GC, p. 400.2)

7. What was the religious experience of the Millerites under the midnight cry? “There was little _____ joy, but rather _____ searching of heart, confession of sin, and forsaking of the _____. A preparation to meet the Lord was the _____ of agonizing spirits. There was persevering prayer and _____ consecration to God. (GC, p. 400.2)

8. Which was the most perfect religious movement in Christian history since the days of the apostles? “Of all the great religious movements since the days of the apostles, _____ have been more free from human _____ and the _____ of Satan than was that of the autumn of 1844.” (GC, p. 401.3)

9. What evidence is there that the Millerite movement in the autumn of 1844 had an extra supply of oil? “_____ were sent from heaven to _____ those who had become discouraged and _____ them to receive the message. The work did not stand in the wisdom and learning of men, but in the _____ of God.” (GC, p. 402.1)

10. What power impelled the midnight cry? “The message, ‘Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!’ was not so much a matter of _____, though the Scripture proof was clear and conclusive. There went with it an impelling _____ that moved the soul.” (GC, p. 402.2)

11. What else does Ellen White say about the religious experience of the wise Millerites? “Every _____ they felt that it was their first duty to secure the evidence of their acceptance with God. Their hearts were closely _____, and they prayed much with and for one another. . . . The assurance of the Savior's approval was more necessary to them than their _____ food; and if a cloud darkened their minds, they did not rest until it was swept away. (GC, p. 403.1)

12. The Millerites were disappointed again when Jesus failed to come on October 22, 1844. With what Biblical event does Ellen White compare their disappointment? (GC, p. 404.1 to GC, p. 405.3) _____

13. **Thought Question:** Did the Bridegroom come on October 22, 1844? Where did He come to and what did He come for? (Study Daniel 7:13-14 and Luke 12:36 in the light of EW, p. 54.1 to EW, p. 56.3 and GC, p. 423.1 to GC, p. 431.3)

14. Was there a shut door in 1844? That is to say, did probation close for a certain group of people at that time? "I was shown in vision, and I still believe, that there was a _____ door in 1844. All who saw the light of the first and second angels' messages and _____ that light, were left in darkness. And those who accepted it a received the Holy Spirit which attended the proclamation of the message from heaven, and who afterward renounced their faith and pronounced their experience a delusion, thereby rejected the Spirit of God, and it no longer _____ with them." (1SM, p. 63) In our next lesson we will study the end-time application of the story of the ten virgins. Don't miss it for anything in the world!

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables” Lesson #16 - The Parable of the Ten Virgins – Part 2

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp 405-421; GC, pp. 613-634; **Matthew 25:1-13**

In our last lesson we studied how the parable of the ten virgins was exemplified in the Millerite Movement of 1843-1844. In our lesson today we will analyze the broader fulfillment of this parable with those who will live upon the earth immediately before the second coming of Jesus.

The Setting and Timing of the Parable

1. Where was Jesus when he told the parable of the ten virgins? “Christ with his disciples is seated upon the Mount of _____.” (COL, p. 405.1)

2. What was transpiring as Jesus told the parable, which made it even more vivid? (COL, p. 405.1)

3. How do the marriage customs of the day help us comprehend the meaning of this parable? “The bridegroom goes forth to meet his bride and bring her to his _____. By torchlight the bridal party proceed from _____ father’s house to his own, where a _____ is provided for the invited _____.” (COL, p. 405.1)

4. To which period of history does the parable of the ten virgins particularly apply? “He [Jesus] told His disciples the story of the ten virgins, by their experience _____ the experience of the church that shall live _____ before His second coming.” (COL, p. 406.2)

Note: The immediately preceding context of Matthew 25:1-13 indicates that Ellen White’s time frame is correct. In Matthew 24:36-51 Jesus had been teaching the disciples about His second coming.

The Symbols of the Parable

1. What is represented by the lamps in the parable? “By the lamps is represented the _____ or God.” (COL, p. 406.3; Psalm 119:105)
2. What is symbolized by the oil? “The oil is a symbol of the Holy _____.” (COL, p. 406.3; Zechariah 4:1-14)
3. Why are the ten young women called “virgins”? “They are called virgins because they profess a _____ faith.” (COL, p. 406.3; 2 Corinthians 11:2)
4. What do the two classes of virgins represent? “The two classes of watchers represent two _____ who _____ to be waiting for their Lord.” (COL, p. 406.3; Matthew 25:13)
5. How does the Holy Spirit accomplish His work on earth? “So from the _____ ones that stand in God’s presence His Spirit is _____ to the human instrumentalities who are consecrated to His service.” (COL, p. 408.1)

Note: Ellen White is here commenting on Zechariah 4:1-14. In the light of this chapter, it is clear that the Holy Spirit performs His work on earth through the ministration of the angels. It is in this sense the Spirit is omnipresent.

6. Whom does the bridegroom represent? “And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the _____ fast, while the _____ is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be _____ away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.” (Luke 5:34-35)

Note: The context makes it very clear that the bridegroom in this passage is Christ. He was then present with His disciples, however, He would be taken away from them upon His ascension.

Wise and Foolish Virgins

1. In what way were all ten virgins similar? “In the parable, _____ ten virgins went out to meet the bridegroom. _____ had lamps and vessels of oil. For a time there was no _____ between them. . . . _____ have a knowledge of the Scriptures. All have heard the message of Christ’s near approach, and confidently expect His appearing.” (COL, p. 408.2)

2. Though all ten virgins had lamps (the Bible), in what sense were the foolish virgins different? "They are _____ of the Holy Spirit." (COL, p. 408.2) " _____ the Spirit of God a knowledge of His word is of no avail. The _____ of truth, unaccompanied by the Holy Spirit, cannot _____ the soul or sanctify the heart." (COL, p. 408.3)

3. How did the foolish virgins regard the truth? "They have a regard for the truth, they have _____ the truth, they are _____ to those who believe the truth; but they have not _____ themselves to the Holy Spirit's working." (COL, p. 411.1)

4. How were the foolish virgins similar to the "stony ground" hearers in the parable of the sower? "This class are represented also by the stony-ground hearers. They _____ the word with readiness, but they fail of assimilating its _____." (COL, p. 411.1)

5. What texts of Scripture does Ellen White employ to prove the point she made in question number four? _____ . (COL, p. 411.1)

6. What type of service to God do the five foolish virgins render? "Their service to God degenerates into a _____." (COL, p. 411.1)

The Shutting of the Door and the Delay

1. Why couldn't the wise virgins give of their oil to the foolish virgins? "But character is not _____. No man can believe for another. No man can receive the Spirit for another. No man can impart to another the character which is the fruit of the Spirit's working." (COL, p. 411.2)

2. What verse of Scripture does Ellen White employ to support the assertion in question number one? _____ (COL, p. 411.2)

3. Was there a time in the past when it became impossible to "purchase" the oil of the Holy Spirit? "My Spirit shall not _____ strive with man, for that he is also flesh: Yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." (Genesis 6:3)

Note: The one hundred and twenty years of probation was the time during which the Holy Spirit could mold and transform the character. After this period the Holy Spirit would not be available to the pre-flood race.

4. What happened when Noah finished the task of preaching? "And the Lord _____ him [Noah] in." (Genesis 7:16)

Note: The Holy Spirit was withdrawn and the door was shut. No longer could people respond to the wooing of the Holy Spirit's voice. Yet it did not begin to rain at the precise moment the door was shut. Seven days transpired before destruction was unleashed. In the interim the faith of Noah and his family was severely tested.

5. What is represented by the closing of the door in the flood story and in the parable of the ten virgins? "The great final _____ comes at the close of human _____, when it will be too late for the soul's need to be supplied." (COL, p. 412.1)

6. What great event will reveal whether a person has been truly transformed by the Word through the power of the Holy Spirit? "So now, a sudden and unlooked-for _____, something that brings the soul face to face with _____, will show whether there is any real faith in the _____ of God." (COL, p. 412.1)

Note: There can be no doubt that Ellen White is referring to the universal death decree in Revelation 13:15 as the "unlooked-for calamity, something that brings the soul face to face with death."

7. What sobering remark does Ellen White make about the final plight of the five foolish virgins? "All claim to be _____. All have a _____, a _____, a 4 lamp, and all profess to be doing God's _____. . . . Five will be found surprised, dismayed, outside the banquet hall." (COL, p. 412.2)

8. How does Ellen White describe those who come to the time of trouble without the necessary character preparation? "Those professed Christians who come up to that last fearful conflict _____ will, in their despair, confess their _____ in words of burning anguish, while the wicked exult over their distress." (GC, p. 620.3)

9. Why won't Jesus allow the "foolish virgins" to come into the wedding supper? "It's light would fall on _____ eyes, its melody upon _____ ears. Its love and joy could awake no chord of _____ in the world-benumbed heart. You are shut out from heaven by your own _____ for its companionship." (COL, p. 413.1)

10. What biblical indication do we have that those who hear the words of doom "I know you not," actually claimed to be Christians? "Many will say to me in that day, _____, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy _____? And in thy _____ have cast out devils? And in thy _____ done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I _____ knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:22-23)

11. As in the time of Noah, will God’s people experience a delay in the coming of the bridegroom? How will they face this delay? “The season of distress and _____ before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, _____, and hunger—a faith that will not _____ though severely tested. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time.” (GC, p. 621.2)

12. How will we be able to stand in the midst of the excruciating delay? “Only those who have been _____ students of the Scriptures and who have received the _____ of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. . . . To all the _____ time will come. By the sifting of temptation the genuine Christian will be revealed.” (GC, p. 625.3)

Lighting the Path to the Bridegroom’s House

1. What is represented by the virgins who light the way to the bridegroom’s house? “So the _____ of Christ are to shed light into the _____ of the world.” (COL, p. 414.2)

2. What is represented by the shining light of the lamps? “By _____ in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the _____ of God. The light of His glory—His character—is to shine forth in His followers.” (COL, p. 414.2)

3. When Moses asked God to show him His glory, how did God respond? “And he said, I will make all my _____ pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be _____ to whom I will be gracious, and will shew _____ on whom I will shew mercy.” (Exodus 33:18-19)

4. What is represented by “midnight” in the parable? “The coming of the bridegroom was at midnight—the _____ hour. So the coming of Christ will take place in the darkest hour of this _____ history. . . . The great _____ will develop into darkness deep as midnight, impenetrable as sackcloth of hair” (COL, p. 414.3)

5. What will this “midnight” darkness bring upon God’s people? “To God’s people it will be a night of trial, a night of _____, a night of _____ for the truth’s sake. But out of that night of darkness God’s light will shine.” (COL, p. 414.3)

6. In what sense will the world be in its greatest darkness before Jesus comes? “It is the darkness of _____ of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His _____. It has been misunderstood and _____ (COL, p. 415.3)

7. What is the last message which will be imparted to the world by God's people? "The last rays of merciful light, the last measure of _____ to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of _____." (COL, p. 415.5)
8. What symbol did Jesus employ to illustrate His mission and that of His followers? "I am the _____ of the world. . . . Ye are the _____ of the world." (John 9:5; Matthew 5:16; Matthew 5:16)
9. In practical terms, what does it mean to be the light of the world? "Practical work will have far more effect than mere _____. We are to give _____ to the hungry, _____ to the naked, and _____ to the homeless." (COL, p. 417.4)
10. How many people must be reached with the light of God's glory? "From no _____, rank, or _____ of people is the light shining from heaven's throne to be excluded." (COL, p. 418.3)
11. How can we become light bearers for God? "But no man can _____ that which he himself has not _____. In the work of God, humanity can _____ nothing. No man can by his own _____ make himself a light bearer for God." (COL, p. 418.5)
12. What is heaven's most precious gift and why do we not receive it? "In the great and measureless gift of the Holy Spirit are contained _____ of heaven's _____. It is not because of any _____ on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not _____ earthward to men. If all were willing to receive, all would become filled with His Spirit." (COL, p. 419.1)
13. How will we reveal that the Spirit is truly present in our lives? "The _____ of the Spirit will be shown by the _____ of heavenly love." (COL, p. 419.4)
14. What will characterize the true religion of Christ? "The religion of Christ means more than the _____ of sin; it means _____ away our sins, and filling the vacuum with the _____ of the Holy Spirit. . . . It means a heart emptied of _____, and blessed with the abiding presence of Christ." (COL, p. 419.6)
15. What must God's people not **strive** to do? "Christ does not bid His followers _____ to shine. He says, _____ your light shine. If you have received the grace of God, the light is in you. Remove the _____, and the Lord's glory will be revealed." (COL, p. 420.1)

Candidates for Heaven

1. What will happen when we reflect God's glorious character? "And in currents of praise and thanksgiving from the many _____ thus won to God, glory will flow _____ to the great Giver." (COL, p. 420.2)

Note: The moon not only reflects the glory of the sun to earth but in the process, it glorifies the sun from which it received its light. The same is true of us. When the character of Jesus shines upon us, we reflect His glory and bring honor and glory to His name (see, Matthew 5:16)

2. What will happen when we are in constant communion with God's glory? "They are prepared for _____; for they have heaven in their _____." (COL, p. 420.3)

3. What is Jesus waiting for in His people? "Christ is _____ with longing desire for the manifestation of _____ in His church. When the _____ of Christ shall be _____ reproduced in His people, then He will come to _____ them as His own." (COL, p. 69.1)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables” Lesson #17 – The Pharisee and the Publican

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 150-163; Luke 18:9-14

A Profile of the Pharisee

1. The Pharisee had two fundamental problems: He _____ in himself and _____ others. (Luke 18:9)
2. The Pharisee always has a high opinion of himself and a low opinion of others. This is the reason why he says: “God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this _____.” (Luke 18:11). “Whoever trusts in himself that he is righteous, will _____ others. As the Pharisee judges _____ by other men, so he judges other men by _____. . . . His self-righteousness leads to _____ (COL, p. 151.2)
3. The Pharisee “is full of _____. He looks it, he _____ it, he prays it.” In fact, the Pharisee prayed with _____. (COL, p. 150.2)
4. The Pharisee “judges his character, not by the holy _____ of God, but by the character of other _____. His mind is turned _____ from God to humanity. This is the secret of his _____.” (COL, p. 150.3)

Note: When the prophet Isaiah caught a glimpse of the holiness of God, he immediately discerned his own unworthiness: “Woe is me! For I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.” (Isaiah 6:5). Likewise when Peter met Jesus on the shore of the sea of Galilee, he said: “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” (Luke 5:8). When Moses met God at the burning bush he “hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.” (Exodus 3:6).

5. The Pharisee “is satisfied with a _____ that has to do with the _____ life.” This is the reason why he boasts that he _____ twice a week, and gives _____ of all he possesses. (COL, p. 151.1; Luke 18:12)

6. Jesus spoke about the prayer habits of the Pharisee in Matthew 6:5 : “And when thou _____, thou shalt not be as the _____ are: for they love to pray _____ in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of _____. Verily I say unto you, they have their _____.”

7. Jesus also spoke about the legalistic religion of the Pharisee in Matthew 23:27-28 : “Woe unto you scribes and _____, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful _____, but are _____ full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also _____ appear _____ unto men, but _____ ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.”

8. The apostle Paul spoke of the pharisaic spirit of the of his own people according to the flesh: “For they being ignorant of God’s _____, and going about to establish their _____ righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of _____.” (Romans 10:3).

9. The Pharisee’s case was hopeless: “The Pharisee felt no conviction of _____. The Holy Spirit could not work with him. His soul was _____ in a self-righteous armor which the arrows of God, barbed and true-aimed by _____ hands, failed to penetrate.” (COL, p. 158.1). Notice here that the Holy Spirit accomplishes His work through the ministration of the angels!

A Profile of the Publican

1. The publican differed from the Pharisee in four significant ways: “And the publican, standing _____ off, would not _____ up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but _____ upon his breast, saying, God be _____ to me a sinner. (Luke 18:13)

2. The publican “did not compare himself with _____. Overwhelmed with a sense of _____, he stood as if alone in _____ presence. His only desire was for _____ and _____, his only plea was the _____ of God.” (COL, p. 151.3)

3. Who were the first two historical representatives of the Pharisee and the publican? _____ and _____. What similarities are there between these two original prototypes _____ and _____ the _____ characters _____ in _____ Christ’s _____ parable?

4. Which disciple of Jesus was changed from the spirit of the Pharisee into the spirit of the publican? _____. COL, 152.3 to (COL, p. 154.1). Carefully follow the trajectory of Peter's conversion experience.

5. What finally converted Peter from a selfish Pharisee into a penitent publican? "At that moment [when Peter denied Jesus the third time] Christ looked at Peter, and beneath that grieved look, in which _____ and love for him were blended, Peter understood _____. He went out and wept _____. That look of Christ's _____ his heart." (COL, p. 152.3)

6. What are the greatest dangers for the human soul? "There is nothing so _____ to God or so dangerous to the human soul as _____ and _____. Of all sins it is the most _____, the most _____." (COL, p. 154.4)

7. Why is it dangerous to boastfully claim that we are saved? "Those who accept the Savior, however sincere their _____, should never be taught to say or to feel that they are _____. This is misleading. Everyone should be taught to cherish hope and faith; but even when we give ourselves to Christ and _____ that He accepts us, we are not beyond the reach of _____." (COL, p. 155.1)

Note: Our assurance of salvation should never lead to self-confident boastfulness. Jesus clearly said: "He who endures unto the end shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13). On the other hand, we can have present assurance of salvation as long as we are looking away from self and to Christ.

8. What is the only way that we can gain a true knowledge of ourselves? "In one way only can a true knowledge of self be obtained. We must _____ Christ. It is _____ of Him that makes men so uplifted in their own _____. When we _____ His purity and excellence, we shall see our own _____ and _____ and defects as they really are. We shall see ourselves _____ and hopeless, clad in garments of self-righteousness." (COL, p. 159.1)

Note: This principle is brought out in 2Corinthians 3:18 where the apostle Paul tells us that as we behold the glory of the Lord, we are changed from glory to glory into His same likeness. That is to say, what we behold is what we become. If television is the central focus of our time, we will reflect the values of that which we spend our time on and our heart will be confirmed in its sin. But if we behold the purity and beauty of Jesus, our characters will be reflect Him.

9. Once we see ourselves as we really are, then we can ask Christ to empty us or ourselves. "But no man can empty _____ of self. We can only consent for _____ to accomplish the work." (COL, p. 159.3)

10. As Jesus empties us of self, good works will flow naturally. But, “All our good works are dependent on a power _____ of ourselves. Therefore there needs to be a _____reaching our of the heart after God, a continual, earnest, _____ confession of sin and Humbling of the soul before Him.” (COL, p. 159.4)

11. We must shun everything that would encourage pride and self-sufficiency. “It is Satan’s work to flatter. He deals in _____ as well as in _____ and condemnation. Thus he seeks to work the _____ or the soul.” (COL, p. 161.2)

The Conclusion of the Story

1. We are told in the story in the Pharisee and the Publican that the publican went home _____.

Note: This is the only time the word “justified” is found on the lips of Jesus in the Gospels. Justification and forgiveness are the same thing. The publican had the righteousness of Christ credited to his account. What Jesus said was revolutionary in the context of rabbinical salvation theology. The rabbis taught salvation as a system of merits and demerits. The good and evil works of each person were all written in books as life transpired. After death the evil works were weighed against the good works. If the good works were weightier, the person was pronounced righteous and given the reward of salvation. This is why rabbis such as Shammai underlined that people must increase merit by giving alms, works of charity, fasting, studying the Torah, tithing, Sabbath-keeping, etc. In this system you could never be sure where you stood until the judgment. That a sinner with so many demerits could be justified and that he could be justified **right then** was unthinkable.

2. The life of one who has been forgiven can experience inexpressible joy: “But Christ dwelling in the soul is a wellspring of _____. For all who _____ Him, the very keynote of the word of God is _____.” (COL, p. 162.1)

3. Thus, all a sinner needs is Christ: “As the sinner, drawn by the power of Christ, approaches the uplifted _____, and prostrates himself before it, there is a new _____. A new heart is given him. He becomes a new _____ in Christ Jesus. _____ finds that it has nothing more to require.” (COL, p. 162.4)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #18 – The Ungrateful Debtor

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 243-251; Matthew 18:21-35; Luke 17:3-4

This story is commonly known as the parable of the two debtors. As we study this lesson together we will find that the central theme of the parable is the stark contrast between the unlimited forgiveness of God and the unforgiving spirit of man. Let’s jump right into our study.

The Parable’s Occasion

1. What significant question did Peter ask Jesus? “Lord, how oft shall my brother _____ against me, and I _____ him? Till _____ times?” (Matthew 18:21)
2. Why did Peter suggest the number seven? “The _____ limited the exercise of forgiveness to _____ offenses. Peter, carrying out, as he supposed, the teaching of Christ, thought to extend it to seven, the number signifying _____.” (COL, p. 243.1)
3. What did Jesus reply to Peter’s “generous” willingness to forgive? “I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy _____ seven.” (Matthew 18:22)
4. What did Jesus mean by the figure of seventy times seven? “Christ taught that we are _____ to become _____ of forgiving.” (COL, p. 243.1)

Note: Ellen White has stated in another place: “And we are not only to forgive seven times, but seventy times seven. **Just as often** as God forgives us, we are to forgive one another.” Review and Herald, April 8, 1902.

5. In which way did the spirit of Lamech contrast with the spirit of Christ? “If Cain shall be avenged _____, truly Lamech _____ and _____ (Genesis 4:24).

Note: Christ spoke of forgiving seventy times seven, but Lamech, who was of the wicked genealogy of Cain, talked about taking vengeance seventy times seven.

The Symbols of the Parable

1. Who is represented by the king who took account of his servants? _____
(Matthew 18:35)

Note: “Christ is represented by the king, who, moved with compassion, forgave the debt of his servant.” (COL, p. 244.3)

2. Who is symbolized by the servant who was brought in before the king? _____
(Matthew 18:35)

Note: “Man was under the condemnation of the broken law. He could not save himself, and for this reason Christ came to this world, clothed His divinity with humanity, and gave His life, the just for the unjust.” (COL, p. 244.3)

3. Who is represented by the fellow servant who owed one hundred pence? _____
(Matthew 18:35)

4. **Thought Question:** What do you suppose is represented by the unpayable debt of the first servant? _____

The King’s Servant

1. What occupation did the servant have in the king’s realm? “Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take _____ of his servants. And when he had begun to _____ . . .” (Matthew 18:23-24)

Note: The servant was not a slave. He was rather an employee. The words “take account” and “reckon” are financial terms (see, Luke 16:2). This seems to indicate that the servant was an administrator of the king’s monetary assets. Most scholars believe he must have been responsible for the revenue in one of the provinces belonging to the king’s realm. The enormous debt he owed his lord indicates that he was one of the high officials in the king’s government.

2. Did this servant come of his own accord? “And when he had begun to reckon, one was _____ unto him [the king], which _____ him ten thousand talents.” (Matthew 18:24)

Note: The Greek terms used seem to indicate that this man was already under suspicion of embezzlement. The passive tense of the verb indicates that he did not come of his own accord but rather was brought by the king's guards.

3. How great a debt was incurred by the king's servant? "One was brought unto him [the king] which owed him ten _____ talents." (Matthew 18:24)

Note: The debt was enormous and utterly unpayable. Ten thousand talents is equivalent to 470,448 pounds of silver and ten thousand talents of silver are equal to 100 million *denarii*. The enormity of this amount can only be understood when we realize that a *denarius* was the daily wage for a common worker in the Roman Empire. Furthermore, as Joachim Jeremias has pointed out, the enormity of this debt can only be understood "if we realize that both *muria* [thousand] and *talanta* [talent] are the highest magnitudes in use (10,000 is the highest number used in reckoning, and the talent is the largest currency unit in the whole of the Near East." (Joachim Jeremias, The Parables of Jesus, p. 210) We, like the king's servant, have broken God's holy law. We have forfeited our right to freedom. We deserve to perish. The enormity of our debt to God is impossible to pay.

4. When the king commanded that the servant, his wife, his children and all his possessions be sold, how did the servant react? "The servant therefore _____ down, and _____ him saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." (Matthew 18:26)

Note: The servant deserved the sentence which was pronounced against him. He did not argue about his guilt or innocence. He repented, humbled himself, confessed his wrong, promised to make restitution and threw himself on the mercy of the court. Actually, he did not realize that his debt was so great that, no matter how good his intentions, he could never pay. Scholars have calculated that if this was a high government official it would have taken him at least 15,000 years to pay the debt!! We cannot pay the debt we have incurred because of sin. We cannot argue our case before God. We cannot earn salvation by our own works. All we can do is repent of our sins, confess them and throw ourselves upon His mercy.

5. What lesson can we learn from the servant's offer to pay his debt? "He did not realize his _____. He hoped to deliver _____. . . . So there are many who hope by their own _____ to merit God's _____. They do not realize their helplessness." (COL, p. 245.3)

6. What did the king do when he saw his servant's penitence? "Then the lord of that servant was moved with _____, and _____ him, and _____ him the debt." (Matthew 18:27).

Note: What an illustration of grace! The undeserving servant was relieved of his debt simply because the king had compassion upon him. Notice that the king did not make the servant work off his debt. This would have been impossible. The debt was completely forgiven simply because the man, in his dire need, cried out to the king for mercy! He was not forgiven because of his goodness but rather because of the goodness of the king.

The Measure of God's Forgiveness

The Bible uses several analogies to illustrate the magnanimous forgiveness of God. Let's examine several of them:

1. According to Micah 7:19, how fully does God forgive our sins? "Thou [God] wilt cast _____ their sins into the _____ of the sea."
2. For thou hast cast all my _____ behind thy _____." (Isaiah 38:17)
3. As far as the _____ is from the _____, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." (Psalm 103:12)
4. I have _____ out, as a thick _____, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." (Isaiah 44:22)
5. I, even I, am he that _____ out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not _____ thy sins." (Isaiah 43:25)
6. If we confess our _____, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to _____ us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

The Unforgiving Servant

1. After the servant's debt was forgiven by the king, what did he do with one of his fellow servants? "But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which _____ him an hundred pence: and he laid _____ on him, and took him by the _____, saying, Pay me that thou owest." (Matthew 18:28)
2. How did the fellow servant react when the servant took him by the throat? "And his fellow servant _____ down at his feet, and _____ him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay the debt." (Matthew 18:29)

Note: The servant not only pleaded with the king. He also worshiped him as the Greek word *proskuneo* in Matthew 18:26 indicates. But the fellow servant did not worship the servant. This would indicate that the king in this parable represents Christ who receives our penitential worship.

3. Did the servant manifest mercy for his fellow servant? “And he [the servant] would _____: but went and cast him into _____, till he should pay the debt.” (Matthew 18:30)

4. What is represented by the servant’s unwillingness to forgive his fellow servant? “Their own _____ against God, compared with their brother’s sins against them, are as ten thousand talents to one hundred pence—nearly one _____ to one; yet they dare to be _____.” (COL, p. 245.3)

Note: The word “pence” used here is a reference to a *denarius* which was the daily wage a common laborer was paid. Though 100 *denarii* was a considerable debt (100 days of labor), it could be paid in the course of time with a little effort. In contrast to 10,000 talents (100 million *denarii*), 100 *denarii* was “peanuts”.

5. What did the king do when he found out that the servant had been unwilling to forgive his fellow servant? “And his lord was _____, and delivered him to the tormenters, till he should _____ all that was due unto him.” (Matthew 18:34)

The Parable’s Central Lesson

1. According to Ellen White, what is the central lesson of this parable? “He who refuses to _____ is thereby casting away his own _____ of pardon.” (COL, p. 247.1)

2. Is Ellen White correct in her assessment? Notice the words of the king to his servant: “Shouldest not _____ also have had _____ on thy fellow servant, even as I had _____ on thee?” (Matthew 18:33)

3. When Jesus said, “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors” was He teaching that we do not have to pay our legitimate debts? “By this He did not mean that in order to be forgiven our sins we must not require our just dues from our debtors. If they cannot _____, even though this may be the result of unwise management, they are not to be cast in prison, oppressed, or even treated harshly; but the parable does not teach us to encourage _____.” (COL, p. 247.2)

4. If a brother or sister sins against us, what should we not do under any circumstances? “Our Lord teaches that matters of difficulty between _____ are to be settled within the

_____. They should not be opened before those who do not _____ God. If a Christian is wronged by his brother, let him not _____ to unbelievers in a court of justice.” (COL, p. 248.5; see also 1 Corinthians 6:1-3)

5. What wise counsel is given to us by the apostle Paul? “And be ye _____ one to another, tender hearted, _____ one another, even as God for _____ sake hath forgiven _____.” (Ephesians 4:32; see also COL, p. 3:13)

6. What sobering truth did Jesus teach in the Sermon on the Mount? “For if ye _____ men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also _____ you. But if ye forgive _____ men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive _____ trespasses.” (Matthew 6:14-15)

7. Why will God not pardon us if we are unwilling to pardon others? “He who is unmerciful toward others shows that he himself is not a _____ of God’s pardoning grace. In God’s forgiveness the heart of the erring one is drawn close to the great heart of Infinite Love. The tide of divine compassion flows _____ the sinner’s soul, and _____ him to the souls of others.” (COL, p. 251.1; see also John 7:37-39. **Hint:** We cannot give what we have not received)

8. What is the great lesson of the parable? “But the great lesson of the parable lies in the _____ between God’s compassion and man’s _____; in the fact that God’s forgiving mercy is to be the measure of our _____.” (COL, p. 251.3)

9. **Thought Question:** What do you suppose Ellen White meant when she said the following words: “We are not forgiven *because* we forgive, but *as* we forgive.” (COL, p. 251.4) _____

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #19 – The Hidden Treasure

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp 103-114; Matthew 13:44; Proverbs 2:1-5; 2Corinthians 4:3-4; COL, p. 2:3

In this lesson we will study the parable of the hidden treasure. Though it is one of Jesus’ shorter parables, it teaches profound spiritual lessons. As we begin, let us take a look at the symbols which the parable contains.

The Customs of the Day

1. Where did people hide their treasures in ancient times? “In ancient times it was customary for men to hide their treasures in the _____.” (COL, p. 103.2)

2. For what three reasons did people bury their treasures in the earth in ancient times? “Thefts and _____ were frequent. . . . whenever there was a _____ in the ruling power, those who had large possessions were liable to be put under _____ tribute. Moreover the country was in constant danger of _____ by marauding armies.” (COL, p. 103.2)

3. How was it possible for hidden treasures to be lost? “But often the _____ of concealment was forgotten; _____ might claim the owner, _____ or exile might separate him from his treasure. . . .” (COL, p. 103.2)

4. Could the treasure be found simply by walking over the place where it was buried? “A man might pass over the place where the treasure had been _____. In dire necessity he might sit down to rest at the foot of a _____, not knowing of the riches hidden at its roots.” (COL, p. 104.4)

5. What would friends and relatives think of the person who sold all in order to buy the field? “His family and his neighbors think that he is acting like a _____. Looking on the field,

they see no _____ in the neglected soil.” (COL, p. 103.3)

6. What was the man willing to do in order to purchase the field and find the treasure? “The finder of the treasure in the field was ready to part with _____ that he had, ready to put forth untiring _____, in order to secure the hidden riches.” (COL, p. 104.1; Matthew 13:44)

The Symbols of the Parable

1. What is symbolized by the field? “In the parable the field containing the _____ represents the Holy _____.” (COL, p. 104.2)

2. According to Ellen White, what does the treasure represent? “And the _____ is the treasure.” (COL, p. 104.2)

3. Is Ellen White’s concept in harmony with the Bible? Notice the words of the apostle Paul: “But if the _____ be _____, it is hid from them that are _____. In whom the god of this world hath blinded the _____ of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious _____ of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” (2 Corinthians 4:3-4)

4. What is meant by the silver and gold in the treasure? “Receive my _____, and not silver; and _____ rather than _____ gold.” (Proverbs 8:10)

5. What is far better to have than silver and gold? “How much _____ is sit to get wisdom than _____! And to get _____ rather to be chosen than _____!” (Proverbs 16:16)

6. How does Proverbs 2:1-5 help us understand the meaning of the treasure? “If thou seekest her [wisdom] as _____, and searchest for her as for hid _____; then shalt thou understand the _____ of the LORD, and find the _____ of God.”

7. What did David have to say about the value of the law of God? “The law [torah] of thy mouth is _____ unto me than thousands of _____ and _____.” (Psalm 119:72)

8. Who is represented by the man who discovered and bought the treasure? “So the _____ of heavenly treasure will count no _____ too great and no _____ too dear, in order to gain the treasures of truth” (COL, p. 104.1)

Why the Treasure is Hidden

1. What happens when people place earthly riches above the Word of God? “From them the treasures of His _____ are _____.” (COL, p. 106.1)

2. How do the field and the treasure apply to the Jewish people? “As a _____ treasure, truth had been entrusted to the _____ people. . . . They had the word of God [the field] in their hands; but the traditions which had been handed down from generation to generation, and the human _____ of the Scriptures, hid from them the truth [the treasure] as it is in _____.” (COL, p. 104.4)

3. Does God conceal His truth from men? “God does not _____ His truth from men. By their _____ course of action they make it obscure to _____.” (COL, p. 105.1)

4. according to the Spirit of Prophecy, what is true higher education? “The true higher education is gained by _____ and _____ the word of God. But when God’s word is laid aside for books that do not lead to God and the kingdom of heaven, the education acquired is a _____ of the name.” (COL, p. 107.3)

Note: If what Ellen White says is true, most of the education which is imparted in worldly schools and in many of our own SDA schools is a perversion of true education.

5. What wise words of counsel about text books does Ellen G. White give to our educational institutions? “Instead of books containing the _____ of reputedly great authors, they choose the word of Him who is the greatest _____ and the greatest teacher the world has ever known. . . .” (COL, p. 107.5)

6. Why did the Jews fail to find Christ in the Old Testament? “It required a _____ to receive changeless, eternal truth. Therefore they would not admit the most _____ evidence that God could give to establish faith in Christ.” (COL, p. 105.1)

Note: In order to find Christ in the Scriptures, two things must happen. First, we must put all our effort and energy to dig deep into the Word. Second, we must be willing to give up all that which would keep us from “buying” Christ.

7. What did Jesus say to the Jews of His day? “Ye _____ the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have _____ life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not _____ to me, that ye might have life.” (John 5:39).

Note: The Jews of Christ’s day searched the Old Testament Scriptures [the field] in order to find the treasure but came up empty because they rejected the treasure of Scripture—Jesus Christ. This is why Jesus said: “For had ye believed Moses [his writings], ye would have believed me; for he wrote about me.” (John 5:46)

Searching for the Treasure

1. What did the man of the parable do when he found the hidden treasure? “when a man hath found, he hideth, and for _____ thereof goeth and selleth _____ that he hath, and buyeth that field.” Matthew 13:44)

2. **Thought Question:** What do you think is meant by the act of selling all in order to buy the field?

3. What example from Adventist history illustrates what it means to search for hidden treasure? (See quotation # 11 the end of this material). _____

4. How did the pioneers approach Bible study? (Study quotation #11 at the end of this material and write down several answers)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

5. Why do many fail to find the hidden treasures of God’s word? “They are content with _____ work, taking for granted that they have all that is _____. They take the sayings of others for _____, being too _____ to put themselves to diligent, earnest labor, represented in the word as _____ for hidden treasure.” (COL, p. 109.1)

6. How important is a study of the Scriptures? “It is _____ for old and young not only to _____ God’s word, but to _____ it with wholehearted earnestness, praying and searching for truth as for hidden treasure. . . . (COL, p. 111.2) Our _____ depends on a knowledge of the _____ contained in the Scriptures.” (COL, p. 111.3)

7. How important is faith in the search for the hidden treasure of God’s word? “To have faith means to _____ and _____ the gospel treasure, with all the obligations which it

_____ (COL, p. 112.4). . . . without the eye of faith [the seeker] cannot _____ the treasure.” (COL, p. 112.5)

Gems from Ellen White on the Hidden Treasure

1. “We are to regard the Bible as God’s disclosure to us of eternal things--the things of most consequence for us to know. By the world it is thrown aside as if the perusal of it were finished, but a thousand years of research would not exhaust the hidden treasure it contains. Eternity alone will disclose the wisdom of this Book, for it is the wisdom of an infinite mind. Shall we, then, cultivate a deep hunger for the productions of human authors and disregard the word of God?” (CT, p. 443.2)

2. “The jewels of truth lie scattered over the field of revelation; but they have been buried beneath human traditions, beneath the sayings and commandments of men, and the wisdom from heaven has been practically ignored. Satan has succeeded in making the world believe that the words and achievements of men are of great consequence.” (CT p. 437.2)

3. “Thousands of men who minister in the pulpit are lacking in essential qualities of mind and character because they do not apply themselves to the study of the Scriptures. They are content with a superficial knowledge of the truths that are full of rich depths of meaning; and they prefer to go on, losing much in every way, rather than to search diligently for the hidden treasure.” (CT, p. 460.2)

4. “The Bible is to be your standard, the living oracles of Jehovah are to be your guide. You are to dig for the truth as for hidden treasures. You are to find where the treasure is, and then you are to plow every inch of that field to get the jewels. You are to work the mines of truth for new gems, for new diamonds, and you will find them.” (FW, p. 77.1)

5. “These men [worldly authors] had received their talents from God, and every gem of thought by which they had been esteemed worthy of the attention of scholars and thinkers, belongs not to them, but to the God of all wisdom, whom they did not acknowledge. Through tradition, 5 through false education, these men are exalted as the world’s educators; but in going to them students are in danger of accepting the vile with the precious; for superstition, specious reasoning, and error are mingled with portions of true philosophy and instruction. This mingling makes a potion that is poisonous to the soul,-- destructive of faith in the God of all truth. Those who have a thirst for knowledge need not go to these polluted fountains; for they are invited to come to the fountain of life and drink freely. Through searching the word of God, they may find the hidden treasure of truth that has long been buried beneath the rubbish of error, human tradition, and opinions of men.” (FE, p. 170.3)

6. “The wonderful symbol of the living bird dipped in the blood of the bird slain and then set free to its joyous life (Leviticus 14:4-8), is to us the symbol of the atonement. There were death and life blended, presenting to the searcher for truth and hidden treasure, the union of the pardoning blood with the resurrection and life of our Redeemer. The bird slain was over living water; that flowing stream was a symbol of the ever flowing, ever cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. . . . ” (SD, p. 226.3)

7. “In those days there were many who searched for treasure which was supposed to be buried in certain localities where great cities had once stood. In the great thoroughfare of travel, where Jesus was then teaching, it was not unusual to meet persons who had come long distances on their way to where it was supposed hidden treasure could be found. The desire for great riches led them upon a journey fraught with many perils. They had left their avocations upon a venture that seldom proved successful. But if they secured a small treasure they redoubled their exertions, hoping to realize still greater riches. Jesus had this class of his hearers in view, when he thus illustrated the mysterious riches of his grace, which, once having attracted the heart of man, lead him to seek higher attainments and greater blessings. The more he realizes of the peace of God, the more he desires to drink deeper at the fountain of his love. The thirst for righteousness, the longing and seeking for its treasures, continually increase.” (ZSP, p. 251.1)

“In order to obtain a vast treasure that is supposed to be hidden in a field, or a gem that is of great and unknown value, the man who is seeking for riches invests all his substance in that field, or uses it to purchase the precious jewel, calculating that it will increase in value on his hands and bring him the fortune that he covets. So should the Christian, who desires the riches of Heaven, set aside all considerations that interfere with his eternal welfare, and put his soul into the work of securing the riches of Christ's love. His talents, his means, his energies, should all be applied in such a way as to win the approbation of God. Jesus directs the minds of his hearers to infinite riches, hidden where all may engage in searching for them, sure of being successful, never doomed to the disappointment of fruitless toil. He came from Heaven to direct the search. High and low, rich and poor, stand upon an equal footing, and none need seek in vain.” (ZSP, p. 252.1)

8. “Above all other books, the word of God must be our study, the great textbook, the basis of all education; and our children are to be educated in the truths found therein, irrespective of 6 previous habits and customs. In doing this, teachers and students will find the hidden treasure, the higher education. (GI, p. 131.3)

9. “The Majesty of heaven was not discerned in the disguise of humanity. He was the divine Teacher sent from God, the glorious Treasure given to humanity. He was fairer than the sons of men, but His matchless glory was hidden under a cover of poverty and suffering. He veiled His glory in order that divinity might touch humanity, and the treasure of immense value was not discerned by the human race.... (TMK, p. 58.4)

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" ([John 1:14](#)). The treasure indeed is hidden under the garb of humanity. Christ is the unsearchable riches, and he who finds Christ finds heaven. The human agent who looks upon Jesus, who dwells by faith on His matchless charms, finds the eternal treasure. ([TMK](#), p. 58.5)

"Christ does not use this parable to commend the man who hides the treasure until he can buy the field, but His object in using this illustration is to convey to our mind the value of spiritual things. To obtain worldly treasure, the man would make a sacrifice of his all, and how much more should we give for the priceless, heavenly treasure!" ([TMK](#), p. 58.6.)

10. "We have purchased the field of truth because of the treasure that is hidden therein. The rich gems of truth do not lie on the surface. You must dig for them. Take your Bible, and compare passage with passage, and verse with verse, and you will find the precious jewels of truth. You should put the precious gems of light in a beautiful setting, and hang them in memory's hall." ([RH](#), April 16, 1889)

11. "My husband, with Elders Joseph Bates, Stephen Pierce, Hiram Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, was among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. ([CET](#), p. 192.3.)

"We would come together burdened in soul, praying that we might be one in faith and doctrine; for we knew that Christ is not divided. One point at a time was made the subject of investigation. The Scriptures were opened with a sense of awe. Often we fasted, that we might be better fitted to understand the truth. After earnest prayer, if any point was not understood, it was discussed and each one expressed his opinion freely; then we would again bow in prayer, and earnest supplications went up to heaven that God would help us to see eye to eye, that we might be one, as Christ and the Father are one. Many tears were shed. ([CET](#), p. 192.4.)

"We spent many hours in this way. Sometimes the entire night was spent in solemn investigation of the Scriptures, that we might understand the truth for our time. On some occasions the Spirit of God would come upon me, and difficult portions were made clear through God's appointed way, and then there was perfect harmony. We were all of one mind and one spirit." ([CET](#), p. 193.1)

"We sought most earnestly that the Scriptures should not be wrested to suit any man's opinions. We tried to make our differences as slight as possible by not dwelling on points that were of minor importance, upon which there were varying opinions. But the burden of every soul was to bring about a condition among the brethren which would answer the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one as He and the Father are one. ([CET](#), p. 193.2)

“Sometimes one or two of the brethren would stubbornly set themselves against the view presented, and would act out the natural feelings of the heart; but when this disposition appeared, we suspended our investigations and adjourned our meeting, that each one might have an opportunity to go to God in prayer, and without conversation with others, study the point of difference, asking light from heaven. With expressions of friendliness we parted, to meet again as soon as possible for further investigation. At times the power of God came upon us in a marked manner, and when clear light revealed the points of truth, we would weep and rejoice together. We loved Jesus; we loved one another.” (CET, p. 193.3)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #20 – The Two Builders

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: MB, pp. 145-152; Matthew 7:15-29; Luke 6:47-49

One of the great parables of Jesus is that of the men who built their houses upon the rock and upon the sand. I vividly remember going through the primary division of Sabbath School and singing at the top of my lungs about the house of the foolish man which came tumbling down! But oddly enough, I don't remember ever hearing about what the parable means. In this lesson we will attempt to decode its important meaning for God's people in these last days.

Textual and Geographical Setting

1. What relationship does this parable have with the Sermon on the Mount? “Jesus ended His teaching with an illustration that presented with startling _____ the importance of putting in _____ the words He had spoken.” (MB, p. 147.2)

Note: This parable is not only the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount. It reveals the eternal consequences of accepting or rejecting that sermon.

2. What was the geographical setting of this parable? “As they sat upon the _____, listening to the words of Christ, they could _____ valleys and ravines through which the mountain streams found their way to the sea..” (MB, p. 147.2)

3. What happened in Israel in the summer and winter? “In summer these streams often wholly _____ leaving only a dry and dusty channel. But when the wintry _____ burst upon the hills, the rivers became fierce, raging _____, at times overspreading the valleys and bearing everything away on their resistless flood.” (MB, p. 147.2)

4. What classic word did Jesus often use to introduce this and other parables? “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will _____ him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.” (Matthew 7:24)

Wise and Foolish Builders

1. In which other parable does Jesus refer to wise and foolish followers? “And five of them [virgins] were _____, and five were _____.” (Matthew 25:2).

Note: The Greek words for “wise” and “foolish” in the parable of the ten virgins are identical to those in the parable of the two builders. This indicates that these parables should be studied together.

2. What characterized the wise man who built his house upon a rock? “Therefore whosoever heareth these _____ of mine, and _____ them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which _____ his house upon a rock.” (Matthew 7:24)

Note: It is important to realize that the word for “sayings” in this verse is *logos*. This very word is used to describe Jesus in John 1:1-3; John 14:23.

3. What significant expression does the gospel of Luke add to this parable? “Whosoever _____ to me, and _____ my sayings, and _____ them, I will shew you to whom he is like.” (Luke 6:47)

4. What characterized the foolish man who built his house upon the sand? “And every one that heareth these _____ of mine, and doeth them _____, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the _____.” (Matthew 7:26)

Hearing and Doing

1. What significant statement did the apostle Paul make? “For not the _____ of the law are just before God, but the _____ of the law shall be justified.” (Romans 2:13).

Note: We have all heard the expression, “words are cheap”. This is exactly what the apostle Paul is saying in Romans 2:13.

2. What information does the apostle John add to this discussion about saying and doing? “My little children, let us not love in _____, neither in _____; but in _____ and in truth.” (1 John 3:18)

3. How does the context of this parable illustrate the contrast between those who say and those who do? “Not everyone that _____ unto me, _____, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that _____ the will of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 7:21)

4. Is it possible to perform supernatural feats and yet to be reckoned among the foolish? “Many will _____ unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not _____ in thy name? And in thy name have cast out _____? And in thy name done many _____ works? (Matthew 7:22)

Note: These counterfeit disciples claimed the name of Jesus. They exercised what appeared to be the gifts of the Holy Spirit (see, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11) and yet Jesus refused to recognize them as His.

5. What important words does Ellen G. White write about those who place their personal experiences above the Word of God? “When persons will speak lightly of the word of God, and set their impressions, _____, and _____ above the divine standard, we may know that they have no _____ in them.” (MB, p. 146.2)

6. What sobering words did Jesus pronounce to these counterfeit disciples? “And then I will _____ unto them, I _____ knew you: depart from me, ye that _____ iniquity.” (Matthew 7:23)

Note: The word “iniquity” here is the Greek *anomías*. It means “lawlessness” or “one who lives contrary to the law.” The word is identical to the one that is translated ‘transgression of the law’ in 1 John 3:4. It is significant that many of those who profess the name of Christ will actually be opposed to God’s law. The identical word is translated ‘iniquity’ in 2Thessalonians 2:7-8.

7. What other contextual evidence do we have that the foolish man represents those who disguise themselves as Christians? “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s _____, but inwardly they are ravening _____.” (Matthew 7:15)

8. What parallel expression did Jesus use to address the five foolish virgins? “Afterward came also the other [foolish] virgins, _____, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I _____ you _____.” (Matthew 25:11-12)

Bearing Fruit to God’s Glory

1. “Doing” and “bearing fruit” are two ways of saying the same thing. What will be the evidence of a truly committed Christian? “Ye shall know them by their _____. . . . A good tree _____ bring forth _____ fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.” (Matthew 7:16; Matthew 7:18)

2. What is the good fruit which the good tree bears? “But the fruit of the _____ is love, joy, _____, longsuffering, gentleness, _____, faith, meekness, temperance:

against such there is no _____.” (Galatians 5:22-23)

3. What is the evil fruit which the evil tree produces? “Now the works of the _____ are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, _____, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, _____ variance, emulations, _____, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, _____, drunkenness, revelings and the _____.” (Galatians 5:19-21)

4. What will happen to those who bear evil fruit? “Every tree that bringeth _____ forth good fruit is _____ down, and cast into the fire. . . . they which do such things shall not _____ the kingdom of God.” (Matthew 7:19; Galatians 5:21)

5. What is the only way that we can bear good fruit? “I am the vine, ye are the _____: He that _____ in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth _____ fruit, for without _____ ye can do _____. . . . Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much _____; so shall ye be my _____.” (John 15:5; John 15:8)

6. What boastful claims did the Jews of Christ’s day make? “We be _____ seed.” (John 8:33)

7. What did John the Baptist say about this boastful claim? “And now also the axe is laid unto the _____ of the trees: Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth _____ fruit is hewn down, and cast into the _____.” (Matthew 3:10; read Luke 3:10-14 to see what John meant by “fruit”).

8. What did the apostle Paul say about the meaning of the word “fruit”? “But now being made free from _____, and become _____ to God, ye have your _____ unto holiness, and the _____ everlasting life.” (Romans 6:22)

Building the House

1. What name did God call Israel and Judah in the Old Testament? “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the _____ of Israel, and with the _____ of Judah.” (Jeremiah 31:31)

2. What does the house represent in the New Testament? “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the _____ of God, which is the _____ of the living God, the _____ and _____ of the truth.” (1 Timothy 3:15)

3. In a broader sense, what does the “house” represent? “Except the LORD build the _____, they labor in vain that _____ it.” (Psalm 127:1)

Note: The succeeding context clearly indicates that the word “house” means the family.

4. Besides the corporate church, does the ‘house’ also represent individual persons? “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a _____, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will _____ into my _____ from whence I came out. . . .” (Matthew 12:43-44). Clearly, “man” and “house” are parallel in these verses.

5. How difficult is it to build a house upon a rock? “These houses were reared with _____ and difficulty. They were not _____ of access, and their location appeared less inviting than the grassy _____.” (MB, p. 147.2)

Note: Building is hard work. It takes planning, carefully chosen materials and a solid foundation. But all the hard work is worth it when the tempest comes.

6. What is meant by the act of building? “To a great extent everyone is the _____ of his own _____. Every day the structure more nearly approaches completion. The Word of God warns us to take heed how we _____, to see that our building is _____ upon the Eternal Rock.” (CG, p. 164.3)

7. How is character built? “We build on Christ by _____ His word. It is not he who merely _____ righteousness, that is righteous, but he who _____ righteousness. Holiness is not _____; it is the result of surrendering all to God; it is doing the _____ of our heavenly Father. . . . It is through _____ that character is built.” (MB, p. 149.1)

Building Upon the Rock

1. In the Old Testament, what is represented by the rock we must build upon? “The LORD is my _____, and my fortress, and my deliverer; the God of my rock; in him will I trust: He is my _____, and the horn of my salvation, my high _____, and my refuge, my savior; thou savest me from violence.” (2 Samuel 22:2-3)

2. Who is identified as the rock in the New Testament? “And did [Israel] all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual _____ that followed them, and that Rock was _____.” (1 Corinthians 10:4; see also 2 Peter 2:8)

3. How does the gospel of Luke underline the importance of a proper foundation? “He is like a man [the wise builder] which built an house, and digged _____, and laid the _____ on a rock.” (Luke 6:48)

Note: Ellen White describes the five foolish virgins as those Christians who have a superficial religion. They do not dig deep into the Word of God to put their character in harmony with it.

4. What is the only sure foundation we can build upon? “For other _____ can no man lay than that is laid, which is _____ Christ.” (1 Corinthians 3:11)

5. What assurance is given to those who build upon Christ, the Rock? “And I say also unto thee that **thou** art Peter [*petros*, meaning pebble], and upon **this** _____ [*petra*] I will _____ my _____; and the gates of hell [*hades*, the grave] shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18)

6. How do we build upon Christ? “The _____ of God is the only steadfast thing our world knows. It is the sure _____.” (MB, p. 148.1)

Note: Jesus is the Word of God in person (John 1:1-3; John 1:14) but we assimilate that person by studying and obeying His word. When we assimilate His Word we partake of His very life. This is what Jesus meant by eating His flesh and drinking His blood (see, John 6:63).

7. In a specific sense, what did Jesus mean when He spoke about building on the rock? “The great principles of the _____, of the very nature of God, are _____ in the words of Christ on the _____. Whoever builds upon them is building upon Christ, the Rock of _____.” (MB, p. 148.2)

8. How does the apostle Paul amplify what it means to build upon Christ? “And are built upon the foundation of the _____ and _____, Jesus Christ himself being the chief _____.” (Ephesians 2:20).

Note: To build upon Christ means to build upon the teachings of Christ as found in the writings of the apostles and prophets.

9. How can we be sure our experience with Jesus is genuine? “When the _____ we accept kills sin in the _____, purifies the soul from _____, bears fruit unto _____, we may know that it is the truth of God.” (MB, p. 146.3)

10. What is meant by building on the sand? “[The person who builds upon] the foundation of _____ ideas and opinions, of forms and _____ of man’s invention, or by

_____ that he can do independently of the _____ of Christ is erecting his structure of character upon _____ sand.” (MB, p. 150.3)

Note: The contrast between the builders upon the rock and the builders upon the sand can be seen in the concluding verse of Matthew 7:1-29. Jesus taught with the authority of God’s word. In contrast, the scribes taught with no authority because they depended upon the traditions of men (see, Mark 7:1-37) Ellen White remarks: “Self is but shifting sand. If you build upon human theories and inventions, your house will fall. By the **winds** of temptation, the **tempests** of trial, it will be swept away. But these principles that I have given will endure. Receive me, build on My words.” (DA, p. 314.3)

11. According to the prophet Isaiah, what would God do to Israel for preferring a refuge of lies instead of the foundation of stone? “Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall _____ away the refuge of _____, and the waters shall _____ the hiding place. . . . when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be _____ down by it.” (Isaiah 28:16-18)

Storm, Floods and Winds

1. What is represented by the winds? “And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, _____ the four _____ of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.” (Revelation 7:1)

Note: When the winds of strife are released, the world will experience the time of trouble such as has never been seen in the history of planet earth. Then, only those who have built upon the solid foundation of God’s word will be able to stand (see the question in Revelation 6:17)

2. What insight does the apostle Paul add concerning the meaning of the word “winds”? “That we henceforth be no more children _____ to and fro, and carried about with every _____ of doctrine, by the _____ of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to _____.” (Ephesians 4:14; see also Jude 1:12; Matthew 11:7; James 1:6)

3. How does John describe the persecution of God’s people during the Middle Ages? “And the serpent cast out of his mouth _____ as a _____ after the woman, that he might cause her to be _____ away of the flood.” (Revelation 12:15; see also, Isaiah 8:7-8)

4. What particular stage of human history is the storm of Matthew 7:24-29 describing? “But it is not yet too _____ to escape the impending _____. Before the tempest breaks, flee to the _____ foundation.” (MB, p. 152.1; see also Isaiah 4:1-6)

5. What will be our only protection in the coming cataclysmic storm? “None but those who have fortified the _____ with the truths of the _____ will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching _____: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the _____ of God's immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? (GC, p. 593.2)

6. According to Revelation, what is meant by the falling of the house? “Babylon the great is _____, is _____.” (Revelation 18:2)

Note: The whole worldwide system (Babylon) which is based on human greatness and prowess will come crashing down (remember why the Tower of Babel came crashing down). Then only those who have built a character according to the divine similitude will be able to stand.

7. What glorious promise does God give through David to those who will experience the time of trouble? “For in the time of _____ he shall hide me in his _____; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he _____ me; he shall set me up upon a _____.” (Psalm 27:5)

8. In what sense is Jesus far more than a common, ordinary stone? “Christ, the true foundation is a _____ stone; His life is _____ to all that are built upon Him. . . The stones [us] became _____ with the foundation; for a common _____ dwells in all. That building no tempest can _____.” (MB, p. 150.2; see Ephesians 2:20-22)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #21 - The Householder, the Tenants and the Son

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 284-306; Matthew 21:33-46; Mark 11:1-12; Luke 20:9-19; Isaiah 5:1-30

Introduction

In this lesson we will study the parable which is found in Matthew 21:33-46. This tragic story begins with a description of the bountiful blessings which God poured out upon the nation of Israel. It ends, however, with the rejection of that people and the adoption of the Gentiles as God’s chosen nation. Was this parable meant for the Jews only or is there the possibility that we could repeat their sad history today? Because of the lesson’s length, it will take us two sessions to study it. Let us begin our considerations with the textual setting, the historical background and the meaning of the symbols.

The Textual Setting of the Parable

1. What great event took place the day before Jesus told this parable? (Matthew 21:1-14) The _____ entry into Jerusalem. This event took place on Palm Sunday.
2. Where was Jesus when he told this parable and to whom did He tell it? “And when he [Jesus] was come into the _____, the chief _____ and the _____ of the people came unto him. . . .” (Matthew 21:23)

Note: The parable was told the day after the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem as can be seen in Matthew 21:18. This would be on the Monday before the crucifixion.

3. Who’s temple did Jesus enter before narrating this parable? “And Jesus went into the temple of _____. . . . And said unto them, It is written, _____ house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.” (Matthew 21:12-13)

The Symbols of the Parable

4. Read the story carefully and then explain what you think is represented by the following symbols in the parable? (The answers are found throughout the chapter in Christ's Object Lessons. **Warning:** Do not look at the note below this question before you fill in the blanks. **No cheating please!!**)

The householder _____

The husbandmen _____

Act of leasing _____

The vineyard _____

The tower _____

The hedge _____

The servants _____

The Son _____

The fruit _____

Other husbandmen _____

Note: The renowned theologian, Joachim Jeremias, has correctly grasped the meaning of the symbols: "The vineyard is clearly Israel, the tenants are Israel's rulers and leaders, the owner of the vineyard is God, the messengers are the prophets, the son is Christ, the punishment of the husbandmen symbolizes the ruin of Israel, the 'other people' (Matthew 21:43) are the Gentile Church." (Joachim Jeremias, The Parables of Jesus, p. 70)

The Parable's Six Historical Stages

1. How is the first historical stage of the parable described? "And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his _____ to the husbandmen, that they might receive the _____ of it." (Matthew 21:34)

2. How is the second historical stage described? "_____, he sent _____ servants more than the _____; and they did unto them likewise." (Matthew 21:36)

3. What important event took place at the third historical stage? "But _____ of all he sent unto them his _____, saying, they will _____ my son." (Matthew 21:37)

4. Under the fourth stage, what happened with the original husbandmen? “He [God] will miserably _____ those wicked men. . . .” (Matthew 21:41)

5. In the fifth stage, what did the householder do with his vineyard? He “will let out [lease] his vineyard unto _____ husbandmen, which shall render unto him the _____ in their seasons.” (Matthew 21:41)

6. What does the parable say would happen in the sixth and final stage with those who rejected the Stone? “And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will _____ him to _____.” (Matthew 21:44)

7. To which great prophecy does the previous question allude? The stone “shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms , and it shall stand for ever.” (Daniel 2:44)

Note: This parable vividly describes the six stages of Israel’s history. **1)** After their election at Mt. Sinai, God sent Israel a plethora of prophetic messengers, but Israel mistreated them so God allowed Israel to be taken captive to Babylon (2 Kings 24:15-16). **2)** Following the Babylonian captivity, God sent them more messengers and Israel did likewise with them (Matthew 23:37). **3)** As a last resort, God sent His own Son, Jesus, and they cut Him off. **4)** As a result, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in the year 70 A. D., **5)** the kingdom was removed from literal Israel and given to the Gentiles (Matthew 21:43; Act_13:46-47). But this is not the end of the story for those who rejected Jesus. **6)** Under the last stage the stone which the builders rejected will pulverize those who rejected Him. Keep in mind, for the time being, that this will take place on occasion of the great post-millennial judgment of Revelation 20:11-15 (more on this later)!

The First Application: Literal Israel

1. To which Old Testament prophecy did Jesus allude when he told the parable of the vineyard? _____ (COL, p. 285.1)

2. Who was the leader of Israel in the wilderness? “_____ was the leader of the children of Israel in their _____ wanderings. Enshrouded in the _____ of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, He _____ and guided them.” (COL, p. 287.1)

3. What blessings did God pour out upon Israel when He took them out of Egypt? “He preserved them from the _____ of the wilderness, He brought them into the land of _____, and in the sight of all the nations that acknowledged not _____ He established Israel as His own chosen _____, the Lord’s vineyard.” (COL, p. 287.1)

Note: The Greek word *exedoto* [“to let out”] in Matthew 21:33 seems to indicate that Jesus began to relate the history of Israel at the point of the exodus from Egypt.

4. What do the hedge and tower represent? “They were _____ about by the precepts of His _____, the everlasting principles of _____, justice and purity. . . . And as the _____ in the vineyard, God placed in the midst of the land His holy _____.” (COL, p. 287.2)

5. What was God’s glorious plan for the children of Israel? “God desired to make His people Israel a _____ and a _____. . . . COL, p. 288.2) The glory of God, His majesty and power, were to be revealed in all their _____. . . . (COL, p. 288.3) God furnished them with every _____ for becoming the greatest _____ on earth.” (COL, p. 288.3)

6. Did God’s plan embrace Israel alone or did it include all the nations of the world? “Through the Jewish nation it was God’s purpose to impart rich _____ to all _____. Through Israel the way was to be prepared for the diffusion of His _____ to the whole _____.” (COL, p. 286.1)

7. What two passages from the book of Deuteronomy does Ellen White quote to describe God’s plan for Israel? _____ (COL, p. 288.4; study these texts carefully)

8. How does Ellen White describe God’s awesome plan for the salvation of the world? “But it was God’s purpose that the by revelation of His _____ through Israel men should be _____ unto Him. To all the world the _____ invitation was to be given. Through the teaching of the _____ service _____ was to be uplifted before the nations.” (COL, p. 290.1)

9. What were the nations supposed to do as they understood the gospel plan? “All. . . . were to _____ themselves with His chosen people. As the _____ of Israel increased they were to _____ their borders, until their _____ should embrace the world.” (COL, p. 290.1)

10. Why did Israel fail to fulfill God’s plan? “The blessings they had _____ brought no blessing to the _____. All their _____ were appropriated for their own _____.” (COL, p. 291.2)

11. What did the husbandmen do with the vineyard and its fruit? “The husbandmen who had been placed in charge of the Lord’s vineyard were _____ to their trust. The _____ and _____ were not faithful instructors of the people. . . . They desired to appropriate

the _____ of the vineyard. It was their study to _____ attention and homage to _____." (COL, p. 292.1) The Greek of Matthew 21:34 says: "His fruit".

12. What did the rabbi's do to lead the people astray? "The people lived in _____ unrest, for they could not fulfill the _____ laid down by the rabbis. As they saw the _____ of keeping man-made commandments, they became careless in regard to the _____ of God." (COL, p. 292.2)

13. What did God do to try and bring Israel back to His original plan? "Prophets and messengers were _____ to urge God's claim upon the husbandmen; but instead of being welcomed, they were treated as _____. The husbandmen _____ and killed them." (COL, p. 293.1)

14. What biblical corroboration sustains the view of Ellen White in the previous question? "And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his _____, rising up bedtimes, and sending; because he had _____ on his people, and on his dwelling place; but they _____ the messengers of God, and despised his _____, and misused his _____, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy." (2 Chronicles 36:15-16; see also, Matthew 23:29-37)

Note: According to 2 Chronicles 36:17-20 the wrath of God was poured out against Israel and as a consequence they were taken captive to Babylon for 70 years.

15. When Israel was restored to their land after the Babylonian captivity, who helped them in the work of restoration? "And with them were the _____ of God _____ them." (Ezra 5:2)

Note: In his parable, Jesus recalled that God sent a second group of messengers to gather fruit from the vineyard (Matthew 21:36). Jesus knew Hebrew history. After the Babylonian captivity, God did raise up a plethora of prophets and messengers. Some of these were: Haggai, Zechariah, Joshua the high priest, Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah and Malachi. Though the people started out well under these consecrated leaders [faithful husbandmen], the book of Malachi reveals that their successors [unfaithful husbandmen] led the people into apostasy once more.

16. What did God do as a last resort to try and reach the Jewish nation? "But _____ of all he sent unto them his _____, saying, they will _____ my son." (Matthew 21:37)

Note: The gospel of Mark says that the householder sent "a **beloved** son" which is the very title applied to Jesus in Mark 1:9-11. The expression "last of all" indicates finality. The son will make the last call for the Jewish nation to produce fruit. If they don't, they will be cut down and cast

into the fire (see, Matthew 3:8; Matthew 3:10; Luke 13:1-6; Mark 11:12-14; Mark 11:20)

17. What did the husbandmen do with the beloved son? “But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, this is the _____; come let us _____ him and seize his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him _____ of the vineyard and _____ him.” (Matthew 21:38-39)

Note: Joachim Jeremias describes the customs of the day: “The arrival of the son allows them to assume that the owner is dead, and that the son has come to take up his inheritance. If they kill him, the vineyard becomes ownerless property which they can claim as being first on the spot.” (Joachim Jeremias, The Parables of Jesus, pp. 75-76).

In the light of Luke 20:9, Jeremias’ remarks appear accurate. There we are told that the householder went into a far country “for a long time.” This seems to indicate that the vinedressers believed the owner was an absentee landlord. In their minds, it was only the son who stood between them and the inheritance. Ironically, if the Jews had accepted Jesus, they would have become joint heirs with Him of the Father’s promises (Romans 8:17). But by rejecting Him, they forfeited any right to the inheritance. The promises were made to Abraham and his Seed (Galatians 3:16) and only those who choose to unite with the Seed will inherit the promises (Galatians 3:29); see the conversation of Jesus with the Jewish leaders in (John 8:1-59). Thus the Jewish leaders caused that which they wished to prevent and prevented that which they wished to cause (see, also John 11:47-52). Jesus was killed after being cast out of Jerusalem (John 19:17; Hebrews 13:12-13). In this sense He was cast out of the vineyard and killed.

18. What did God do when the Jews chose Barabbas instead of Jesus and declared, “we have no king but Caesar”? “Their decision was _____ in the book which John saw in the hand of Him that sat upon the _____, the book which no man could open. In all its _____ this decision will appear before them in the day when this book is _____ by the Lion of the tribe of Judah.” (COL, p. 294.1; see also GC, p. 666.2)

Note: Ellen White has stated elsewhere about this book: “There in His open hand lay the book, the roll of the history of God's providences, the prophetic history of nations and the church. Herein was contained the divine utterances, His authority, His commandments, His laws, the whole symbolic counsel of the Eternal, and the history of all ruling powers in the nations. In symbolic language was contained in that roll the influence of every nation, tongue, and people from the beginning of earth's history to its close.” (9MR, p. 7.2)

19. According to Matthew 21:41, who pronounced the doom of the Jewish nation? “_____ say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other _____, which shall render him the fruits in their _____.” (Matthew

21:41)

20. What did the Jews say when they spoke their own doom? "God _____." (Luke 20:16)

21. What happened to the Jewish nation for rejecting the Messiah? "Jerusalem was _____, the temple was laid in ruins, and its site plowed like a field. . . . (COL, p. 295.3) The privileges they had _____, the work they had slighted was entrusted to _____." (COL, p. 296.1)

22. What words did Jesus pronounce when he left the Jewish temple for the last time? "Behold, _____ house is left unto you _____. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye say, _____ is he that cometh in the _____ of the Lord." (Matthew 23:38-39)

23. According to Ellen White, on what occasion will the Jewish leaders pronounce the words of Matthew 23:39? "Every _____ in that vast multitude is turned to behold the glory of the Son of God. With one _____ the wicked hosts exclaim: 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.'" (GC, p. 662.2)

What About Today?

1. Does this parable apply alone to the Jewish nation? "The parable of the vineyard applies not alone to the Jewish nation. It has a _____ for _____. The church in this generation has been endowed by God with great _____ and blessings, and He expects corresponding _____." (COL, p. 296.2)

2. On how broad a stage does God expect his people to reveal right principles to the world? "These principles are to be manifest in the _____ Christian, in the _____, in the _____ and in every _____ established for God's service." (COL, p. 296.5)

3. What dangers does the church of today face? "It is when _____ building is neglected, when the _____ of the soul is lacking, when the simplicity of _____ is lost sight of, that pride and love of _____ demand magnificent church edifices, splendid adornings and _____ ceremonies." (COL, p. 297.1)

4. What is Jesus hungering for in His church today? "Christ _____ to receive from his vineyard the fruit of _____ and _____. He looks for the principles of _____ and goodness. Not all the beauty of art can bear comparison with the beauty of _____ and character to be revealed in those who are Christ's _____."

(COL, 298.2)

5. Why does God impart His blessings to us? “God imparts His _____ to us that we also may _____, and thus make known His _____ to the world.” (COL, p. 300.3)

6. Does God ever require of us that which is impossible to perform? “God makes no requirement without making _____ for its fulfillment. Through the _____ of Christ we may accomplish everything that God _____.” (COL, p. 301.2)

7. To which church is the Laodicean message especially applicable? “Shall Seventh-day Adventists walk in the same path as did the _____ nation? Shall the message to the Laodicean church be applicable to _____ people? Shall those who have seen great _____, who have had large _____ and many _____, cease to do service as witnesses for Christ?” (19MR, p. 172.3)

8. Is the Seventh-day Adventist church today in danger of following the same path as ancient Israel? “Because thou sayest, I am _____, and increased with _____, and have need of nothing.” (Revelation 3:17)

9. What does Jesus say He will do to the church today if it fails to repent? “So then because thou art _____, and neither cold nor hot, I will _____ thee out of my mouth.” (Revelation 3:16)

10. Where is Jesus standing as he hungers for the fruit of holiness? “Behold, I stand at the door, and _____; if any man hear my _____, and open the door, I will come in to him and will _____ with him, and he with me.” (Revelation 3:20)

11. **Thought Question:** Has God given the Seventh-day Adventist church great prophetic light in the areas of education, medical work, publishing, family life, lifestyle, health, etc.? Has the church today generally obeyed the light? _____

The Broadest Meaning of the Parable

1. Does this parable apply only to Israel and the church? “God claims the whole _____ as His _____.” (COL, p. 301.3)

2. What is the great sin of the world today? “Ingratitude to God, the _____ of opportunities and _____, the selfish appropriation of God’s gifts—these were comprised in the sin that brought _____ upon Israel. They are bringing ruin upon the world today.” (COL, p. 302.2)

3. In what condition are God's people found as the world rushes to its ruin? "Men are in _____. Multitudes are perishing. But how few of the _____ followers of Christ are burdened for these souls. . . . There is a _____, a _____ upon the people of God, which prevents them from understanding the _____ of the hour." (COL, p. 303.1)

4. What did Israel fail to do when they entered the land of Canaan? (COL, p. 303.2) _____

5. How is our very own [local] church repeating the same error as ancient Israel? "With the whole _____ before them in need of the gospel, professed Christians _____ where they themselves can _____ the gospel _____. They do not feel the necessity of occupying _____ territory, carrying the message of salvation into regions _____. . . . Are they less _____ than was the Jewish church?" (COL, p. 303.2)

6. What awesome statement does Ellen White make about God's people today? "The professed followers of Christ are on _____ before the heavenly _____; but the coldness of their _____ and the feebleness of their _____ in God's service mark them as _____." (COL, p. 303.3)

7. What will happen with many professed followers of Jesus when their names come in review before the heavenly universe? "Many there are against whose names will be found written in the books of heaven, Not _____, but _____. By many who bear Christ's name, His glory is _____, His beauty _____, His honor withheld." (COL, p. 303.3)

8. Who were particularly to blame for the apostasy of Israel? "For the rejection of Christ, with the results that followed, they [the leaders] were responsible. A nation's _____ and a nation's _____ were due to the _____ leaders." (COL, p. 305.1)

9. Is the same error being committed today by the Christian church? "From many of the pulpits of the churches the people are _____ that the law of God is not binding upon them. Human _____, ordinances, and _____ are exalted. Pride and self-satisfaction because of the _____ of God are fostered, while the _____ of God are ignored." (COL, p. 305.2)

10. What can we learn from Israel's failure? "The result of Israel's _____ is before us. Will the church of _____ take warning?" (COL, p. 306.3)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #22 – The Priceless Pearl

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 115-121; Matthew 13:45-46; Revelation 21:21; Philippians 3:7-8; Mark 10:28-30

Introduction

The parable of the priceless pearl is one of many found in Matthew 13:1-58. Like so many other parables of Jesus, this one has more than one meaning. We will find in our study that the pearl, in one sense, represents Jesus Christ, but in another sense it represents us. Let’s see what we can learn from this magnificent parable.

The First Meaning of the Parable

The Pearl and Its Value

1. Who is represented by the pearl of great price? “_____ Himself is the pearl of great price.” (COL, p. 115.1)

2. What aspects of Christ’s character can be compared to the beauty of a pearl? “The glory of the attributes of God is expressed in his _____. . . . The righteousness of Christ, as a pure, white pearl, has no defect, no stain. No work of man can improve the great and precious gift of God. It is without _____.” (COL, p. 115.1)

3. What does the apostle Paul say about the value of Jesus? “In whom [Jesus] are _____ all the _____ of wisdom and knowledge.” (COL, p. 2:3)

4. How does Peter corroborate what the apostle Paul says about the value of Jesus? “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not _____ with corruptible things, as silver and _____, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, But with the

_____ blood of Christ, as a lamb without _____ and without _____." (2 Peter 1:18-19)

5. How does Ellen White describe the sufficiency of Christ? "All that can _____ the needs and _____ of the human soul, for this _____ and for the world to come, is _____ in Christ." (COL, p. 115.1)

6. What made it possible for Jesus to become our savior? "Though he were a _____, yet he learned _____ by the things which he _____; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal _____ unto all them that obey him." Hebrews 5:8-9)

Note: A beautiful and priceless pearl is formed when a grain of sand irritates the oyster and causes it to secrete calcium carbonate. Thus the pearl is formed through much pain and suffering. Likewise, Jesus, by what he suffered, developed a priceless character which He will impute to those who are willing to surrender all to Him.

Identifying the Merchant

1. According to Ellen White, who is represented by the merchant? "The merchantman in the parable represents a _____ who were sincerely desiring _____." (COL, p. 116.1)

2. What two persons from among the Gentiles were searching for that which they could receive as the soul's treasure? _____ (COL, p. 116.1)

Note: It would be well at this point to review carefully the story of the conversion of Cornelius in Acts 10:1-48; Acts 11:1-30 and the story of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26-39.

3. Were there some among the Jews of Christ's day who were dissatisfied with a formal religion and were seeking for that which they had not? "Christ's chosen _____ belonged to the latter class. . . ." (COL, p. 116.1)

The Merchant's Discernment

1. Who gives us the ability to see the incalculable value of the pearl, Jesus Christ? "It is the Holy Spirit that _____ to men the _____ of the goodly pearl." (COL, p. 118.3)

2. What does Christ say is one of the problems of the Laodicean church and how can the problem be remedied? "Thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and _____, and naked. . . . and

anoint thine eyes with _____ that thou mayest _____.” (Revelation 3:17-18)

Note: The seeker of goodly pearls must have keen discernment in order to detect which pearls are particularly valuable. They must have a trained eye or else they could pass up pearls that are priceless. When Christ came to this world he had “no beauty that we should desire him” (Isaiah 53:2) and therefore He came to His own and His own received Him not (John 1:11). Those among whom Jesus walked had no spiritual discernment. They failed to discern the priceless beauty of His character. The same problem characterizes the Laodicean church. It is so busy establishing its own righteousness that it cannot discern the beauty of Christ’s righteousness. It needs the eye-salve of the Holy Spirit.

3. Were the Jews of Christ’s day able to discern the incalculable value of Christ? “To whom [Jesus] coming, as unto a living _____, disallowed indeed of _____, but chosen of God, and _____.” (2 Peter 2:4)

Note: Peter is referring here to an actual experience during the building of Solomon’s temple. Ellen White explained this period of Israel’s history:

“When the temple of Solomon was erected, the immense stones for the walls and the foundation were entirely prepared at the quarry; after they were brought to the place of building, not an instrument was to be used upon them; the workmen had only to place them in position. For use in the foundation, one stone of unusual size and peculiar shape had been brought; but the workmen could find no place for it, and would not accept it. It was an annoyance to them as it lay unused in their way. Long it remained a rejected stone. But when the builders came to the laying of the corner, they searched for a long time to find a stone of sufficient size and strength, and of the proper shape, to take that particular place, and bear the great weight which would rest upon it. Should they make an unwise choice for this important place, the safety of the entire building would be endangered. They must find a stone capable of resisting the influence of the sun, of frost, and of tempest. Several stones had at different times been chosen, but under the pressure of immense weights they had crumbled to pieces. Others could not bear the test of the sudden atmospheric changes. But at last attention was called to the stone so long rejected. It had been exposed to the air, to sun and storm, without revealing the slightest crack. The builders examined this stone. It had borne every test but one. If it could bear the test of severe pressure, they decided to accept it for the cornerstone. The trial was made. The stone was accepted, brought to its assigned position, and found to be an exact fit. In prophetic vision, Isaiah was shown that this stone was a symbol of Christ.” (DA, p. 597.5)

The Pearl's Price

1. According to the parable, how much does the pearl cost? The merchantman “went and sold _____ that he had, and _____ it.” (Matthew 13:46)

2. Why do some people fail to find the priceless pearl? Because “they do not make an _____ surrender of their wrong habits. They do not _____ to _____ that Christ may live in them. . . . Almost _____, yet not _____ Christians, they seem near to the kingdom of heaven, but they cannot _____ there. Almost but not _____ saved, means to be not almost but _____ lost.” (COL, p. 118.1)

3. Does everyone have an equal opportunity to buy the priceless pearl? “The gospel of Christ is a blessing that _____ may possess. The _____ are as well able as the _____ to purchase salvation; for no amount of worldly _____ can secure it. It is obtained by willing _____, by giving ourselves to Christ as His own purchased _____.” (COL, p. 117.1)

Note: The cost of the pearl is the same for everyone because once everything is given, all have the same amount left, nothing. But, as we shall see, when we give up all that we have Jesus will give us all that He has—quite a tradeoff!!

4. What did Jesus say to the rich young ruler concerning the cost of salvation? “One thing thou _____: go thy way, sell _____ thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have _____ in heaven; and come, take up thy _____, and follow me.” (Mark 10:21)

5. How much must we be willing to forsake in order to be Christ’s disciple? “So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not _____ that he hath, he _____ be my disciple.” (Luke 14:33)

6. How much was the apostle Paul willing to forsake in order to win Christ? “Yea, doubtless, and I count _____ things but loss for the _____ of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the _____ of _____ things, and do count them dung, that I may win _____.” (Philippians 3:8)

7. Since Christ is represented in the Bible as a gift (John 3:16), why are we told in the parable that we must “buy” Him? “He is a _____, but only to those who give themselves, soul, body, and _____ to Him without _____. . . . All that we are, all the _____ and capabilities we possess, are the _____, to be consecrated to His service.” (COL, p. 116.2)

8. What did Jesus mean when he said that we must forsake all our houses, lands, friends, and relatives (Mark 10:29)? “He that loveth father or mother _____ than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter _____ than me is not worthy of me.” (Matthew 10:37)

Note: Jesus was not instructing us to get rid of our possessions, friends and relatives, that is, unless these stand between us and Jesus. Our Lord was teaching that all things must be kept in their proper perspective: Jesus must be first and all other things must be last. The teaching of Jesus has to do with the way in which we order our priorities. Nothing must be allowed to stand in the way of our relationship with Jesus. The Master expressed it this way: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33) Nothing we have must be allowed to occupy the primary place in our lives. Only Jesus deserves that place.

What’s In It For Us?

1. What is our reward if we give up all in order to purchase the pearl? “When we thus give ourselves _____ to Him, Christ, with all the _____ of heaven, gives _____ to us. We obtain the _____ of great price” (COL, p. 116.2)

2. According to Jesus, what do we gain when we are willing to give up all we have for His sake? “Verily I say unto you, there is no man that _____ house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or _____, or wife, or children, or _____, for my sake, and the gospel’s, but he shall receive an _____ now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with _____; and in the world to come _____ life.” (Mark 10:29-30)

3. **Thought Question:** What do you suppose Jesus meant when he said that when we forsake all, we will have **now in this time** “houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands”? Was he saying that we will be materially rich now in this present world?

4. According to the apostle Paul, what do we receive as a result of Christ’s sacrifice? “He that spared not his own _____, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not _____ him also freely give us _____ things?” (Romans 8:32)

Note: When we give Christ our all, He gives us His all. Purchasing the pearl is not to be seen as an expense but rather as an investment, and quite an investment at that!! Think of it. We give up all that we have that we might gain all that He has. Earlier in Rom 8:1-39 the apostle Paul has said

that if we accept Jesus we become heirs with Him of all that which belongs to the Father! Instead of earthly possessions, family and friends, we gain heavenly treasures and become members of the heavenly family!!

The Second Meaning of the Parable

The Merchantman

1. What do the merchantman and the pearl represent in the second sense of the parable? “Christ, the heavenly _____ seeking goodly pearls, saw in _____ humanity the pearl of great price.” (COL, p. 118.2)

2. Did Jesus need special spiritual discernment in order to see value in fallen humanity? “In man, defiled and _____ by sin, He [Jesus] saw the _____ of redemption.” (COL, p. 118.2)

The Pearl’s Value

1. How does the Father look upon sinful humanity? “God looked upon humanity; not as vile and _____; He looked upon it in _____, saw it as it might become through _____ love.” (COL, p. 118.2)

2. How much was heaven willing to invest in order to purchase lost humanity? “He [Jesus] collected all the riches of the _____, and laid them down in order to _____ the pearl. And Jesus, having found it, _____ it in His own diadem.” (COL, p. 118.2)

Note: Ellen White had much to say about the value of a soul. Notice the following statement: “So great is the value of the human soul that Christ paid an infinite price for the redemption of the race. God gave His Son up to shame and reproach and to an ignominious death that man might have eternal life.” (Ellen G. White, Manuscript 24, 1903) In another remarkable statement, Ellen White explains how much the Father was willing to give for our redemption: “The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Savior's life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings,—all are enlisted in behalf of man's redemption.” (SC, p. 21.2)

3. What two Old Testament texts does Ellen White quote to illustrate the value of Christ’s redeemed children? _____ (COL, p. 118.2)

The Pearl and Suffering

1. How does redeemed humanity become “pearly white”? “These are they which came out of great _____, and have washed their _____, and made them white in the _____ of the lamb.” (Revelation 7:14)

Note: There is no natural beauty in ourselves. But as we are covered with the spotless robes of Christ’s righteousness, God looks upon us as if we had never sinned and we are accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:6). We need not be concerned about what the Father thinks of us but rather what the Father thinks of Jesus, our substitute.

2. What is the only way in which we can enter the kingdom of God? Paul says that “we must through much _____ enter into the kingdom of God.” (Acts 14:22)

3. What are the gates of the holy city composed of? “And the twelve gates were twelve _____; every gate was of one _____.” (Revelation 21:21)

Note: It is probably no coincidence that God’s people will enter the holy city through gates of pearl. As we have previously seen, pearls are formed as the result of an irritant. God’s people will enter through the gates into the city after great tribulation. It is through much suffering that we must enter the kingdom of God.

Sharing the Pearl

1. At what time do people particularly seek the pearl of great price? “The time of the Holy Spirit’s _____ is the time when in a _____ sense the heavenly gift is sought and found.” (COL, p. 118.3)

2. On what past occasion was the heavenly gift sought and found in a special sense? “But after Christ’s _____ His enthronement in His mediatorial kingdom was signaled by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.” (COL, p. 118.3)

3. What became the passion of those who had purchased the priceless pearl? “One interest prevailed. One object _____ up all others. All hearts beat in _____. The only ambition of believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ’s _____, and to labor for the enlargement of His _____.” (COL, p. 120.1)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables” Lesson #23 – Without a Wedding Garment

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp 307-324; GC, pp. 421-431; Matthew 22:1-14; Daniel 7:13-14; Revelation 19:7-8; Luke 12:35-37

Introduction

In this lesson we will study the parable of the king’s feast. As in the story of the unfaithful husbandmen, this parable blends tragedy with triumph. As the story develops, the original invited guests end up outside the wedding hall while those who were invited from the highways and byways end up enjoying the bliss of fellowship with the bridegroom. Let’s begin by examining the textual and historical setting of the parable.

Textual Setting and Historical Stages

1. Where and to whom did Jesus tell this parable? “And when he was come into the _____ And when the chief _____ and _____ had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of _____” (Matthew 21:23; Matthew 21:45)

Note: Matthew 21:1-46 makes it abundantly clear that Jesus told this parable primarily to the chief priests and the Pharisees in the temple (Matthew 21:23; Matthew 21:45). It also leaves no doubt that the parable was told the same day as the parable of the vineyard—the day after the triumphal entry. (Matthew 21:33-46)

2. Even though the parable does not specifically identify the king, who do you think he represents? _____.

3. Who is represented by the king’s son? _____.

4. What is symbolized by the first servants who were sent out to “to call them that were bidden

to the wedding”? “In those days came _____ the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, ‘ _____ ye for the _____ of heaven is at hand. . . . These _____ Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying. . . . Preach, saying, the _____ of heaven is at hand. . . . After these things the Lord appointed other _____ also, and sent them two and two _____ his face into every city and place, whither he _____ would _____.” (Matthew 3:1-2; Matthew 10:5-7; Luke 10:1).

5. Who is was the “friend of the bridegroom”? _____ (John 3:29),

6. According to Matthew 9:15 who is the bridegroom? _____.

7. What happened after the Hebrew nation rebuffed the message of the first servants? “Again, he sent forth _____ servants to _____ them that were bidden to the wedding; and they would _____ come.” (Matthew 22:3). A second call was sent to the same people who had rejected the first call.

8. What is meant by the fact that this second group of servants was sent after the oxen and fatlings had been killed? “This was the message borne to the _____ nation after the _____ of Christ.” (COL, p. 308.2)

9. How did the original recipients of the first call respond to the second call? “But they made _____ of it, and went their _____, one to his farm, another to his merchandise; and the _____ took his servants, and entreated them spitefully and _____ them.” (Matthew 22:5-6)

Note: The Jewish nation not only ignored the gospel message which was preached by the apostles after the death of Jesus. They actually mistreated some of the messengers. Peter and John were beaten and thrown into prison Acts 4:1-37; Acts 5:1-42), Saul of Tarsus instigated a persecution against the Christians and after his conversion became persecuted himself [Acts 8:1-4; Acts 13:26-52; 2Corinthians 11:24-33] Other messengers were killed (Stephen [Acts 7:1-60], James [Acts 12:1-3]). Jesus had predicted that this would happen after His death Matthew 23:34-35)

10. To whom does the third call to the wedding feast go? “The third call to the feast represents the _____ of the gospel to the _____.” (COL, p. 309.1)

Note: This giving of the gospel to the Gentiles was predicted by Jesus in Matthew 21:43 and was actually realized by Peter in Acts 10:1-48; Acts 11:1-30 and by Paul in Acts 13:45-47. After the rejection of the Jewish theocracy, the message was to go to the “highways and the byways”, that is, to all the areas of the Roman Empire.

11. On which historical occasion did God [the king] send his armies to destroy those murderers and burn up their city? (Matthew 21:7-8) "The judgment _____ came upon the Jews in the destruction of _____ and the scattering of the nation." (COL, p. 308.3)

Note: The third call to the wedding feast has been proclaimed for the last two thousand years. During this time, the gospel has gone into all the world, calling men and women to repent and receive Jesus.

The Genuine and the Counterfeit

1. In which other parable did Jesus present the idea of both good and bad being gathered in by the gospel call? _____ (Matthew 13:47-50). When will the good be separated from the bad? _____?

2. What is represented by the "good and the bad" guests in this parable and what is meant by the process of examination? "By the king's examination of the guests at the feast is represented a work of _____. The guests at the gospel feast are those who _____ to serve God, those whose _____ are written in the book of life. But not all who _____ to be Christians are true _____." (COL, p. 310.1)

3. When does this examination of the guests take place? "Before the final _____ is given, it must be decided who are _____ to share the inheritance of the righteous. This decision must be made _____ to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven." (COL, p. 310.1)

Note: This pre-advent investigative judgment is clearly depicted in Revelation 14:7. The reward phase of this judgment is a separate event that is described in Revelation 22:12.

4. Where does this judgment take place and where are God's professed people while it transpires? "It is while men are still _____ upon the earth that the work of investigative judgment takes place in the _____ of heaven. The lives of all His professed followers pass in _____ before God. All are examined according to the _____ of the _____ of heaven, and according to his _____ the destiny of each is _____ fixed." (COL, p. 310.2)

5. Is there any Biblical evidence to corroborate what Ellen White states in the previous question? Jesus said to His disciples: "Let your loins be _____ about, and your _____ burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that _____ for their lord, when he will _____ from the wedding. . . . Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he _____ shall find _____." (Luke 12:35-37)

6. **Thought Question:** According to Ephesians 2:8-9, salvation is by grace through faith in Christ. If this is true, why will the verdict of the judgment be pronounced on the basis of our works?

Hint: (Carefully study Matthew 16:27; 2 Corinthians 11:15; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 2:11-14; James 2:14-26; Revelation 22:12; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14) Note: Ellen White explains: "Righteousness is right doing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do. The works show whether the faith is genuine." (COL, p. 312.2)

The Garment Gift

1. What is the original Biblical source for the idea of garments covering the shame of man's nakedness?

_____ (Study carefully COL, p. 310.4)

2. Though the parable itself does not explicitly state it, who provided the wedding garments and of what material did they consist? "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of _____ and _____ them." (Genesis 3:21)

3. What is represented by the garments in the previous question? "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their _____, and made them _____ in the blood of the Lamb. . . . And to her it was _____ that she should be arrayed in fine _____, clean and _____; for the fine linen is the _____ of _____." (Revelation 7:14; Revelation 19:8)

Imputed or Imparted Righteousness?

1. What is the difference between Christ's imputed and Christ's imparted righteousness? "The righteousness by which we are _____ is _____; the righteousness by which we are _____ is _____. The first is our _____ to heaven, the second is our _____ for heaven." (MYP, p. 35.2)

2. Does the garment in Christ's parable represent Christ's imputed or Christ's imparted righteousness? "It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished _____, that through faith is _____ to all who receive Him as their personal Savior." (COL, p. 310.3)

3. How much of this righteousness can we take credit for? "This robe, woven in the loom of _____ has in it not one _____ of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought

out a perfect _____, and this character He offers to _____ to us. . . . Everything that we ourselves can do is _____ by sin.” (COL, p. 311.4)

4. More fully, what does the impartation of this garment mean? “By His perfect obedience He has made it _____ for every human being to _____ God’s commandments. When we _____ ourselves to Christ, the _____ is united with His heart, the _____ merged with His will, the _____ becomes one with His mind, the _____ are brought into captivity to Him; we live His _____. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.” (COL, p. 311.4)

5. What practical means has God provided to make it possible for us to reflect Christ’s character? “The truth is to be planted in the _____. It is to control the mind and regulate the _____. The whole character must be stamped with the divine _____. Every jot and tittle of the _____ of God is to be brought into the daily practice.” (COL, p. 314.1)

6. What Biblical corroboration do we have for what Ellen White states in the previous question? “Thy _____ have I hid in mine _____, that I might not _____ against thee.” (Psalm 119:11)

The Speechless Guest

1. When the king came in to examine the guests, he found a man without the wedding garment which he himself had provided. What did the king say to him and how did the guest respond? “Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a _____ garment? And he was _____.” (Matthew 22:12)

Note: It is obvious that the examination of the guests will not take place after the second coming of Jesus when God’s people are in heaven. That is to say, no one will be able to sneak into heaven only to find out later that he does not belong there. Those who profess the name of Jesus will be judged by their records in heaven while they are personally on earth.

2. Who is represented by the man without the wedding garment? “The man who came to the feast without a wedding garment represents the _____ of many in our world _____.” (COL, p. 315.2)

Note: This man does not represent unbelievers. He claimed to have a perfect right to be present in the heavenly wedding chamber. Yet a close examination of his character revealed that he had not made the necessary preparation.

3. Some Christians boastfully affirm that the law of God was abolished. How does Ellen White respond? “By His life on earth He [Jesus] _____ the law of God. By His death he _____ it. He gave His life as a sacrifice, not to _____ God’s law, not to create a lower _____, but that justice might be maintained, that the law might be shown to be _____, that it might stand fast forever.” (COL, p. 314.3)

4. What did Jesus prove by His sinless life on earth? “By His _____ obedience He proved that _____ and _____ combined can obey every one of God’s precepts. . . . (COL, p. 314.4) When a soul receives Christ, he receives _____ to live the life of Christ.” (COL, p. 314.5)

5. **Thought Question:** Could Jesus expect us to overcome as He overcame if He had a different human nature than ours?

6. Of what sort are those who are found without the wedding garment? “They profess to be Christians, and lay claim to the _____ and privileges of the gospel; yet they feel no need of a _____ of character. They have never felt true _____ for sin. They do not realize their need of Christ or _____ faith in Him. They have not overcome their _____ or _____ tendencies to wrong-doing.” (COL, p. 315.2)

7. **Thought Question:** What do you think Ellen White meant by the following statement: “Many who call themselves Christians are mere human _____.” (COL, p. 315.3; COL, p. 316.2 will help you answer this question)

8. What indictment did Ellen White offer of the Christendom of her day? “The professed followers of Christ are no longer a _____ and _____ people [what would she say today?]. The line of demarcation is _____. The people are subordinating themselves to the _____, to its practices, its _____, its selfishness.” (COL, p. 315.3)

9. What is the fundamental problem with these unconverted people? “All these expect to be saved by Christ’s _____, while they refuse to live His self-sacrificing _____. They extol the riches of free _____, and attempt to cover themselves with an _____ of righteousness, hoping to screen their _____ of character.” (COL, p. 316.1)

10. What will the righteousness of Christ not cover? “The righteousness of Christ will not cover one _____ sin.” (COL, p. 316.2)

11. What do some Christians do today that they will not be able to do in the judgment? “Men may now _____ their defects of _____, but in that day they will offer no _____.” (COL, p. 317.1)

Note: Some excuses people provide today are: “I grew up in the wrong environment,” “my heredity made it impossible for me to obey,” “Jesus overcame in a different nature than mine,” “we are not under law but under grace,” “Jesus kept the law for me,” “the devil made me do it,” “all you need is love, not law”. When our lives come in review before God, those who have uttered these vain excuses will be left speechless!!

12. List some of the advantages that Christians have today that the Jews did not have in antiquity.

_____ (These are found in (COL, p. 317.2).

13. What evidence does Ellen White provide to show that the Holy Spirit performs His work on earth through the ministration of the angels? “We _____ back the army of evil angels. We sent brightness and _____ into the souls of men, _____ their memory of the love of God expressed in Jesus. We _____ their eyes to the cross of Christ. Their hearts were deeply _____ by a sense of the sin that crucified the Son of God. They were _____.” (COL, p. 318.1)

14. How attractive will the world appear in the day of final reckoning? “The world’s pleasures, _____, and honors will not then seem so _____. Men will then see that the righteousness they despised is _____ of value.” COL, 318.3) When will men be able to see this reality? (Notice the Bible text Ellen White employs in (COL, p. 318.2)

15. What is the period of probation that God grants us? “There will be no _____ probation in which to prepare for eternity. It is in this _____ that we are to put on the robe of Christ’s righteousness. This is our _____ opportunity to form characters for the home which Christ has made ready for those who _____ His commandments.” (COL, p. 319.1)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #24 - The Mustard Seed and Other Lessons From Agriculture

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 76-89; Matthew 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18-19

Introduction

In this lesson we will study the Parable of the Mustard Seed which is one of several recorded in Matthew 13:1-58. We will also study various Bible texts that employ agriculture to teach spiritual lessons. Ellen White has repeatedly stated that agriculture should be one of the main subjects in the curriculum of our Seventh-day Adventist schools. This lesson will help us understand better why the Lord’s servant felt so strongly about this. Let’s begin our study by taking a look at the people to whom the parable was particularly addressed.

The Original Recipients

1. What particular group was Jesus speaking to in the parable of the mustard seed? “In the multitude that _____ to Christ’s teaching there were many _____.” (COL, p. 76.1)
2. What question did the Pharisees have in mind concerning Jesus? “Without _____, power, or _____, how was he to establish the new _____.” (COL, p. 76.1)
3. What could the people see as Jesus told this parable? “As Jesus spoke this parable, the mustard plant could be _____ far and near, lifting itself above the _____ and grain, and waving its _____ lightly in the air. _____ flitted from twig to twig, and _____ amid the leafy foliage.” (COL, p. 77.2)

Earthly Kingdoms

1. With what could Jesus **not** compare His kingdom and why? “No _____ society could afford Him a symbol. . . . (COL, 76.2) Its _____ of development are the _____ of those that rule the kingdoms of this world.” (COL, p. 77.1)

2. What method do earthly kingdoms employ to gain and keep power? With what does the Holy Spirit compare them? “Earthly governments prevail by physical _____; they maintain their dominion by _____. . . . The Holy Spirit represents _____ kingdoms under the symbol of fierce _____ of prey.” (COL, p. 77.1)

Note: Daniel 7:1-28 is a prime example of fierce beasts being used as symbols of ravenous earthly kingdoms. On the other hand, the principles of God’s kingdom are illustrated by the domestic beasts used in the sanctuary service.

3. What type of kingdom did the Jews of Christ’s day look for? “The Jews looked for the kingdom of God to be established in the _____ way as the kingdoms of the world. To promote righteousness they resorted to _____ measures. They devised methods and _____.” (COL, p. 77.1)

4. When Jesus fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, what did the Jews attempt to do? “When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by _____, to make him a _____, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.” (John 6:15)

5. **Thought Question:** Is there a parallel between the type of kingdom the Jews wished to establish and the kind of kingdom that the religious right wants to implant in the United States?

Christ’s Kingdom

1. What does the seed symbolize? “The seed is the _____ of God.” (Luke 8:11)

2. How is true righteousness established in Christ’s kingdom? “But Christ _____ a principle. By _____ truth and righteousness, He _____ error and sin.” (COL, p. 77.1)

3. Where must Christ’s kingdom be established before it can cover the world? “The kingdom of God cometh not with _____: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! For behold, the _____ of God is _____ you.” (Luke 17:20-21)

Note: When Jesus implants the principles of His kingdom in the hearts of His subjects, the result will be peace on earth and good will toward men. What cannot be gained by force will be gained by the silent work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart.

4. What did Jesus once say to Pontius Pilate? “My kingdom is not of this _____. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants _____, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but _____ is my kingdom not of this world.” (John 18:36)

5. Which other parable of Jesus teaches the same lesson about the kingdom? The parable of the _____ (Matthew 13:33)

6. What **corporate lesson** is illustrated by the smallness of the mustard seed and the largeness of the bush? “When Christ spoke this parable, there were only a _____ Galilean peasants to represent the new _____. . . . But the mustard seed was to _____ and spread forth its branches throughout the whole _____.” (COL, p. 77.2)

Note: The apostle Paul told the Colossians that the gospel was “preached to every creature under heaven” (COL, p. 1:23). In a matter of a few decades, the gospel which began with a humble carpenter and twelve unlettered peasants, had spread to the whole world.

7. What **individual lesson** does the parable of the mustard seed teach? “So the work of _____ in the heart is _____ in its beginning. A word is spoken, a ray of light is shed into the _____, and influence is exerted that is the beginning of the new life; and who can _____ its results?” (COL, p. 78.1)

8. Which four persons are referred to by Ellen White as examples of the growth of the mustard seed and why? (COL, p. 78.2)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

Why? _____

9. Where do we find the special truths for this time? “As in earlier ages, the special truths for this time are found, not with the _____ authorities, but with men and women who are not too _____ or too _____ to believe the word of God.” (COL, p. 79.1)

10. When will the parable of the mustard seed reach its glorious and complete fulfillment? “And in this _____ generation the parable of the mustard seed is to reach a signal and triumphant fulfillment. The little _____ will become a _____.” (COL, p. 79.3)

Divine Power and Human Effort

1. How does agriculture teach the law of divine-human cooperation? “There can be no reaping unless the _____ hand acts its part in the sowing of the _____. But without the agencies God provides in giving _____ and _____, dew clouds, there would be no _____.” (COL, p. 82.1)

2. What great truth did the apostle Paul utter to the Corinthians? “We are _____ together with _____.” (1 Corinthians 3:9)

3. How does divine-human cooperation in the natural realm illustrate divine-human cooperation in the spiritual realm? “Thus it is in _____ things, in the formation of the _____, and in every line of Christian work. We have a part to _____, but we must have the power of _____ to unite with us, or our efforts will be in vain.” (COL, p. 82.1)

4. How does the importance of human effort compare with the importance of divine power? “Immeasurably _____ is the part which the human agent sustains; but if he is _____ with the divinity of Christ, he can do _____ things through the strength that _____ imparts.” (COL, p. 82.2)

5. **Thought Question:** How do the stories of Samson, the conquest of Jericho, the battle of David and Goliath and the miraculous fishing expedition illustrate the importance of divine-human cooperation? Can you think of other Biblical stories which illustrate the same principle?

Child Training

1. What can we learn from the gradual development of a plant? “The gradual development of the plant from the _____ is an object lesson in _____ training.” (COL, p. 82.3)

2. Who’s life does the development of a plant perfectly exemplify? “But at each _____ of His _____ He was perfect, with the simple, natural _____ of a sinless life.” (COL, p. 82.3)

3. What must parents **not do** with their children? “It is not wise to give them special _____, and repeat their clever _____ before them. Vanity should not be _____ by praising their _____, their _____, or their actions. Nor should they be _____ in an expensive and showy manner.” (COL, p. 83.2)

Note: Some parents complain that Ellen White goes overboard with this counsel. They state that children should be publicly recognized and exhibited in order to bolster their self-esteem or self-image. What would you say to such parents?

4. What special care should be taken in the education of children? “The little ones should be educated in childlike _____. . . . Childhood answers to the _____ in the parable, and the blade has a beauty peculiarly its own. The children should not be _____ into a precocious _____ but should retain as long as possible the freshness and _____ of their early years.” (COL, p. 83.3).

Note: What do you think this tells us about the age at which the little ones should be sent to school? Do you think that parents are perhaps rushing their children into formal education before their physical and mental skills are ready for it? How important do you think it is for mom to stay at home and cultivate the characters of her small children?

5. How much does God expect of little children? “The little children may be _____, having an experience in accordance with their _____. This is all that God expects of them.” (COL, p. 84.1)

The Law of Sowing and Reaping

1. What unerring law of nature applies also to spiritual things? “In the laws of God in nature, _____ follows _____ with unerring certainty. . . . So in spiritual things; the faithfulness of every worker is _____ by the results of his work” (COL, p. 84.2)

2. How did Paul explain this unerring law? “Be not _____; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man _____, that shall he also _____.” Galatians 6:7)

3. In the end, who is responsible for the destruction of the wicked? “God _____ no man. Everyone who is destroyed will have destroyed _____. Everyone who stifles the admonitions of _____ is sowing seeds of _____ and these will produce a sure harvest.” (COL, p. 84.4)

4. How did this law apply to the experience of Pharaoh? “By _____ the first warning from God, Pharaoh of old _____ the seeds of obstinacy, and he _____ obstinacy.”

(COL, p. 84.4)

5. How does this law apply in our relationships with others? “In our relation to others, this law holds true. Every _____, every _____, is a seed that will bear fruit. Every deed of thoughtful _____, of obedience, or of self-denial, will _____ itself in others, and through them in still _____.” (COL, p. 85.1)

The Lesson of Liberality

1. What other great lesson is taught in seed sowing? “_____ both is spiritual and in temporal things is _____ in the lesson of seed sowing.” (COL, p. 85.2)

2. How did the apostle Paul express this great principle? “This I say, He which soweth sparingly shall _____ also sparingly; and he which soweth _____ shall reap also bountifully.” (2 Corinthians 9:6)

3. Does liberality impoverish the giver? “The sower _____ his seed by casting it _____. So it is with those who are faithful in _____ God’s gifts. By imparting they _____ their blessings. God has promised them a sufficiency that they may _____ to give.” (COL, p. 85.2)

4. What did Luke have to say about the law of liberality? “Give, and it shall be _____ unto you; good measure, pressed down, and _____ together, and running _____, shall men give into your bosom.” (Luke 6:38)

5. What happens when we distribute our temporal blessings? “As we distribute God’s temporal blessings, the _____ of our love and sympathy awakens in the receiver gratitude and _____ to God. The soil of the heart is _____ to receive the seeds of _____ truth.” (COL, p. 86.1)

Death Which Leads to Life

1. What great truth did Jesus seek to teach regarding Himself in John 12:24? “So the death of Christ will result in _____ for the kingdom of God. In accordance with the law of the _____ kingdom, life will be the result of His death.” (COL, p. 86.2)

2. What experience must we share with Christ? “And all who would bring forth _____ as workers together with Christ must first fall into the _____ and die. . . . Self-love, self-interest, must _____. But the law of _____ is the law of self-preservation.” (COL, p. 86.3)

3. What other lesson is taught by the death and germination of the seed and what text does Ellen White provide to corroborate her statement? "The seed dies to spring forth into new life, and in this we are taught the lesson of the _____." (COL, p. 87.1)

The Importance of Agriculture

1. List 5 lessons that parents and teachers can share with children from the science of agriculture: (COL, p. 87.2)

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____

2. How vital is the science of agriculture in our schools? "They [the youth] should be taught to till the soil. It would be well if there were, connected with _____ school, lands for cultivation. Such lands should be regarded as God's own _____. The things of nature should be looked upon as a lesson _____ which His children are to study, and from which they may obtain knowledge as to the culture of the _____." (COL, p. 87.3)

The Importance of Hard Work

1. What lesson can we learn from the hard work of tilling the soil? "Earnestness, diligence, and persevering _____ are to be put forth in treating the soil _____ to sowing the seed. So it is in the _____ work in the human heart." (COL, p. 88.1)

2. What is the ultimate lesson we can learn from tilling the soil? "While the human sower is planting the seed to sustain our _____ life, the Divine Sower will plant in the soul the seed that will bring forth _____ unto life everlasting." (COL, p. 89.1)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #25 - The Vine and the Branches

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: DA, pp. 674-677; Bible Commentary, vol. 5, pp. 1142-1144; 1 SM, pp. 336-339; STC, pp. 68-73; 4T, pp. 354-355; John 15:1-27

Introduction

In this lesson we will study the beautiful allegory of the vine and the branches. As we proceed, we shall find in this parable a richness that can never be exhausted and divine lessons that tax our human wisdom to the utmost. It would be helpful to remember that in Israel, branches that did not bear fruit were pruned in February/March. Raymond Brown explained: “Sometimes the vines are so completely cut back that one sees in the vineyard only the stalks bereft of branches. Later (August) when the vine has put forth leaves, comes the second stage of pruning, as the vinedresser pinches off the little shoots so that the main fruit-bearing branches get all the nourishment.” (Raymond Brown, The Gospel According to John, volume 2, p. 675) Let’s begin by examining the parable’s historical background, its occasion and its symbols.

Occasion and Place of the Parable

1. When and to whom did Jesus speak the parable of the vine and the branches? “And he [Jesus] said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My _____ is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy _____ with my disciples.” (Matthew 26:18)

Note: A careful comparison of John 13:1-38; John 14:1-31; John 15:1-27; John 16:1-33; John 17:1-26 with Matthew 26:18-45 reveals that they are chronologically parallel. The events described in these sources are taking place on Thursday evening and Jesus is speaking to His disciples. Both Matthew and John begin with the last supper in the Upper Room and end with the prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. But John adds many details which are not found in Matthew. The foot washing (John 13:1-15), the discourse on the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17), the parable of the vine and the branches (John 15:1-8), and further instruction on the Holy Spirit (John 16:13-14)

are unique to John. The prayer of Jesus as described by Matthew covers only three verses (Matthew 26:39; Matthew 26:42; Matthew 26:44) but in John it covers the whole of John 17:1-26.

2. To what destination were Jesus and His disciples traveling when He told this parable? “Jesus and the disciples were on the way to _____, at the foot of Mount _____, a retired spot which He had often visited for meditation and prayer.” (DA, p. 674.2)

Note: Ellen White’s comment is corroborated by John 14:31 where, after the events in the Upper Room, Jesus told His disciples: “Arise, let us go hence.” Matthew 26:36 explains that they departed for the Garden of Gethsemane.

3. More specifically, where were Jesus and the disciples when He told the parable? “The moon is shining bright and _____ to Him a flourishing _____. Drawing attention of the disciples to it, He employs it as a _____.” (DA, p. 674.2)

The Parable’s Symbols

1. Why did Jesus choose the vine as an illustration instead of a tree? “Instead of choosing the graceful _____, the lofty _____, or the strong _____, Jesus takes the vine with its clinging _____ to represent Himself. The palm tree, the cedar, and the oak stand _____. They require no _____. But the vine entwines about the trellis, and thus climbs heavenward.” (DA, p. 674.3)

2. What is represented by the husbandman, the vine and the branches? Jesus said: “I am the _____ and my Father is the _____. . . . I am the vine, ye [the disciples] are the _____.” (John 15:1; John 15:5)

3. What is represented by the fruit? “But the fruit of the Spirit is _____, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, _____, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no _____.” (Galatians 5:22-23)

Note: It is noteworthy how many times Jesus underlined the need to bear fruit. John the Baptist had said: “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance” (Matthew 3:8), Jesus said: “Ye shall know them by their fruits” (Matthew 7:16; cf. Matthew 12:33). Toward the end of His ministry Jesus cursed the fruitless fig tree (Matthew 21:19) and denounced the husbandmen for not rendering God the fruit of the vineyard in its season (Matthew 21:33-46)

4. Why did Jesus emphasize that He is the **true** vine? “But Jesus says, I am the _____ Vine. Think not that through a connection with _____ you may become partakers of the

_____ of God, and inheritors of the promise. Through Me _____ is spiritual life received.” (DA, p. 675.1)

Note: In the Old Testament God had spoken of Israel as His vineyard. From this declaration, Israel had developed the wrong impression that a connection with Israel was sufficient for salvation. However, Jesus made it clear that Israel was not the real vine, He WAS! In the same vein, Jesus said to the Jews: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the **true** bread from heaven” (John 6:32).

The noted commentator, Leon Morris, concurs with Ellen White: “As we have seen, the vine is often the symbol of Israel, and this adjective [*alethinos*] may point to Israel as the degenerate vine (Jeremiah 2:21) now replaced by the true.” (The Gospel According to John, p. 668-669)

The lesson for today is clear. A formal link with the Seventh-day Adventist church through church membership is worthless unless it is accompanied by a vital, personal and continuous connection with Jesus.

The Vine is Planted

1. As a human being, from whence did Jesus derive His power? “So Christ in His _____ was dependent upon _____ power. ‘I can of Mine own _____ do nothing,’ He declared.” (DA, p. 674.3)

2. Where did the Father plant Jesus? “On the hills of _____ our heavenly Father had planted this goodly Vine, and He _____ was the husbandman.” (DA, p. 65.2)

3. How did the multitudes look upon this Vine? “Many were _____ by the beauty of this Vine, and declared its _____ origin.” (DA, p. 675.2)

4. What did the Jewish leaders do with the Vine? “But to the leaders in Israel it appeared as a root out of _____ ground. They took the plant, and _____ it, and _____ it under their unholy feet. Their thought was to _____ it forever.” (DA, p. 675.2)

5. What did the husbandman do with the bruised Vine? “But the heavenly Husbandman never lost _____ of His plant. After men thought they had _____ it, He took it, and _____ it on the other side of the _____.” (DA, p. 675.2)

6. When the Husbandman replanted the Vine in heaven, could human beings still be grafted into it? “The vine stock was to be no longer _____. It was hidden from the rude assaults of men. But the _____ of the Vine hung over the wall. They were to represent the

_____. Through them _____ might still be united to the Vine. From them fruit has been obtained. There has been a harvest which the passers-by have plucked.” (DA, p. 675.2)

Note: The meaning of all of this is clear: The Father planted Jesus in this world. Though many discerned His heavenly origin, the Jewish leaders trampled on Him and bruised Him. But the grave could not retain Jesus, and when He came forth, the Father transplanted Him to heaven. From there, the disciples who had already attached themselves to Jesus, preached the gospel of salvation to others and these others were then grafted into Jesus.

Abiding in the Vine

1. Who chose us to be grafted into the vine? “Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and _____ you that ye should _____ and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever ye shall ask of the Father in My name He may give it you.” (John 15:16)

Note: In the times of Jesus it was customary for students to seek out the most renowned rabbis as teachers. But the disciples did not choose Jesus, He chose them.

2. How is union with the Vine established? “The scion is _____ into the living vine, and _____ by fiber, vein by vein, it _____ into the vine stock. . . . So the soul _____ in trespasses and sins receives _____ through connection with Christ. By faith in Him as personal Savior the union is formed.” (DA, p. 675.3)

3. What happens when this union is established? “The sinner unites his weakness to Christ’s _____, his emptiness to Christ’s _____, his frailty to Christ’s enduring _____. Then he has the mind of Christ. The _____ of Christ has touched our humanity, and our humanity has touched his _____.” (DA, p. 675.3)

4. What must we do after we have been grafted into the Vine? “_____ in me and I in you.” “This union with Christ, once formed, must be _____. . . . This is no casual touch, no off-and-on connection. The branch becomes a part of the living vine. . . . Separated from the vine, the branch cannot _____. No more, said Jesus, can you live _____ from Me. The life you received from Me can be preserved only by _____ communion.” (John 15:4; (DA, p. 676.1)

Note: The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary remarks: “Riding high on a wave of religious fervor one day, only to fall low into a period of neglect the next, does not promote spiritual growth.” (5BC, p. 1042)

5. Which other synonyms help us understand what it means to abide in Christ? “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: _____ ye in my love. . . . Hereby know we that we _____ in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. . . . These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might _____ in you. . . .” (John 15:9; 1 John 4:13; John 15:11)

Note: The words “continue”, “dwell” and “remain” are all the same Greek word that is translated “abide.” The emphasis of the Greek word *meno* falls upon a **habitual permanence** in Christ.

The Secret of Abiding

1. What is the secret to abiding in Christ? “If ye abide in me, and my _____ abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” (John 15:7) “It is through the _____ that Christ abides in His followers.” (DA, p. 677.1)

2. With which other metaphor did Jesus illustrate what it means to abide in Him? “He that eateth my _____ and drinketh my blood, _____ in me, and I in him. . . . It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The _____ that I speak unto you, they are _____, and they are life.” (John 6:56; John 6:63)

Note: It is by prayerfully studying and assimilating the Word of God that we abide in Jesus. The purpose of Bible study is not mere intellectual knowledge but rather to develop a deeply personal spiritual experience with Jesus.

3. What should be the purpose of Bible study? “And this is _____ eternal, that they might _____ thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. . . . But these are _____, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that _____ ye might have _____ through his name.” (John 17:3; John 20:31)

4. What counsel does Ellen White give concerning the method and purpose of Bible study? “The words of Christ must be _____ upon and cherished and _____ in the heart. They should not be repeated _____, finding no place in the memory and having no influence over the _____ and life.”

(4T, p. 354.3)

5. How did the John, the beloved disciple, learn to abide in Christ? “But as the character of the Divine One was manifested to him, he saw his own _____ and was humbled by the knowledge. . . . Day by day his heart was _____ out toward Christ, until he los sight of _____ in the love for his Master. His resentful, ambitious temper was _____ to the molding power of Christ.” (SC, p. 73.1)

6. How does the apostle Paul describe the results of a habitual contemplation of Jesus? “But we all, with open face _____ as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are _____ into the same _____ from glory to glory, even as by the _____ of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:18)

Note: “By beholding Christ, by talking of Him, by beholding the loveliness of His character we become changed. Changed from glory to glory. And what is glory? Character,—and he becomes changed from character to character. Thus we see that there is a work of purification that goes on by beholding Jesus.” (SD, p. 337.5)

7. How else did the apostle Paul describe his life of abiding trust in Christ? “ I am crucified _____ Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth _____ me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the _____ of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

8. Is abiding in Jesus always an easy endeavor? “We are to grow _____ in spiritual loveliness. We shall _____ often in our efforts to copy the pattern. We shall often have to bow down to _____ at the feet of Jesus, because of our shortcomings and mistakes; but we are not to be _____; we are to _____ more fervently, believe more _____, and try again with more steadfastness to gown into the likeness of our Lord.” (1SM, p. 337.1)

9. What will Christ’s true followers do when they have ingrafted the Word? “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall _____ on me through their _____.” (John 17:20)

The Evidence of Abiding in Him

1. What is the greatest evidence that we are abiding in Christ? He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much _____: for without me ye can do _____.” (John 15:5). The fruit is identified as the “fruit of the Spirit” in Galatians 5:22.

2. Wherein is the Father glorified? “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear _____ fruit; so shall ye be my _____.” (John 15:8)

3. Must we labor to bear fruit? “Yet the Savior does not bid the disciples _____ to bear fruit. He tells them to _____ in Him.” (DA, p. 677.1)

Note: In the same vein, Jesus does not tell his disciples to strive to shed light upon the world. He simply states, “Let your light shine” Matthew 5:16). When we are truly linked with Jesus, fruit and light will spontaneously appear.

4. Does keeping Christ's commandments bear any relationship to abiding in Him? "If ye keep my _____, ye shall abide in my _____, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and _____ in his love. . . . Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I _____ you." (John 15:10; John 15:14; see also, John 14:14-16)

5. To which commandment was Jesus particularly referring? "This is my commandment, that ye _____ one another, as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

6. How did the apostle Paul define true love? "Owe no man anything but to love one another, for he that _____ another hath fulfilled the law. For this, 'thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not _____, and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly _____ in this saying, namely, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'" (Romans 13:8-9)

7. What other evidence indicates that we are abiding in the Vine? "These things have I spoken unto you, that my _____ might _____ in you, and that your joy might be _____." (John 15:11; for what Jesus meant by "joy", study John 14:28; John 16:20-24; Hebrews 12:2; Isaiah 53:11)

8. What lesson on unity did Jesus teach in the parable of the vine and the branches? "The branches of the vine cannot _____ into each other; they are _____ separate; yet every branch must be in _____ with every other if they are united in the same parent stock. . . . So every branch of the True Vine is _____ and distinct, yet all are _____ together in the parent stock. There can be no division." (5BC, p. 1143)

9. How did Jesus further amplify this lesson in His intercessory prayer of John 17:1-26? "That they all may be _____; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be _____ in us: that the world may believe that thou hast _____ me. . . . I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made _____ in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." (John 17:21; John 17:23)

10. How will the world look upon those who are abiding in Jesus? "If the world _____ you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its _____, but because ye are not of the world, but I have _____ you out of the world, therefore the world _____ you." (John 15:18-19)

The Pruning Process

1. How does John describe the pruning process? ". . . every branch that beareth fruit, he _____ it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:2)

Note: The Greek word “purges” here is *katharizo* from which we get the word “catharsis”. The work of pruning is thus a work of cleansing.

2. How does Ellen White describe the pruning process? “The pruning will cause _____, but it is the Father who applies the knife. He works with no wanton hand or indifferent heart. There are branches trailing upon the _____; these must be cut loose from the earthly supports to which the tendrils are fastening. They are to reach _____, and find their support in God. . . . The excessive foliage that draws away the life current from the fruit must be pruned off. The _____ must be cut out, to give room for the healing beams of the Sun of Righteousness.” (DA, p. 676.6)

3. What is the knife which God uses to prune the branches of the vine? “That he might sanctify and _____ it [the church] with the washing of water by the _____, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having _____, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be _____ and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:26-27)

4. According to Jesus, how are we sanctified? “Sanctify them through thy _____, thy _____ is truth.” (John 17:17)

5. According to Paul, what is the Word of God like and what type of work does it perform? “For the word of God is _____, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged _____, piercing even to the dividing asunder of _____ and _____, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and _____ of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12)

6. What did King David have to say about the function of God’s word? “Wherewithal shall a young man _____ his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy _____. . . . Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not _____ against thee.” (Psalm 119:9; Psalm 119:11)

7. What did Jesus say about His disciples in John 15:3? “Now ye are _____ through the _____ that I have spoken unto you.”

Note: The word “cleansed” here is used in only one other place in the gospel of John, that is in John 13:10. When Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, He was symbolically cleansing their hearts. But notice that Jesus said that not all had been cleaned or pruned. As we shall see later, He was speaking of Judas Iscariot (see John 17:12).

8. What, specifically, needs to be pruned from our lives? “He [the Father] then prunes them, because _____, self-indulgence, and _____ are cropping out in their lives.”

(4T, p. 354.1)

9. Is the process of pruning painful? “God prunes us with _____, with disappointment and _____, that the outgrowth of strong, perverse traits of _____ may be weakened and that the _____ traits may have a chance to develop.” (4T, p. 354.2)

10. What two types of reactions result from the painful pruning process? “Those who really desire to _____ God will be _____ for the exposure of every idol and every sin, that they may see these evils and put them _____; but the _____ heart will plead for _____ rather than _____.” (4T, p. 354.2)

11. How can we be sure that conversion is genuine? “No conversion is genuine which does not _____ both the character and the _____ of those who accept the truth. The truth works by love, and _____ the soul.” (5BC, p. 1144)

The Fruitless Branches

1. Who was the fruitless branch in the Upper Room? “From the chosen twelve who had followed Jesus, one [Judas] as a _____ branch was about to be taken away; the rest were to pass under the pruning knife of _____ trial.” (DA, p. 676.6)

Note: Raymond E. Brown concurs with Ellen White: “In the atmosphere of the Last Supper Judas may be thought of as a branch that did not bear fruit; he is now a tool of Satan and belongs to the realm of darkness.” (The Gospel According to John, volume 2, p. 675-676)

2. What characterizes the dead branches? “A profession of religion places men in the _____, but the character and _____ show whether they are in connection with Christ. If they bear no fruit, they are _____ branches.” (DA, p. 676.5)

3. What evidence do we have in this parable that saved people can choose to be lost? “Every branch _____ me that beareth not fruit he _____ away.” (John 15:2, John 15:6 and Matthew 24:12; 2 Peter 2:20-22)

Note: The noted commentator, Raymond E. Brown, has well remarked: “So also in John the branches that are burned were once united to Jesus the vine. The expression ‘withered’ occurs in Mark 4:6 in the Parable of the Sower to describe the fate of the seed that falls on rocky ground and begins to grow, only to be scorched by the sun.” (The Gospel According to John, volume 2, p. 679)

4. Who determines whether a branch remains attached to the vine or is taken away? “When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound Himself to humanity by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the _____ of man himself.” (SC, p. 72.1)

5. What will happen when the church continuously abides in Christ? “When this condition is fulfilled in those who profess to believe the present truth, we shall see a _____ church; for its members will not live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and they will be _____ branches of the living Vine.” (5BC, p. 1144)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #26 – Asking to Give

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 139-149; Luke 11:1-13; John 7:37-39)

Introduction

The parable we will study in our lesson today is very closely linked with the Lord’s Prayer. In fact, the parable illustrates what should be our attitude when we approach the Lord in prayer as well as what we should do once the Lord has answered us. Let’s begin by taking a look at the historical context within which Jesus told the parable.

The Historical Context

1. Where was Jesus immediately before he taught the disciples the Lord’s Prayer? He was praying. “Seeming _____ of their presence, He continued praying _____. The hearts of the disciples were _____ moved. As he ceased praying, they exclaimed, ‘Lord, teach us to pray.’” (COL, p. 140.1; see also, Luke 11:1)
2. What did Jesus do immediately after he taught the disciples the Lord’s Prayer? “Then in a parable He _____ the _____ He desired to teach them.” (COL, p. 140.2)

The Prayer Life of Jesus

1. How did the prayer life of Jesus illustrate the principle He sought to teach in this parable? “Christ was continually _____ from the Father that He might communicate to _____.” (COL, p. 139.1)
2. Which Bible texts does Ellen White provide to corroborate her comment in the previous question? “The word which ye hear, is not _____, but the _____ which sent Me. . . . The Son of man came not to be _____ unto, but to minister.” (John 14:24;

Matthew 20:28)

3. What does Ellen White tell us about the prayer life of Jesus? “From _____ spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the _____ of heaven to men. Daily He received a _____ baptism of the Holy _____.” (COL, 139.1)

4. Which messianic prophecy does Ellen White quote to prove her point in the previous question? “The Lord God hath _____ Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a _____ in season to him that is weary: He _____ morning by morning, He _____ Mine ear to hear as the learned.” (Isaiah 50:4)

5. What does the Gospel of Mark tell us about the habitual prayer life of Jesus? “And in the morning, rising up a great while before _____, he went out, and departed into a _____ place, and there prayed.” (Mark 1:35)

6. What does Ellen White say about the choreography of Christ’s life? “Christ in His life on earth made no _____ for Himself. He accepted God's plans for Him, and day by day the Father _____ His plans. So should we depend upon God that our lives may be the simple _____ of His will. As we commit our ways to Him, He will _____ our steps.” (Pr, p. 226.3)

7. What is one of the central lessons of this parable? “Here Christ represents the petitioner as _____ that he might _____.” (COL, p. 140.4)

Receiving to Give

1. What lesson did Jesus seek to teach His disciples when He fed the five thousand? “They must receive _____ food, or they would have nothing to _____.” (COL, p. 140.5)

Note: When Jesus fed the five thousand he first multiplied the bread and fishes thus providing an abundant supply of food. Jesus then gave the food to the disciples that they might impart it to the multitude. That is to say, they received Christ’s abundant supply in order to give.

2. What altruistic spirit should characterize our prayers? “Our prayers are not to be a selfish _____, merely for our own _____. We are to ask that we may give.” (COL, p. 142.3)

3. How does John 7:37-39 teach the same lesson about receiving and giving? “If any man thirst, let him come unto _____ and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his _____ shall flow rivers of living water.”

Note: When we come to Jesus, the Source and Fount of every spiritual blessing, we in turn become fountains to others of those same blessings.

4. Whom does the selfish neighbor represent? “But the selfish neighbor in the parable does not represent the _____ of God. The lesson is drawn, not by _____ but by contrast. A selfish man will grant an _____ request, in order to rid himself of one who _____ his rest. But God _____ to give.” (COL, p. 141.1)

5. Why does God impart so many blessings to us? “He _____ to us that we may _____ to others and thus become like _____.” (COL, p. 141.1)

6. According to the apostle Paul, what wise words did Jesus speak? “Remember the words of the Lord _____, how he said, ‘It is more _____ to give than to _____.’” (Acts 20:35)

7. What enables us to receive an ever constant supply of heavenly blessings? “The capacity for receiving is _____ only by _____. We cannot continue to receive heavenly treasure without _____ to those around us.” (COL, p. 142.3)

8. What happens when we put the words of Jesus in Acts 20:35 into practice? “Give, and it shall be _____ unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall men _____ into your bosom. For with the same _____ that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you _____.” (Luke 6:38)

The Father Who Delights to Hear

1. What did Jesus say about the solicitous generosity of a parent for his child? “If a son shall ask _____ of any of you that is a father, will he give him a _____? Or if he ask a _____, will he for a fish give him a _____? Or if he shall ask an _____, will he offer him a _____? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly _____ give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” (Luke 11:11-13)

Note: Why did Jesus use a stone, a fish and a scorpion in His illustration? G. Christian Weiss provides the answer:

“The loaves of bread familiar to the people to whom Jesus was speaking were round, flattish, and rather dark in color. They were made of whole wheat or barley and were baked beside an open fire in a brick oven, often being covered with ash and cinders. Hence they actually had very much the same appearance as an ordinary stone on the ground might have had. The comparison

between a fish and a serpent is similar. There are certain types of slender, edible fish which closely resemble the deadly sea snake.

“But why would He associate an egg with a scorpion? This is also a vivid comparison. While many scorpions are dark in color, there is also in the Near East a light colored variety, sometimes called the white scorpion. Though not snow white by any means, this creature, when curled up into its relaxed state, could be mistaken for an egg.” (G. Christian Weiss, Insights into Bible Themes, p. 16)

2. Why does God encourage us to address Him as our Father? “In order to strengthen our _____ in God, Christ teaches us to address Him by a new name, a name entwined with the _____ associations of the human heart. He gives us the privilege of calling the _____ God our Father.” (COL, p. 141.4)

3. How does the Father respond when we address Him as our Father? “Spoken when asking His favor or _____, it is as _____ in His ears. That we might not think it presumption to call Him by this name, He has _____ it again and again. He desires us to become _____ with the appellation.” (COL, p. 141.4)

4. How does the love of earthly parents toward their children compare with the love of God for His children? “Parents love their children, but the love of God is _____, broader, deeper, than _____ love can possibly be. It is _____.” (COL, p. 142.1)

5. Which three principles of prayer did Jesus seek to teach through this parable? “He shows what is the true _____ of prayer, He teaches the necessity of _____ in presenting our requests to God, and assures us of His willingness to _____ and answer prayer.” (COL, p. 142.2)

The Purpose of Prayer

1. Is prayer meant to change God’s mind? “Prayer is not to work any _____ in God; it is to bring us into _____ with God.” (COL, p. 143.1)

Note: Prayer is not sanctified arm twisting. It puts us in tune with the infinite will and wishes of our heavenly Father. It blends our mind with His so that we are on the same page. When we discern His will through prayer, we will understand that His ways are better than our ways and His plans wiser than ours.

2. Why does God sometimes delay to answer our prayers? “When we make request of Him, He may see that it is _____ for us to search our hearts and _____ of sin.

Therefore He takes us through _____ and trial, He brings us through humiliation, that we may see what _____ the working of His Holy Spirit through us.” (COL, p. 143.1)

3. Will delay prove a benefit to those who will go through the time of Jacob’s trouble? “The very delay, so _____ to them is the best _____ to their petitions. As they endeavor to wait trustingly for the Lord to work they are led to _____ faith, hope, patience, which have been too _____ exercised during their religious experience.” (GC, p. 630.2)

Conditions for Answered Prayer

1. What must accompany prayer? “There are _____ to the fulfillment of God’s _____, and prayer can never take the place of _____.” (COL, p. 143.2)

Note: “He who does nothing but pray will soon cease to pray, or his prayers will become a formal routine.” (SC, p. 101.1)

2. Are there conditions for receiving the Holy Spirit? “If ye love me, keep my _____ and I will pray to the _____, and he shall give you another _____, that he may _____ with you forever.” (John 14:15-16)

3. What relationship is there between prayer and the observance of God’s law? “He that turneth away his _____ from hearing the _____, even his prayer shall be an _____.” (Proverbs 28:9)

Note: Ellen White has well remarked: “Prayer and effort, effort and prayer, will be the business of your life. You must pray as though the **efficiency** and **praise** were all due to God, and labor as though **duty** were all your own.” (4T, p. 538.2)

4. How did the apostle Peter underline the fact that obedience is necessary in order to receive the Holy Spirit? “And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath _____ to them that _____ him.” (Acts 5:32)

5. What does Ellen White say regarding those who pray without regard to the conditions? “Those who bring their _____ to God, claiming His promise while they do not comply with the _____, insult Jehovah.” (COL, 143.2)

Note: “Only he who has true faith is secure against presumption. For presumption is Satan’s counterfeit of faith. Faith claims God’s promises, and brings forth fruit in obedience. Presumption also claims the promises, but uses them as Satan did, to excuse transgression.” DA, p. 126.1). On the Mount of Temptation Satan tried to entice Jesus to claim His Father’s promises in

disobedience (see, Matthew 4:5-7)

6. Who only has a right to claim God's promises? "All His gifts are promised on condition of obedience. . . . All who _____ Him may with _____ claim the fulfillment of His _____." (COL, 145.1)

7. How can wounding others prove to be an obstacle to answered prayer? "If we have in any way grieved or _____ others, it is our duty to confess our fault and seek for reconciliation. This is an _____ preparation that we may come before God in faith, to ask His _____." (COL, p. 144.2)

8. Can unfaithful stewardship practices be a reason for unanswered prayer? "If we are unfaithful stewards of _____ things, how can we expect Him to entrust us with the things of _____? It may be that here is the secret of _____ prayer." (COL, p. 144.4)

Persistence in Prayer

1. Why does God sometimes delay to answer our prayers and what should we do about it? "Often He _____ to answer us in order to _____ our faith or _____ the genuineness of our desire. . . . (COL, 145.2) Unwearyingly _____ in prayer." (COL, p. 145.3)

2. Why do we oftentimes not see more of the power of God in our lives? "But many have not a _____ faith. This is why they do not see more of the _____ of God. Their weakness is the result of their _____." (COL, p. 145.4)

3. What will happen as a result of a faithful persistence in prayer? "The more earnestly and steadfastly we ask, the _____ will be our spiritual union with Christ. We shall receive increased _____ because we have increased faith." (COL, p. 146.1)

4. Why should we not make it a habit to tell our difficulties to others? "The practice of telling our difficulties to others only makes us _____, and brings no _____ to them. It lays upon them the burden of our spiritual infirmities, which they cannot _____. We seek the strength of erring, _____ man, when we might have the strength of the unerring, _____ God." (COL, p. 146.3)

5. How do our attitude and words affect our prayer life? "By looking at appearances and complaining when _____ and pressure come, you give evidence of a sickly, _____ faith. Talk and _____ as if your faith was invincible." (COL, p. 146.5)

6. When God makes a promise in His word, can we be certain that it will be fulfilled? “If we ask _____ according to his _____, He heareth us; and if we _____ that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we _____ that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” (1 John 5:14-15)

7. What assurance can we have that God will hear our petitions when we come to Him in the right spirit? “When we come to Him confessing our _____ and sin, He has pledged Himself to give heed to our cry. The _____ of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word unto us.” (COL, p. 148.1)

8. What attracts the interest of the angels? “When they [the angels] see one manifest Christlike _____ for the erring, they press to his side and bring to his _____ words to speak that will be as the bread of life to the soul.” (COL, p. 148.4)

9. What must we do before we work for others? “Personal effort for others should be preceded by much _____ prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the _____ of saving souls. Before communicating with _____, commune with Christ.” (COL, p. 149.1)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #27 – Saying and Doing

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 272-283; Matthew 21:23-32; Matthew 23:1-4; Matthew 23:23-28

Introduction

In our lesson today we will study about the two sons who promised to go and work in their father’s vineyard. One of them said he would go and didn’t. The other said he wouldn’t go, and did. Though we will focus our attention on the parable itself (Matthew 21:28-32), it is highly recommended that you study the immediately preceding verses (verses 1-27) in order to comprehend the events which led up to the parable.

The parable reads: “But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.” (Matthew 21:28-32)

The Historical Context

1. When, where and to whom was this parable spoken by Jesus? The next day [the day after the triumphal entry], as Christ was teaching in the _____, "the chief priests and _____ of the people came unto Him as he was teaching and said: By what _____ doest Thou these things? And who gave Thee this _____?" (Matthew 21:23)

2. What had Jesus done to reveal His authority just before He told the parable? “And Jesus went into the temple of God, and _____ out all them that sold and bought in the _____, and overthrew the tables of the _____. And the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written My _____ shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of _____.” (Matthew 21:12-13)

3. Who was left in the temple after Jesus cleansed it? “And the _____ and the _____ came to him in the temple; and he healed them.” (Matthew 21:14)

4. When Jesus cast out the money changers from the temple, how did they respond? “Amazed and _____, they had obeyed his _____ without excuse or resistance.” (COL, p. 272.3)

5. Why did the Jewish leaders want Jesus to explain the source of His authority? “The priests and elders were anxious for Jesus to proclaim Himself the _____ that they might misapply His _____ and stir up the _____ against Him. They wished to destroy His _____ and put him to death.” (COL, p. 273.3)

6. How did Jesus respond to the inquiry of the Jewish leaders? “...He _____ the issue they hope to bring about and turns the _____ upon themselves.” (COL, p. 273.4)

7. **Thought Question:** How did the response of Jesus put the Jewish leaders between a rock and a hard place? (COL, p. 274.3 will provide help)

The Central Lesson and Symbols

1. According to Ellen White, what is the central lesson of this parable? “_____ are of no value unless they are accompanied with appropriate _____. This is the lesson taught in the parable of the two sons.” (COL, p. 272.2)

2. What is represented by the father, the vineyard and the two sons? “In this parable the father represents _____, the vineyard the _____. By the two sons are represented two _____ of people.” (COL, p. 275.2)

The First Son

1. What group of human beings is represented by the first son? “The son who refused to obey the command, saying, ‘I will not,’ represented those who were living in open _____, who make no _____ of piety, who openly refused to

come under the yoke of _____ and obedience which the law of God imposes.” (COL, p. 275.2)

2. Is Ellen White correct in her assessment of the first son? Jesus said, “Verily I say unto you [the Pharisees and Elders] that the _____ and the _____ go into the kingdom of God before you.” (Matthew 21:31)

Note: The first son clearly represents the publicans and the harlots, people who made no profession of piety but who later repented when John preached his message.

3. What did these open sinners do when they heard the message of John the Baptist? “When the gospel came to them in the message of John the Baptist. . . they _____ and confessed their _____.” (COL, p. 275.2)

4. How did the common people respond to the message of John the Baptist? “And all the people that heard him, and the _____, justified God, being _____ with the baptism of John.” (Luke 7:29)

5. What did Luke mean when he said that the publicans justified God when they were baptized? How can human beings justify God? (Study 1 John 1:10 and Romans 3:4 for the answer)

6. What three groups of people gladly heard John and asked him how they needed to respond to his message? The _____, the _____, and the _____. (Luke 3:10; Luke 3:12; Luke 3:14)

The Second Son

1. According to Ellen White, who is represented by the second son? “In the son who said, ‘I go, sir,’ and went not, the character of the _____ was revealed. Like this son, the Jewish leaders were _____ and _____.” (COL, p. 276.1)

Note: It is noteworthy that the first son did not address the father as ‘sir’ while the second did. The Greek work here is *kúrios* which is usually translated ‘lord’ but in this context is correctly translated ‘sir’. Though the second son appeared to be more respectful toward the father, in reality his disobedience to his father’s command revealed a deep lack of respect.

2. What was the fundamental problem with the second son? “In the parable the son who said, ‘I go, sir,’ represented himself as _____ and obedient; but _____ proved that his profession was not real. He had not true _____ for his father. So the Pharisees prided themselves on their _____, but when tested, it was found wanting.” (COL, p.

278.4)

3. What did John call the Jewish leaders who came to hear him preach? A generation of _____ . (Matthew 3:7; see also, Matthew 23:33)

4. How did these Jewish leaders respond to the message of John the Baptist? “But the Pharisees and lawyers _____ the counsel of God against themselves, being not _____ of him.” (Luke 7:30)

5. What counsel did Jesus give concerning the teachings of the Scribes and Pharisees? “Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his _____, saying, ‘The scribes and the Pharisees sit in _____ seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you _____, that observe and _____; but do not ye after their works, for they _____, and _____ not.” (Matthew 23:1-3)

6. According to Ellen White, what did Jesus mean when He spoke the words in the previous question? “But they performed their ceremonies to be _____ by men that they might be thought of by the world to be _____ and _____. While professing to obey they refused to render _____ to God. They were not doers of the truth which they professed to _____.” (COL, p. 278.1)

7. How did the Jewish nation at Mt. Sinai reveal the same spirit as the Pharisees? “And all the people answered together, and said, ‘_____ that the LORD hath spoken _____ will _____.” (Exodus 19:8).

Note: Israel broke their promise just a few days later when they worshiped the golden calf. The reason why they were unable to keep their promise is that they thought they could render legal obedience to the Ten Commandments without a change of heart (see, Jeremiah 31:31-34). God can only accept spontaneous obedience from the heart.

8. How did Ellen White amplify the mistake Israel committed at the foot of Mt. Sinai? “The religious life of the Jewish nation had become a _____. When the law was proclaimed on Mount Sinai by the voice of God, all the people pledged themselves to _____. They said, ‘I go sir,’ but they went not.” (COL, p. 276.1)

9. **Thought Question:** What characterized the piety of the Scribes and Pharisees?
_____ (Read Matthew 23:23-28; Luke 18:9-14)

10. What is the only kind of obedience that is acceptable to God? “Christ had shown them [the Pharisees] that they continued to _____ because they had not the _____

_____ which leads to obedience.” (COL, p. 276.1)

11. **Thought Question:** As we have seen in a previous lesson, Laodicea represents the Seventh-day Adventist church. To which of the two sons is the church of Laodicea similar and why?

_____ (Revelation 3:14-21 will help you answer this question)

Lessons for Today

1. What solemn words did Jesus speak to those who will live in the closing moments of this earth’s history? “Not everyone that _____ unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that _____ the will of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 7:21)

Note: There can be no doubt that Jesus is speaking about those who will live in the midst of the final scenes of this earth’s history. This is shown by the fact that Jesus uses the phrase “in that day” (Matthew 7:22), an expression that refers to the final judgment and reward (see, Luke 10:12; Luke 17:31).

2. How did the apostle Paul underline the same truth about actions speaking louder than words? “For not the _____ of the law are just before God, but the _____ of the law shall be justified.” (Romans 2:13)

3. **Thought Question:** Elsewhere, the apostle Paul clearly states that “man is justified by faith without works of law” Romans 3:28). Is Paul contradicting what he stated in Romans 2:13?

_____ (James 2:14-26 might help you answer this question)

4. What does Ellen White say about those who claim to be sons of God but deny this relationship in actual life? “In profession they _____ to be sons of God, but in _____ and character they deny the relationship. They do not surrender the _____ to God. They are living a _____.” (COL, p. 279.1)

5. When do “fair weather Christians” show their true colors? “The promise of obedience they appear to fulfill when this involves no _____; but when _____ and self-sacrifice are required, when they see the cross to be _____, they draw back.” (COL, p. 279.2)

6. Is it possible to work against Christ without being openly hostile to Him? “Do not think that because you do not manifest decided _____ to Christ you are doing His service. We thus _____ our own souls. By _____ that which God has given us to

use in His _____, be it _____ or _____ or any other of his entrusted gifts, we work against Him.” (COL, p. 279.3)

7. Is there such a thing as a converted person who lives an inactive spiritual life? “There is no such thing as a truly _____ person living a helpless, _____ life. It is not possible for us to _____ into heaven. No sluggard can enter there.” (COL, p. 280.2)

8. Why can't God take to heaven those who refuse to cooperate with Him? “Those who refuse to co-operate with God on _____ would not co-operate with Him in _____. It would not be _____ to take them to heaven.” (COL, p. 280.2)

Note: Think about it. All heaven is in constant activity. Every fiber of every being is invested in the task of upholding the universe of God. Would it be safe for God to take people to heaven who have not even raised a finger to advance His work on earth?

9. Why is it never safe to delay obedience to God's call? “It is _____ to delay obedience. You may never hear the _____ again.” (COL, p. 280.4)

10. What is the consequence of cherished sin? “Every sin cherished _____ the character and _____ habit; and physical, mental and moral _____ is the result.” (COL, p. 281.1)

11. Ellen White has previously identified the vineyard as the church. What two other applications does she give of the vineyard? “If you cultivate faithfully the vineyard of your _____, God is making you a laborer together with Himself. And you will have a work to do not only for yourself, but for others. . . . The Lord's vineyard is to be enlarged. In all parts of the _____ He desires it to be extended.” (COL, p. 282.2)

12. How many classes are in the world today? “There are only two classes in the world today; and only two classes will be recognized in the _____ those who violate God's _____ and those who _____ it.” (COL, p. 283.3)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables” Lesson #28 – The Reward of Grace – Part 1

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 390-404; Matthew 19:16-30; Mark 10:17-31; Luke 18:18-30; Matthew 20:1-16

Introduction

Today we will study the parable of the laborers who went to work in the vineyard at different hours of the day. However, before we can fully comprehend the meaning of this story, we must take a look at an event which took place immediately before—the encounter of Jesus with the rich young ruler.

Historical Occasion

1. What event took place just before Jesus spoke this parable? “Just before He gave the parable of the laborers, an event occurred that _____ the way for Him to present the right _____. (COL, p. 390.1) As he was walking by the way, a _____ ruler came running to him, and _____, reverently saluted him.” (COL, p. 390.2)
2. What act of Jesus attracted the rich young ruler to Him? “Then little _____ were brought to Him that he might put His _____ on them and pray.” (Matthew 19:13)

Note: Ellen White explains: “As he saw Jesus blessing the little children, he was convinced that this must be a good man.” (Review and Herald, September 11, 1900)

The Rich Young Ruler

1. What was the rabbinical view of salvation and the final reward? “The rabbis taught that God’s favor must be _____. The reward of the righteous they hoped to _____ by their own works. Thus their _____ was prompted by a grasping, _____ spirit.” (COL,

p. 390.1)

2. What vital question did the rich young ruler ask Jesus? “Good Master, what _____ thing shall I do, that I may have _____ life?” (Matthew 19:16)

3. How did Jesus respond to the rich young ruler’s question? “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the _____.” (Matthew 19:17)

Note: Matthew 19:18-19 clearly indicate that Jesus was referring to the Ten Commandments. At first sight, Jesus’ answer is perplexing. Are we not saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9)? Why, then, does Jesus make commandment keeping the litmus test for eternal life? As we proceed we shall understand the reason.

4. Does God expect less of us today than He expected of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? “The Lord expects no _____ of the soul now than He expected of man in Paradise; _____ obedience; unblemished _____.” (COL, p. 391.2)

5. **Thought Question:** In His answer to the rich young ruler, Jesus referred to the second table of the law. Which commandment did Jesus exclude? Which commandment did He include in its place and why?

6. What type of obedience did the rich young ruler render the law? “His conception of the law was _____ and _____. Judged by human standards, he had preserved an _____ character. To a great degree his _____ life had been free of guilt; he verily thought that his obedience had been without _____.” (COL, p. 391.4)

Note: “Many see much to admire in the life of Christ. But true love for him can never dwell in the heart of the self-righteous. Not to see our own deformity is not to see the beauty of Christ’s character. When we are fully awake to our own sinfulness, we shall appreciate Christ. The more humble are our views of ourselves, the more clearly we shall see the spotless character of Jesus.” (RH, September 25, 1900)

7. What was the canker sore of the rich young ruler’s soul? “He [Jesus] showed him the plague spot of his _____. The young man desired no further enlightenment. He had cherished an _____ in the soul; the _____ was his _____.” (COL, p. 392.1)

8. What was wrong with the rich young ruler’s law obedience? “He professed to have kept the commandments, but he was _____ of the _____ which is the very spirit and life of them all. He did not possess true _____ for God or man.” (COL, p. 392.1)

Note: The rich young ruler's obedience had the wrong motivating principle. Self, not love, was the driving force. Notice the following remarkable statement from the pen of Ellen White: "If the rich young ruler had seen by the light of the commandment that he was sinful, if, like Paul, he had honored God by obeying the commandments in **spirit** and in **truth**, his sinful nature would have been slain by the law, and he would have laid hold of eternal life." (RH, September 11, 1900)

9. What did the rich young ruler need to accept before he could serve Jesus as a preacher of righteousness? "But first he must accept the _____ of discipleship. He must give himself _____ to God." (COL, p. 393.1)

10. How did Levi Matthew respond to the call of Jesus? "And he left _____, rose up, and _____ him." (Luke 5:28)

11. What did the rich young ruler choose instead of Jesus? "The young man himself looked upon Christ with _____. His heart was drawn toward the Savior. But he was not ready to accept the Savior's principle of _____. He chose _____ before Jesus." (COL, p. 393.2)

Note: The rich young ruler wanted to have his cake and eat it too. He hoarded his riches in this world and yet hoped for eternal riches in the world to come. Jesus made it crystal clear that no one can serve two masters: "You cannot serve God and mammon." (Matthew 6:24)

12. How did Judas Iscariot feel about Jesus' demands upon the rich young ruler? "...Judas was _____. He thought that a mistake had been made. If such men as this ruler could be connected with the believers, they would help _____ Christ's cause. If Judas were only received as a counselor, he thought, he could suggest many _____ for the advantage of the little church. His principles and methods would _____ somewhat from Christ's, but in these things he thought himself _____ than Christ." (DA, p. 719.3)

The Disciples and Riches

1. How difficult did Jesus say it is for a rich man to be saved? "And again I say unto you, it is easier for a _____ to go through the eye of a _____ than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (Matthew 19:24)

Note: Ancient cities frequently had smaller gates beside the large city gates. In fact, Damascus actually has a gate called 'Needle's Eye.' G. Christian Weiss explains: "Camels loaded with sacks of grain, wood, charcoal, or other commodities entered the city daily. If a merchant should happen to arrive in the evening after the main gates of the city were closed, the only way he and his beast could possibly enter would be for the camel to be unloaded of all of its baggage and

made to kneel and literally crawl through the 'needle's eye' on his knees. Stripped bare and down to his knees! The clear implication is that a wealthy man, in order to become a Christian, must be ready to let go of his material wealth and humble himself to the level of a poverty-stricken sinner at the feet of Jesus." (Insights Into Bible Themes and Customs, p. 25)

2. What did the apostle Paul say about the danger of riches? "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a _____, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in _____ and perdition. For the love of money is the _____ of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have _____ from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Timothy 6:9-10)

3. How did the disciples react when Jesus said it was hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God? Why were they so alarmed? "When His disciples heard it, they were greatly _____, saying, 'Who then can be _____?'" "They [the disciples] had been taught to look upon the rich as the _____ of heaven. . . . if the rich were to fail of entering the kingdom, what _____ could there be for the rest of men?" (Matthew 19:25; COL, p. 393.3)

4. What will happen when we believe and practice the words of 1 Corinthians 6:19-20? "When men believe this, their _____ will be held as a _____, to be used as God shall direct, for the saving of the _____, and the comfort of the suffering and the poor." (COL, p. 394.4)

5. What did Jesus mean when He said: "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible?" (Matthew 19:26) "With man this [practicing the words of 1 Corinthians 6:19-20] is impossible, for the _____ clings to its _____ treasure. . . . But with God all things are possible. By beholding the _____ love of Christ, the selfish heart will be _____ and subdued." (COL, p. 394.4)

6. What spirit did Peter and the disciples reveal when he said to Jesus: "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" "But Peter's question. . . . had revealed a spirit that uncorrected would _____ the disciples to be messengers for Christ; for it was the spirit of a _____. While they had been attracted by the love of Jesus, the disciples were not wholly free from _____. They still worked with the thought of meriting a reward in proportion to their _____" (COL, p. 396.1)

7. What will be the reward of those who apply the principles Jesus taught? "And every one that hath _____ houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or _____, for My name's _____, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." (Matthew 19:29)

Note: Jesus was not telling us to become hermits or to take vows of poverty in order to enter eternal life. Neither is he telling us to forsake our families. Jesus is teaching us a lesson about priorities. That is to say, nothing can be allowed to stand in the way of our relationship with Jesus. He must occupy first place, our fellow-men second place and ourselves last place.

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables” Lesson #29 – The Reward of Grace – Part 2

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, 396-404; Matthew 20:1-16

Introduction

In this lesson, we will study the parable of the workers who went out to labor in the vineyard at different times of the day. In our study we shall find that in the original application of the parable, the owner of the vineyard represents God, the vineyard represents the world, the early workers represent Israel and the eleventh hour workers represent the Gentiles. We shall also find that the final application of the parable contains a solemn message for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

“For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. ² And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. ⁵ Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. ⁶ And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? ⁷ They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. ⁸ So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. ⁹ And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. ¹⁰ But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. ¹¹ And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house, ¹² Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. ¹³ However, he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? ¹⁴ Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. ¹⁵ Is it not lawful for me

to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? ¹⁶ So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen." (Matthew 20:1-16)

Setting and Central Truth

1. Did Jesus take a real life situation to illustrate the reward of grace? "It was the _____ for men seeking employment to wait in the market places, and thither the employers went to find servants." (COL, p. 396)

2. What central truths does this parable contain? "It is only through the _____ grace of Christ that any man can find _____ into the city of God. . . ." (COL, p. 394.3) [The parable illustrates] "the _____ in which God deals with His servants, and the _____ in which He desires them to labor for Him." (COL, p. 396.2)

3. What do the landowner and the hired laborers represent? "The householder's dealing with the workers in his vineyard represents _____ dealing with the _____ family." (COL, p. 396.5)

The Remuneration

1. Did the owner of the vineyard agree to pay the eleventh hour workers the same amount as those who worked longer? "Now when he had agreed with the laborers [of the first three shifts] for a _____ a day, he sent them into his vineyard. He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is _____ you will receive.'" (Matthew 20:2, 7)

Note: The owner of the vineyard agreed to pay the earlier hour workers one denarius but he did not make the same promise to the eleventh hour workers. He promised to pay them 'whatever is right'.

"In the parable the first laborers agreed to work for a _____ sum, and they received the amount specified, nothing more. Those later hired _____ the master's promise, "Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive." They showed their confidence in him by asking no question in regard to wages. They _____ to his justice and equity. They were rewarded, not according to the amount of their labor, but according to the _____ of his purpose." (COL, p. 397.1)

2. In what sense does God's method of compensation differ from that used by men? "In worldly business, compensation is given according to the _____ accomplished. The laborer expects to be paid only that which he _____. But in the parable, Christ was illustrating the principles of His kingdom—a kingdom not of this world. . . ." (COL, p. 396.5) "They [the laborers of the vineyard]

were _____, not according to the amount of their labor, but according to the _____ of his purpose.” (COL, p. 397.1)

1. What is the basis for our final reward? “His reward is given not according to our _____ but according to his own purpose. . . . ‘Not by works of righteousness which _____ have done, but according to His _____ He saved us.’” (COL, p. 397.2)

2. Thought Question: How can we reconcile Paul’s statement in Titus 3:5 with other texts that clearly teach that the reward will be according to our works? (Matthew 16:27; Revelation 22:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Matthew 25:34-40)

Working in the Right Spirit

1. With what spirit should Christ’s followers enter His service? “The Lord desires us to rest in Him without a _____ as to our measure of reward. When Christ abides in the soul, the thought of reward is not _____. This is not the motive that actuates our service.” (COL, p. 398)

2. What should be our motivation for serving others in the name of Jesus? “We should not be so anxious to gain the reward as to do what is _____, irrespective of all gain. _____ to God and to our fellow men should be our motive.” (COL, pp. 398, 399)

3. What is more important than the amount of labor that we do for Christ? “Not the amount of labor performed or its visible _____ but the _____ in which the work is done makes it of value with God.” (COL, p. 397.3)

4. What is most important to God, the amount of work we do or our faithfulness in doing it? “The smallest duty done in sincerity and self-forgetfulness is more _____ to God than the greatest work when marred with _____. He looks to see how much of the spirit of Christ we cherish, and how much of the likeness of Christ our work reveals. He regards more the _____ and faithfulness with which we work than the _____ we do.” (COL, p. 402.3)

5. What is the secret of success in laboring for Jesus? “Not in our learning, not in our position, not in our numbers or entrusted talents, not in the will of man, is to be found the _____ of success. Feeling our inefficiency we are to contemplate Christ, and through Him who is the strength of all strength, the thought of all thought, the _____ and obedient will gain victory after victory.” (COL, p. 404.1)

6. What was the spirit of the eleventh hour workers and how did they react when they were paid for a full day's work? "Those who came into the vineyard at the eleventh hour were _____ for an opportunity to work. Their hearts were full of _____ to the one who had accepted them; and when at the close of the day the householder paid them for a full day's work, they were greatly _____. They knew they had not _____ such wages. And the kindness expressed in the countenance of their employer filled them with joy." (COL, pp. 397, 398)

7. How does God look upon those who serve Him with self-caring motivations? "There is nothing more _____ to God than this narrow, self-caring spirit. He cannot work with any who manifest these attributes. They are _____ to the working of His Spirit." (COL, p. 400.1)

Individual Application of the Parable

1. In the individual application of the parable, whom do the early hour workers represent? "The first laborers of the parable represent those who, because of their services, claim _____ above others. They take up their work in a self-gratulatory spirit, and do not bring into it self-denial and sacrifice. They may have professed to serve God all their _____; they may have been foremost in enduring hardship, privation, and trial, and they therefore think themselves entitled to a large reward." (COL, pp. 399, 400)

Corporate Application of the Parable

1. In the 'corporate' application of the parable, whom do the early and latter workers represent?

"The _____ had been first called into the Lord's vineyard, and because of this they were _____ and self-righteous. Their _____ years of service they regarded as entitling them to receive a larger reward than others. Nothing was more exasperating to them than an intimation that the _____ were to be admitted to equal privileges with themselves in the things of God. (COL, p. 400.2)

2. Were the first laborers faithful to their trust? "The husbandmen who had been placed in charge of the Lord's vineyard were _____ to their trust. The priests and teachers were not faithful instructors of the people. They did not keep before them the goodness and mercy of God and His claim to their love and service. These husbandmen sought their own _____. They desired to appropriate the fruits of the vineyard. It was their study to attract attention and _____ to themselves." (COL, p. 292.1)

Dangers in the Church Age

1. Was there also a danger that the church would follow in the footsteps of the Jewish nation?

“Christ warned the disciples who had been first called to follow Him, lest the _____ evil should be cherished among them. He saw that the weakness, the curse of the _____, would be a spirit of self-righteousness.” (COL, p. 400)

Note: It did not take long for the church to fall into the same trap as the Jewish nation. Soon after the death of the apostles, the church lost its view of God’s grace and entangled itself in a system of merits and demerits. Pilgrimages, indulgences and penance came in as methods to purchase salvation.

The Eleventh Hour Workers

1. What attitude should we have toward those who have joined God’s ranks last?

“The first and the last are to be sharers in the great, eternal reward, and the first should gladly _____ the last. He who grudges the reward to another forgets that he himself is saved by grace alone. The parable of the laborers rebukes all _____ and suspicion.” (COL, p. 402)

2. What solemn warning does the parable provide to the earlier hour workers?

“This parable is a warning to all laborers, however _____ their service, however abundant their labors, that without _____ to their brethren, without _____ before God, they are nothing. There is no religion in the enthronement of self.” (COL, p. 402)

4. According to Ellen White, which period of human history is the eleventh hour?

“Even at _____ eleventh hour, there should be decided advancement made in the matter of a special preparatory work. In all our Conferences there should be well-organized plans for the instruction and training of those who desire to give themselves to the cause of God.” (GW, pp. 92, p. 284)

5. Ellen White describes a mass exodus from the Remnant Church at the end of time. Who will fill the places left vacant by the unfaithful?

“The _____ ranks will be _____ up by those represented by Christ as coming in at the eleventh hour.” (LDE, p. 181)

“But I speak not my own words when I say that God's Spirit will _____ by those who have had their day of test and opportunity, but who have not distinguished the voice of God or appreciated the movings of His Spirit. Then _____ in the eleventh hour will see and acknowledge the truth.” (2SM, p. 16)

6. Who, specifically, are represented by the eleventh hour workers?

“There are many souls to come out of the ranks of the _____, out of the churches--even the Catholic Church--whose _____ will far exceed that of those who have stood in rank and file to proclaim the truth heretofore. For this reason, the _____ hour laborers will receive their penny. These will see the battle coming and will give the trumpet a certain sound. When the crisis is upon us, when the season of _____ shall come, they will come to the front, gird themselves with the whole armor of God, and exalt His law, adhere to the faith of Jesus, and maintain the cause of religious liberty which reformers defended with toil and for which they sacrificed their lives.” (3SM, pp. 386, 387)

7. Why did God call the Seventh-day Adventist Church and what will happen if the Seventh-day Adventist organization proves unfaithful to her trust?

“In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and _____. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most _____ import--the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow _____ else to absorb their attention. The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to _____ to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our _____. The world is to be warned, and God's people are to be true to the trust committed to them.” (9T, p. 19)

“In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-day Adventist church is to be _____. She will be judged by the _____ and advantages that she has had. If her spiritual experience does not correspond to the advantages that Christ, at infinite cost, has bestowed on her, if the blessings conferred have not qualified her to do the work entrusted to her, on her will be pronounced the _____: "Found wanting." By the light bestowed, the opportunities given, will she be _____.” (8T, p. 247)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables” Lesson #30 - Into the Highways and Hedges

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 219-237; Luke 14:1; Luke 14:12-24; Acts 13:46-48; Isaiah 58:5-11

Introduction

In our lesson today we will study the parable of the Great Banquet. Though there are some similarities between this parable and the one in Matthew 22:1-14 (see lesson #23, “Without a Wedding Garment”), they are actually quite different. Let’s begin by taking a look at the historical occasion which led Jesus to tell this parable.

The Historical Occasion

1. Where was Jesus when he told the parable of the Great Banquet? “Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the _____ to eat _____ on the Sabbath, that they _____ Him.” (Luke 14:1)
2. How did Jesus take advantage of this situation to convey truth? “He accepted invitations from the rich as well as the poor, and according to his _____ He linked the scene _____ Him with His lessons of truth.” (COL, p. 219.1)

Note: Jesus actually told the parable about eating bread from God’s table at the great final banquet while He was eating bread from the table of a Pharisee. Jesus always employed real life situations to convey spiritual truth.

3. What concept did the Pharisees have of the great final banquet in God’s kingdom? “The great feast at which they were to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, while the _____ stood _____, and looked on with longing eyes, was a theme on which they _____ to dwell.” (COL, p. 219.1)

4. Immediately before telling this parable, Jesus told another to the same people in the same place? What was the parable and which central lesson did He seek to teach? “For whosoever _____ himself shall be _____; and he that _____ himself shall be _____.” (Luke 14:11)

Note: As we noticed in our last lesson, Jesus expressed the same lesson with the following words: “So the last shall be first, and the first last.” (Matthew 20:16)

The First Group of Guests

1. Who are represented by the first group of guests? “The Lord’s messengers had proclaimed to the _____ the advent of the Savior. . . . In the feast He had provided, _____ offered to **them** the greatest _____ that Heaven can bestow—a gift that is beyond computation.” (COL, p. 222.3)

2. What criterion did the Pharisee use to choose his banquet guests? “In choosing the guests for his _____, the Pharisee had consulted his own _____ interests.” (COL, p. 220.1)

Note: It is clear that the Pharisee’s guest list included only dignitaries and luminaries, family and friends. His main motivation in preparing the banquet was to hobnob with the bigwigs.

3. According to Jesus, who should have been on the Pharisee’s guest list and why? “When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy _____, nor thy _____, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy _____ neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and a _____ be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the _____, the _____, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be _____; for they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the _____ of the just.” (Luke 14:12-14)

4. Was Jesus’ idea of a guest list a totally new and revolutionary concept? “Christ was here _____ the instruction He had given to _____ through Moses.” (COL, p. 220.2)

5. What biblical text does Ellen White quote to prove her assertion in question # 3? _____.

6. Why did God impart abundant spiritual blessings to Israel? “The spiritual blessings given to Israel were not for _____ alone. God had given the bread of life to them, that they might _____ it to the world.” (COL, p. 220.2)

7. How did the guests react when Jesus suggested his guest list? “Christ’s words were a _____ to their selfishness. To the Pharisees His words were _____.” (COL, p.

221.1)

8. What did one of the guests do to remove the heat of Jesus' remark? "Hoping to turn the conversation into another _____, one of them, with a _____ air, exclaimed, 'Blessed is he that shall eat _____ in the kingdom of God.'" (COL, p. 221.1)

Note: The Pharisee who made this remark wished to shift the subject of conversation from his present duty to "the remote time of the resurrection of the just" (COL, p. 221.1) but Jesus would have none of it. He brought his mind back the subject at hand by telling a parable.

9. What was foremost in the mind of the Pharisee who changed the subject? "The Pharisee was not thinking of his own _____ for heaven but of what he hoped to _____ in heaven." (COL, p. 221.1)

10. What did Jesus say after healing a Roman centurion's servant? "And I say to you that many shall come from east and west, and _____ down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the _____ of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness, there will be _____ and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 8:11-12)

Note: These words of Jesus were revolutionary. The "sons of the kingdom" are the Jews and those who come from east and west are the Gentiles. As in the story of the rich man and Lazarus, in the great final banquet there would be a reversal of roles!

Excuses, Excuses

1. Three excuses were offered by the invitees to the banquet. Were any of them valid? "None of the excuses were founded on a _____ necessity." (COL, p. 222.1)

Note: All three invitees offered lame excuses. The land had already been bought and seeing it could have waited. The expression: "I **must** needs go" was an outright lie! The oxen had also been bought and the owner could have waited to test them (perhaps he should have tested them before he bought them!). The man who had just married a wife could have brought her with him to the banquet. It is obvious that the invitees simply did not wish to accept the invitation because they had other priorities in their lives. Coming to the banquet was on the back burner.

2. What did the words "I cannot come" really mean? "The 'I cannot' was only a _____ for the truth—I do not _____ to come." (COL, p. 222.1)

3. What was the fundamental problem with those who excused themselves from coming to the banquet? "All the excuses betray a _____ mind. To these intended guests other

_____ had become _____.” (COL, p. 222.2)

4. What is represented by the great supper and Who is the provision? “By the great supper, Christ represents the _____ offered through the gospel. The provision [of bread] is nothing less than _____ Himself.” (COL, p. 222.3)

Note: “In the feast He had provided, God offered them the greatest gift that Heaven can bestow—a gift that is beyond computation.” (COL, p. 222.3). John 6:1-71 makes it clear that the bread which was provided at the banquet, symbolizes the life we receive when we partake of Jesus through a study of His Word.

5. What needed to happen in order for the Jews to accept the invitation to the gospel feast? “But in order to accept the invitation to the gospel feast, they must make their _____ interests subordinate to the _____ purpose of receiving Christ and His righteousness.” (COL, p. 223.1)

Note: “He [Christ] cannot accept a divided heart. The heart that is absorbed in earthly affections cannot be given up to God.” (COL, p. 223.1)

The Second Group of Guests

1. Who was invited to the banquet when the first group of guests turned down the invitation? The master’s servant was commanded to “Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the _____ and the _____ and the _____ and the _____.” (Luke 14:21)

2. **Thought Question:** What do you think is represented by the “streets and lanes of the city”? Which city did Jesus refer to? _____

3. What did Jesus say to the chief priests and elders in Matthew 21:31? “Verily I say unto you, that the _____ and the _____ go into the kingdom of God before you.”

4. What command did Jesus give to the disciples of John? “Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see. The _____ receive their sight, the _____ walk, the lepers are _____, the _____ hear, the _____ are raised up, and the _____ have the gospel preached to them.” (Matthew 11:4-5; see also, Matthew 15:30-31; Luke 4:16-21)

5. Who remained in the temple after Jesus cleansed it the second time? “And the _____ and the _____ came to him in the temple; and he healed them.” (Matthew 21:14)

Note: Jesus repeatedly attempted to reach the religious cadre of the Jewish nation. But when they persistently rejected His call, he spent most of his time ministering to the publicans, the harlots, the blind, the maimed, the poor, the lame, the lepers and those who were afflicted by evil spirits. The second group of guests represents the outcasts of Jewish society to whom Jesus ministered.

6. Did these outcasts of Jewish society, the “scum of the earth” so to speak, accept the gospel invitation? _____ (see Luke 14:22)

The Third Group of Guests

1. There was still room in the banquet hall after the lame, the blind, the maimed and the poor had been gathered in. Who was compelled to come in next? “Go out into the _____ and the _____, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.” (Luke 14:23)

2. According to Ellen White, who is represented by this third group? “Here Christ pointed to the work of the gospel _____ the pale of _____, in the highways and byways of the world.” (COL, p. 226.1)

3. What instruction did Jesus give to the disciples when He sent them out to preach the gospel? “Go not into the way of the _____, and into any city of the _____ enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of house of _____.” (Matthew 10:5-6)

4. What instruction did Jesus give His followers immediately before His ascension? “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in _____, and in all _____, and in Samaria, and unto the _____ part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

5. When the Jews in Antioch of Pisidia rejected the message of Paul and Barnabas to whom did they turn? “Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should _____ have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the _____. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, ‘I have set thee to be a light of the _____, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the _____ of the earth.’” (Acts 13:46-47)

Lessons for Today

1. Who is repeating, to a great degree, the errors of the Jewish nation? “The message to the _____ is applicable to Seventh-day Adventists who have had great _____ and have not _____ in the light. It is those who have made great

_____, but have not kept in step with their Leader, that will be _____ out of His mouth unless they repent.” (2SM, p. 66.2)

2. How do marital relationships sometime interfere with heeding Christ’s call? “Many there are who allow their _____ or their _____ to prevent them from heeding the call of God.” (COL, p. 224.2; compare Luke 14:26-27)

3. What obstacle sometimes stands in the way of children accepting Christ’s call to the banquet feast? “The children’s hearts are impressed. They desire to _____. But they love their _____ and _____, and since these do not heed the gospel call, the children think that they cannot be expected to come.” (COL, p. 224.2)

4. What is said of those who refuse the gospel call because they wish to keep the family peace? “All these who refuse the Savior’s call because they fear _____ in the family circle. They suppose that in refusing to obey God they are _____ the peace and prosperity of the home; but this is a _____.” (COL, p. 225.1)

5. What else frequently stands in the way of accepting the invitation to the feast? “Men declare that they cannot imperil their _____ prospects by giving attention to the claims of the gospel. They count their _____ interests as of more value than the things of _____. The very _____ they have received from God become a _____ to separate their souls from their Creator and Redeemer.” (COL, p. 224.1)

God’s Final Invitation

1. What is God’s final call to the world before Jesus’ second coming? “Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of his _____ is come. And _____ him that made the heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” (Revelation 14:7)

2. How extensive will this call be? “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every _____, and kindred, and _____, and people.” “It is to reach all _____ of men, rich and poor, _____ and low.” (Revelation 14:6; (COL, p. 228.3)

3. What is the purpose of this end-time message? “It is intended to _____ them to a sense of eternal _____, that they may give heed to the _____ to the Lord’s table.” (COL, p. 228.2)

4. How will the final gospel proclamation be accomplished? “To a great degree this must be accomplished by _____ labor. This was Christ’s method. . . . (COL, p. 229.2) We are

not to wait for souls to come to ____; we must seek them out where they are. . . . There are multitudes who will never be _____ by the gospel unless it is _____ to them.” (COL, p. 229.3). We are to **go** Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15) not wait for people to **come**.

5. To whom must this message go first? “Men in business life, in _____ positions of trust, men with large _____ faculties and scientific insight, men of _____, teachers of the _____ whose minds have not been called to the special _____ for this time—these should be the _____ to hear the call.” (COL, p. 230.1)

6. Are these great men of the earth reachable? How can they be reached? “Many in high social positions are _____, and sick of vanity. They are longing for a _____ which they have not. . . . Many would receive help if the Lord’s workers would approach them _____, with a _____ manner, a heart made tender by the _____ of Christ.” (COL, p. 231.1)

7. Upon what does the success of the gospel message depend? “The success of the gospel message does not depend upon _____ speeches, eloquent _____, or deep _____. It depends upon the _____ of the message and its _____ to the souls that are hungering for the bread of life.” (COL, p. 231.2)

8. What will happen when the human agent wrestles with God and prayer and works will all the faculties that God has given him?? “The Holy Spirit is provided as his _____. Ministering _____ will be by his side to impress _____.” (COL, p. 232.3)

9. What is meant by the “byways and hedges” today? “Christ instructs His messengers to go also to those in the byways and hedges, to the _____ and _____ of the earth.” (COL, p. 232.5)

Note: Ellen White further describes these as those who are “pressed with suffering, want, unbelief, despondency. Disease of every type afflicts them, both in body and in soul.” (COL, p. 232.5)

10. What are many of these lowly people seeking for and what does Satan offer them? “They long to find a _____ for their troubles, and Satan tempts them to seek it in lusts and _____ that lead to ruin and death. He is offering them the apples of _____, that will turn to _____ upon their lips.” (COL, p. 232.5)

11. Who else is represented by those in the byways and hedges? “There are those who are living up to all the _____ they have, and are serving God the best they know how. . . . They are longing for an _____ knowledge of God, but they have only begun to see the _____ of greater light.” (COL, p. 234.2)

12. What is meant by the expression “compel them to come in”? It does not mean that we should force people to accept the message. “But it denotes rather the _____ of the invitation and the _____ of the inducements presented.” (COL, p. 235.1)

13. What will happen with many of those who have had great opportunities but have not prized them? “Many will come from the _____ error and sin, and will take the _____ of others who have had _____ and privileges but have not prized them.” (COL, p. 236.1)

14. How does the Holy Spirit work to constrain people to come to the feast? “Heavenly _____ are still working in co-operation with human agencies. The Holy Spirit is presenting every inducement to _____ you to come..” (COL, p. 237.2)

15. What is all heaven waiting for? “The hosts of heaven are waiting, ready to strike their harps and sing a song of _____ that another soul has _____ the invitation to the gospel feast.” (COL, p. 237.2)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #31 - The Living Manna

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: DOA, pp. 383-394; PP, pp. 291-302; Exodus 16:1-36; Deuteronomy 8:3; Joshua 5:12; Revelation 2:17; John 6:1-71

Introduction

In 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 the apostle Paul reviews several events in ancient Israel’s journey from Egypt to Canaan. As he draws his description to a close, he explains that these events were of more than historical interest: “Now all these things happened unto them for **ensamples** [types] and they are written **for our admonition**, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” (1 Corinthians 10:11). In our lesson today we will study one of those historical types, the manna which fell in the wilderness for forty years. The apostle Paul refers to this Manna as “spiritual meat.” Let us begin by taking a look at the textual setting of the manna episode in the book of Exodus.

The Textual and Historical Setting

1. What was the condition of Israel in the land of Egypt? “And the _____ made the children of Israel to _____ with rigor; and they made their lives _____ with hard _____.” (Exodus 1:13-14)
2. What did the children of Israel do because of their bondage? “And the children of Israel _____ by reason of the bondage, and they _____, and their cry came up unto God by _____ of the bondage.” (Exodus 2:23)
3. How did God respond to Israel’s groans? “And God _____ their groaning, and God _____ his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had _____ unto them.” (Exodus 2:24-25)

4. What sign did God give Israel to commemorate their release from Egypt? _____.
(Exodus 12:13)

5. What happened next to Israel? The apostle Paul affirms that Israel was “_____ unto Moses in the cloud and in the _____.” (1 Corinthians 10:2)

Note: Israel’s lurid past was buried in the Red Sea. Their tormentors were buried in the waters and they came forth to newness of life.

6. To what land was God leading the children of Israel? “And I am come down to _____ them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a _____ land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and _____; unto the place of the _____, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.” (Exodus 3:8)

7. What did God give the children of Israel to physically nourish them and preserve their health on their journey to Canaan? _____ (Exodus 16:4)

Note: We too are on a journey from Egypt (the world) to Canaan (heaven). We too were in bondage to sin. We too cried out for deliverance. We too were delivered by the blood of the lamb. We too were baptized. Our old man was buried in the waters and we have risen to newness of life. But we still have a wilderness to cross before we can enter Canaan. We need the nourishment provided by God’s word in order to make it there.

Heavenly and Earthly

1. Where did the manna come from? “And he _____ down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of _____. Man did eat _____ food; he sent them meat to the full.” (Psalm 78:24-25)

Note: The manna was rained from heaven by the angels but it was composed of earthly nutrients which supplied the full dietary needs of human beings. In this sense, the manna was both heavenly and earthly.

2. Who is symbolized by the manna? “I am the living _____ which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for _____, and the bread that I will give is my _____, which I will give for the life of the world.” (John 6:51)

3. In what sense is Jesus heavenly? “In the beginning was the _____ and the word was with God and the word was _____.” (John 1:1; see also, Matthew 1:23)

4. In what sense is Jesus earthly? “And the word was made _____ and _____ among us.” (John 1:14; see also, Hebrews 2:14-18)

5. Where did the message of the written Word of God come from? “All scripture is given by _____ of _____, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” (2 Timothy 3:16)

Note: The message of the Bible is divinely inspired, that is to say, it is of heavenly origin. It did not come by the will of man.

6. Is there also a human element in the Word of God? “For the prophecy came not of old time by the will of man, but holy _____ of God _____ as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (2 Peter 1:21)

Note: The Word of God also contains a human element because holy men spoke God’s Word in human language. Ellen White amplifies the divine/human character of Scripture: “The Bible points to **God** as its author; yet it was written by **human** hands. . . . (1SM, p. 25.1) . . . the Bible, with its **God-given** truths expressed in the **language of men**, presents a union of the **divine** and the **human**.” (1SM, p. 25.2)

7. How is Jesus assimilated by the believer today? “It is the _____ that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the _____ that I speak unto you, they are _____, and they are life.” (John 6:63)

The Literal and the Spiritual

1. Who sent the manna from heaven? “Then the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, ___ will rain bread from heaven _____ you.” (Exodus 16:4)

Note: This is an important detail because the Jews of Christ’s day trusted in Moses (John 5:45) and attributed the giving of the manna to him. (John 6:31-32)

2. According to Ellen White, who actually gave Israel the bread from heaven? “The giver of the manna was _____ among them. It was Christ Himself who had _____ the Hebrews through the wilderness, and had daily fed them with the bread from heaven.” (DA, p. 385.5)

3. Did God give the manna to merely satisfy Israel’s physical hunger? “And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to _____, and fed thee with _____, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by _____ only, but by every _____ that proceedeth out of the _____ of God doth man live.”

(Deuteronomy 8:3)

4. What did the apostle Paul say about the manna that God gave Israel in the wilderness? “And did all eat the same _____ meat.” (1 Corinthians 10:3)

Note: Exodus 16:4 indicates that Moses did not send the manna from heaven, God did. Furthermore, Deuteronomy 8:3 and 1 Corinthians 10:3 clearly indicate that the manna was not mere physical food but rather a symbol of spiritual food.

5. Why did the multitudes of Galilee follow Jesus? “And a great _____ followed him, because they saw his _____ which he did on them that were diseased. . . . Then those men, when they had seen the _____ that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that _____ that should come into the world.” (John 6:2; John 6:14)

Note: The multitude followed Jesus because He was a great miracle worker. But when He told them that they must assimilate the principles of His character, they forsook Him. Amplifying this point, Ellen White states: “They had welcomed His miracle working power; they were eager to be freed from disease and suffering; but they would not come into sympathy with His self-sacrificing life. They cared not for the mysterious spiritual kingdom of which He spoke.” (DA, p. 391.3)

6. What evidence do we have that the multitudes of Galilee failed to see the profound significance of the manna? “Jesus answered them and said, _____, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the _____, but because ye did _____ of the loaves, and were filled.” (John 6:26)

Note: A fundamental reason why the Jewish nation rejected Jesus is because they failed to discern the deep spiritual significance of the Old Testament types. They failed to distinguish form from substance. They wanted a literal kingdom with a literal king who would literally defeat the Romans. When Jesus spoke of the kingdom, He was referring to a spiritual kingdom implanted in the heart (John 6:15; Luke 17:21).

When Jesus said: “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up,” (John 2:19-21), they took Him literally instead of seeing that He was speaking of His body. The Jews were expecting literal Elijah to prepare the way for the coming of Messiah but they rejected John the Baptist who came in the spirit and power of Elijah (John 1:21; Luke 1:17). They thought that literal circumcision had merit when God intended for them to have circumcised hearts Romans 2:28-29). The religious leaders attached literal phylacteries [pieces of parchment with Bible texts written on them] to their foreheads as a sign of piety when God meant that Scripture should be implanted in the brain (Matthew 23:5; Psalm 119:11). Nicodemus wondered how a man could

literally enter his mother's womb to be born again when Jesus was speaking of spiritual birth (John 3:1ff).

7. How did the multitudes react when Jesus told them that they must eat His flesh and drink His blood? "The Jews therefore _____ among themselves, saying, How can this man _____ us his flesh to eat?" (John 6:52)

Note: Ellen White remarks: "But the Jews had come to make the symbol all-important, while its significance was unnoticed. They discerned not the Lord's body." (DA, p. 388.3)

8. Did the apostle Peter comprehend what Jesus meant by eating His flesh and drinking His blood? "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? _____ hast the _____ of eternal life." (John 6:68)

9. What does it mean to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus? "As we must eat for ourselves in order to receive _____, so we must receive the word for ourselves. We are not to obtain it merely through the medium of _____ mind. We should carefully study the Bible, asking God for the aid of the Holy Spirit, that we may understand His word. We should take _____ verse, and concentrate the mind on the task of ascertaining the thought which _____ has put in that verse for us. We should dwell upon the thought until it becomes _____ own, and we know "what saith the Lord." (DA, p. 390.4)

10. For whom were the promises and warnings of God's word intended? "In His promises and warnings, Jesus means _____. . . . The experiences related in God's word are to be _____ experiences. Prayer and promise, precept and warning, are _____. . . . The word of God, received into the _____, molds the thoughts and enters into the development of _____." (DA, p. 390.5)

11. What attracts and repels multitudes of people? "When the _____ follow, and the multitudes are fed, and the _____ of triumph are heard, their voices are loud in praise; but when the searching of God's Spirit reveals their _____, and bids them _____ it, they turn their backs upon the truth, and walk no more with Jesus." (DA, p. 392.3)

Lessons from the Manna

1. What did the Israelites need to do in order to obtain the manna? "I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall _____ out and _____ a certain rate every day." (Exodus 16:4)

Note: God sent the manna but Israel was required to go out, gather it and eat it. There was no home delivery service. Gathering the manna took time and effort. So it is with the word of God.

We must seek it and eat it. This also takes time and effort.

2. Who was commanded to gather the manna? “And they gathered it every morning, _____ man according to his _____.” (Exodus 16:21; Exodus 16:18)

Note: It was not the responsibility of the priest to home deliver the manna. Each person in the congregation was required to gather the manna for himself. In the same way, the study of God’s word is an individual endeavor.

3. How did the manna taste? “And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna. . . and the _____ of it was like wafers made with _____.” (Exodus 16:31)

Note: Psalm 19:10 explains that the revelation of God is “sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.” In Psalm 119:103 David exclaimed: “How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” And the prophet Jeremiah affirmed: “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.” (Jeremiah 15:16)

4. How frequently were the people to seek out the manna? “I will rain bread from heaven. . . . and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate _____ day.” (Exodus 16:4)

Note: The manna was to be gathered each day. Gathering and eating the manna one day a week would eventually mean physical death. In the same way we need a fresh experience in God’s Word every day. It is not enough to “snack on the word” now and then. We must partake of God’s word on a daily basis. This is why Jesus said: “Give us, **this day**, our daily bread.”

5. At what time of the day were the Israelites to gather the manna? “And they gathered it every _____ . . . and when the sun waxed hot, it _____.” (Exodus 16:21)

Note: The best time to feed on the Word is in the morning when the body is rested and the mind is fresh.

6. At what time of the day did Jesus have his closest communion with the Father? “And in the _____, rising up a great while before _____, he went out, and departing into a _____ place, and there he prayed.” (Mark 1:35; see also, Psalm 5:3)

7. Was the provision of manna sufficient for the entire congregation? “And when they did _____ it with an omer, he that gathered _____ had nothing over, and he that gathered _____ had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating.” (Exodus 16:18)

Note: There is sufficient spiritual food in the word of God to supply the nutritional needs of every person in the world.

8. How did the apostle Paul apply the lesson of Exodus 16:18? “For I mean not that other men be _____, and ye burdened; but by equality, that now at this time your _____ may be a supply for their _____, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want that there may be _____; as it is written, ‘He that had gathered _____ had nothing over, and he that had gathered _____ had no lack.’” (2 Corinthians 8:13-15)

9. **Thought Question:** Do you think that the manna had all the necessary nutrients (proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals) to maintain life and good health? _____

Note: God incorporated in one food all the necessary nutrients to sustain life and health. There can be no doubt that the manna contained the perfect balance of protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. In the same way, the only food that is necessary for spiritual life and health is the Bible. When Israel demanded another kind of food they got physically sick Numbers 11:1-9). Likewise, when we partake of spiritual “junk food” such as reading of novels, watching movies, etc., we become spiritually sick.

“Satan knows that to a great degree the mind is affected by that upon which it feeds. He is seeking to lead both the youth and those of mature age to read story-books, tales, and other literature. The readers of such literature become unfitted for the duties lying before them. They live an unreal life, and have no desire to search the Scriptures, to feed upon the heavenly manna. The mind that needs strengthening is enfeebled, and loses its power to study the great truths that relate to the mission and work of Christ,—truths that would fortify the mind, awaken the imagination, and kindle a strong, earnest desire to overcome as Christ overcame.” (MYP, p. 271.3)

A Messianic Prophecy

1. What Hebrew feast was soon to occur when the events of John 6:1-71 took place? “And the _____, a feast of the Jews, was _____.” (John 6:4)

Note: When Jesus fed the five thousand and spoke about the manna, the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread were at hand.

2. What important fact does Ellen White reveal concerning the manna and the showbread? “Both the manna and the showbread pointed to _____, the living bread who is ever in the _____ of God for us.” (FLB, p. 197.2)

3. On which day of the week did the priests replace the shewbread? “And thou shalt set them [the loaves] in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure _____ before the LORD. . . Every _____ he [the priest] shall set it in order before the LORD _____, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.” (Leviticus 24:6; Leviticus 24:8)

4. What happened to the manna when some disobedient Israelites saved it from one day for the next? “Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning and it bred _____, and _____, and Moses was wroth with them.” (Exodus 16:20)

5. Did the manna breed worms and stink when the people gathered Sabbath’s portion on Friday? “And they laid it up till the [Sabbath] morning, as Moses bade, and it did not _____, neither was there any _____ therein.” (Exodus 16:24)

6. On which day of the week did the body of Jesus remain in the tomb? _____
(Study the sequence of days in Luke 23:54-56 to answer this question)

6. Did the body of Jesus experience corruption in the tomb? “He [David] seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his _____ was not left in hell [*sheol/hades*], neither his _____ did see _____.” (Acts 2:31)

Note: The meaning of all this is clear. Decomposing dead bodies breed worms and stink. The body of Jesus did not experience corruption while He was in the tomb on the Sabbath, because he was the living manna. He was the unleavened shewbread which was placed fresh on the table each Sabbath. Leaven is a symbol of sin but the body of Jesus had no sin.

Manna and the Sabbath

1. What counsel did God give about gathering manna on the Sabbath and why? “Six days ye shall gather it; but on the _____ day, which is the _____, in it there shall be none. . . . See, for that the LORD hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread for two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.” (Exodus 16:26; Exodus 16:29)

Note: The manna fell for a period of 40 years. This means that God taught Israel the lesson of Sabbath observance 2080 times.

2. What evidence do we have in Exodus 16:1-36 that the Sabbath pre-existed the giving of the law on Mount Sinai? When some Israelites went out to gather manna on the Sabbath, God rebuked them by saying: “How long refuse ye to keep my _____ and my

_____?" (Exodus 16:28)

3. What does Ellen White tell us concerning Sabbath observance? "In no _____ should our own business be allowed to _____ upon holy time. . . . Work that is neglected until the beginning of the Sabbath should remain _____ until it is past." (PP, p. 296.1)

A Lesson in Health Reform

1. What complaint did the children of Israel lodge against God in the wilderness? "And the mixed _____ that was among them fell a _____; and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us _____ to eat?" (Numbers 11:4)

2. What happened to the Israelites as a result of their gluttonous appetite for flesh food? "And while the flesh was yet between their _____, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague." (Numbers 11:33)

Note: In giving the manna God wished to teach Israel the benefits of a simple vegan diet and the detrimental effects of flesh food. At first sight this appears to be a very literal lesson, but a closer look reveals a deep spiritual significance. Our ability to comprehend and assimilate the Word of God depends to a great degree upon clarity of mind and clarity of mind depends on what we eat. Time and again we have been instructed that the central purpose of health reform is to have clarity of mind so as to have the ability to discern the will of God as revealed in His word.

3. What does Ellen White say concerning the health benefits of the manna? "The manna with which He fed them in the wilderness was of a nature to _____ physical, mental, and moral strength. . . . Notwithstanding the _____ of their wilderness life, there was not a _____ one in all their tribes." (CG, p. 378.2)

4. What were the consequences of Daniel's healthy diet? "And at the end of the ten days their [Daniel and his friends] countenances appeared _____ and _____ in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat. . . . And in all matters of _____ and _____, that the king enquired of them, he found them _____ times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." (Daniel 1:14-15; Daniel 1:20)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #32 - The Living Water

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: DOA, pp. 183-195; 448-454; Exodus 17:1-8; Numbers 20:8-11; John 4:10; John 4:13-14; John 7:37-39

Introduction

Since time immemorial people have unsuccessfully searched for the fountain of eternal youth. In this lesson we will study two Old Testament and two New Testament episodes that depict Jesus as that fountain from whom all blessings flow. The first Old Testament passage is in Exodus 17:1-8 and the second is found in Numbers 20:8-11. The first New Testament passage is in John 4:1-54 and the second is in John 7:37-39. Let's begin with the two Old Testament passages.

Old Testament Rock Passages

The Rock

1. According to Moses, who is represented by the rock? “_____ is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of _____ and without iniquity, just and right is he.” (Deuteronomy 32:4)

2. How does the apostle Paul corroborate the words of Moses? “And did all drink the same _____ drink: for they drank of that spiritual _____ that followed them: and that Rock was _____.” (1 Corinthians 10:4)

The Rod

1. What is represented by the rod? “If they [David's house] break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the _____, and their iniquity with _____.” (Psalm 89:31-32)

2. What should parents use the rod for? “He that spareth his _____ hateth his son: but he that loveth him _____ him betimes. . . . Withhold not _____ from the child: for if thou _____ him with the rod, he shall not die.” (Proverbs 13:24; Proverbs 23:13-14)

3. What solemn words were spoken by Job when he felt forsaken of God? “Let him take his _____ away from me, and let not his fear _____ me.” (Job 9:34)

Note: Every time Moses raised his rod, God’s judgment fell upon the Egyptians. The rod represents God’s punishment or judgment (see also, Isaiah 11:4).

Striking the Rock

1. Who was standing upon the Rock in Horeb when Moses struck it? “Behold, ____ will stand before thee there _____ the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt _____ the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.” (Exodus 17:6)

2. Upon whom should the rod of God’s judgment have fallen? “And the _____ thirsted there for water; and the _____ murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?” (Exodus 17:3)

3. What is represented by the rod striking the rock? “Surely he [Jesus] hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him _____, _____ of God and afflicted. But he was _____ for our transgressions, he was _____ for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his _____ we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:4-5; see also, Zechariah 13:7)

The Living Water

1. Of what did the prophet Jeremiah accuse Israel before the Babylonian captivity? “For my people have committed two _____; they have forsaken the _____ of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, _____ cisterns, that can hold no water.” (Jeremiah 2:13)

2. What is symbolized by the water that gushed out of the rock? “For by one _____ are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to _____ into one _____.” (1 Corinthians 12:13)

3. What does Ellen White say about the meaning of the water? “Christ combines the two _____. He is the _____. He is the _____ water.” (PP, p. 412.3)
4. Does the Old Testament use water in this metaphorical sense? “As the hart panteth after the _____ brooks, _____ panteth my _____ after thee, O God.” (Psalm 42:1)
5. Is there any real discrepancy between Paul’s declaration in 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Ellen White’s statement in PP, p. 412.3? “It is through the Spirit that Christ _____ in us; and the Spirit of God, received into the _____ by faith, is the beginning of the _____ eternal.” (DA, p. 388.1; see also, John 6:63)

Striking the Rock Twice

1. Why was Moses to strike the rock only once? Why was Moses’ sin so grievous? “Our Savior was not to be sacrificed a _____ time. . . . (PP, p. 411.3) By his rash act Moses took away the force of the _____ that God purposed to teach. The rock, being a _____ of Christ, had been once smitten, as Christ was to be once offered.” (PP, p. 418.1)

Note: Hebrews 7:27; Hebrews 9:25-28 clearly underlines the fact that Jesus only needed to fall under the judgment of God once. In the light of these verses, the sacrifice of the mass is just as blasphemous as Moses striking the rock the second time.

2. Why did God command Moses to speak to the rock the second time? “. . . it is only necessary for those who seek the blessings of His grace to _____ in the name of Jesus, pouring forth the heart’s desire in penitential prayer. Such a prayer will bring before the Lord of hosts the _____ of Jesus, and then will _____ forth afresh the life-giving blood, symbolized by the flowing of the living water for Israel.” (PP, p. 411.3)

3. **Thought Question:** What would have happened to Israel if God had not miraculously given them water from the rock? _____ How does this apply to us today as we cross the desert of life? _____

New Testament Rock Episodes

Encounter with the Woman of Samaria

1. Where was Jesus when He encountered the Samaritan woman? He was at Jacob’s _____ near the town of _____. (John 4:5-6)

2. At what hour of the day did Jesus meet the Samaritan woman? “It was about the _____ hour.” (John 4:6)

Note: The Jews measured the light portion of the day in twelve equal segments (John 11:9). This means that the sixth hour was high noon when the sun was beating down at its highest intensity.

3. Why was it not possible for Jesus to satisfy His thirst at the well? “The woman saith unto Him, ‘Sir, thou hast nothing to _____ with, and the well is _____; from whence then hast thou that living water?’” (John 4:11)

Note: Significant here is the fact that Jesus possessed the power to perform a miracle to satisfy His thirst. But none of the miracles of Jesus were performed to satisfy His own needs. Ellen White remarks: “He who made the ocean, who controls the waters of the great deep, who opened the springs and channels of the earth, rested from His weariness at Jacob’s well, and was dependent upon a stranger’s kindness for even the gift of a drink of water.” (DA, p. 183.4) Does this have a lesson for us today?

4. Where were the disciples when Jesus met the woman of Samaria? “For His disciples were gone away unto the _____ to buy _____.” (John 4:8)

5. How did Jesus find the key to this woman’s heart? “The hatred between Jews and Samaritans prevented the woman from offering a _____ to Jesus; but the Savior was seeking to find the _____ to this heart, and with the _____ born of divine love, He asked, not offered, a _____. The offer of a kindness might have been rejected; but _____ awakens trust.” (DA, p. 183.4)

6. In what way does Jesus contrast with the cisterns of the earth? “Whosoever drinketh of this water [at Jacob’s well] shall _____ again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall _____ thirst. . . .” (John 4:13-14)

Note: Ellen White explains: “The cisterns will be _____, the pools become _____; but our Redeemer is an _____ fountain. We may drink, and drink again, and ever find a _____ supply.” (DA, p. 187.3)

7. What did the woman need to recognize before Jesus could help her? “Before this soul could receive the _____ He longed to bestow, she must be brought to recognize her _____ and her Savior.” (DA, p. 187.5)

8. What tactful method did Jesus employ to convict her of sin? “Jesus said unto her, ‘Go, call thy _____, and come hither.’ The woman answered and said, ‘I have no husband.’ Jesus

said unto her, 'Thou hast well said, I have no husband; for thou hast had _____ husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.'" (John 4:16-18)

Note: Jesus could have immediately denounced her sin but this would have closed her heart to His influence. Jesus simply made a statement of fact: "You have had five husbands and the one you presently live with is not your husband." (John 4:18) "While the very purity of His presence condemned her sin, He had spoken no work of denunciation, but had told her of His grace, that could renew the soul." (DA, p. 189.3)

9. What thoughts came to the woman's mind when her sin was pointed out? "There came to her thoughts of _____, of the future _____, when all that is now hidden shall be _____. In its light, _____ was awakened." (DA, p. 187.6; see also, John 16:8)

10. What did the woman do to quiet the voice of her conscience? "Then, hoping to silence _____, she turned to points of _____ controversy." (DA, p. 188.1)

11. How did Jesus turn the subject of religious controversy between the Jews and the Samaritans to His advantage? "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall _____ in this mountain, nor yet at _____, worship the Father. . . . But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true _____ shall worship the Father in _____ and in _____ for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." (John 4:21; John 4:23)

12. **Thought Questions:** What did Jesus mean when He said that "salvation is of the Jews?" What did Jesus mean when He said that in the future people would no longer have to worship at holy shrines? How did Jesus' remarks in John 4:22-24 tear down the barrier between Jew and Samaritan? _____

13. What did Jesus mean when He said that we must worship God in spirit and in truth? "The religion that _____ from God is the only religion that will lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be _____ of the divine Spirit. This will _____ the heart and renew the _____, giving us a new capacity for _____ and loving God. It will give us a _____ obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship. It is the _____ of the working of the Holy Spirit." (DA, p. 189.2)

14. What is represented by the water which Jesus offered the woman of Samaria? "The water of life, the _____ life which Christ gives to every _____ soul, had begun to spring up in her heart. The _____ of the Lord was working with her." (DA, p. 190.2)

15. What progression can be seen in the woman's consciousness of Jesus' identity? First she saw Jesus as a _____. Then she discerned that he was a _____. Finally, she accepted him as the _____. (John 4:9; John 4:19; John 4:28-29)

The Disciples Return from the City

1. What did Jesus tell His disciples when they offered Him the food they had purchased in the city? "My meat is to do the _____ of Him that sent Me, and to _____ His work." (John 4:34)

2. What did Jesus mean by the words of John 4:34? "He saw her drinking of the water of life, and His own hunger and thirst were _____. . . . To minister to a soul hungering and thirsting for the _____ was more grateful to Him than eating or _____. It was a comfort, a _____ to Him. _____ was the life of His soul." (DA, p. 190.5)

3. What does Jesus hunger and thirst for today? "Our Redeemer thirsts for _____. He hungers for the _____ and love of those whom He has purchased with His own blood. . . . As the _____ watches for the smile of recognition from her little _____ which tells of the dawning of intelligence, so does Christ watch for the expression of grateful love, which shows that spiritual life is _____ in the soul." (DA, p. 191.1)

The Woman Returns to the City

1. What did the woman leave at the well which showed that the message of Jesus hit home? "The woman then _____ her water pot, and went her way into the city." (John 4:28).

Note: No longer was literal water uppermost in this woman's mind. She totally forgot the original reason for coming to the well. Now she needed to tell others about the marvelous water she had found!

2. What did the woman do immediately after drinking from the well of life eternal? "With heart overflowing with _____, she hastened on her way, to _____ to others the precious light she had received." (DA, p. 191.2; John 4:28-29)

3. Why would anyone in the city have listened to such an immoral woman? "There was a new _____ on her face, a _____ in her whole appearance. They were interested to see _____." (DA, p. 191.3)

4. If there were still four months until the reaping season, how could the fields be white, ready for the harvest? “Then they [the inhabitants of the city] went out of the city and _____ unto Him.” (John 4:30)

Note: The fields which Jesus pointed symbolized people of the Sychar. The inhabitants of Sychar were ripe, ready to be harvested (see John 4:41)

5. What did Jesus mean when He said to His disciples: “And herein is that saying true, ‘One soweth, and another reapeth.’ I sent you to _____ that whereon ye bestowed no _____; other men labored, and ye are _____ into their labors?” (John 4:37-38)

Note: “The Savior was here looking forward to the great _____ on the day of Pentecost. The disciples were not to regard this as the result of their own _____. They were entering into other men’s labors. . . . By the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, _____ were to be converted in a day. This was the result of Christ’s sowing, the harvest of _____ work.” (DA, p. 192.1)

6. How long did Jesus tarry in Samaria? “And when the Samaritans were _____ unto Him, they _____ Him that he should tarry with them; and he abode there _____ days.” (John 4:40)

7. What evidence do we have that the woman was merely an instrument in God’s hands to reach the inhabitants of Samaria? “And many more believed because of his _____ word; and said unto the woman: ‘Now we _____, not because of _____ saying; for we have heard him _____, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.’” (John 4:41-42)

8. How did Jesus gain the confidence of the Samaritans? “In face of their prejudices He accepted the _____ of this despised people. He _____ under their roofs, ate with them at their _____—partaking of the food prepared and served by their hands,—taught in their _____, and treated them with the utmost kindness and courtesy.” (DA, p. 193.2)

9. How did the ministry of Jesus in Judea contrast with His ministry in Samaria? “When Jesus sat down to rest at Jacob’s well, He had come from _____, where His ministry had produced little _____. . . . He was faint and weary; yet He did not _____ the opportunity of speaking to one _____, though she was a _____, an alien from Israel, and living in _____ sin.” (DA, p. 194.3)

10. How does the story of the woman of Samaria teach us a lesson about the far-reaching potential of a one soul audience? “The worker for Christ should not feel that he cannot speak with the same _____ to a few hearers as to a larger company. There may be only _____ to hear the message; but who can tell how far-reaching will be its influence?” (DA, p. 194.4)

11. What contrast existed between the disciples and the Samaritan woman? “Their thoughts were fixed upon a great work to be done in the _____. They did not see that right around them was a _____ to be gathered. But through the woman whom they despised, a whole _____ were brought to hear the Savior. She carried the light at _____ to her countrymen.” (DA, p. 195.1)

12. What will characterize every true disciple of Jesus? “Every true disciple is _____ into the kingdom of God as a _____. He who drinks of the living water becomes a _____ of life. The receiver becomes a _____. The grace of Christ in the soul is like a spring in the _____, welling up to refresh all, and making those who are ready to perish eager to drink of the water of life.” (DA, p. 195.2)

At the Feast of Tabernacles

1. What awesome words did Jesus cry out on the final day of the Feast of Tabernacles? “If any man _____, let him come unto me, and _____.” (John 7:37)

2. What condition were the people in when Jesus spoke these words? “The morning of this day found the people _____ from the long season of festivity. . . . The condition of the people made his appeal very _____.” (DA, p. 453.3)

3. What had the priest celebrated that very morning? “The priest had that morning performed the ceremony which commemorated the smiting of the _____ in the wilderness. That rock was a symbol of Him who by His death would cause living streams of salvation to flow to all who are athirst. Christ’s _____ were the water of life.” (DA, p. 454.1)

4. Of what did this impressive ceremony consist? “Here [next to the altar in the court] were two silver basins, with a priest standing at each one. The flagon of _____ was poured into one, and a flagon of _____ into the other; and the contents of both flowed into a pipe which communicated with the Kedron, and was conducted to the _____ Sea.” (DA, p. 449.1)

5. According to the episodes in John 4:1-54 and John 7:1-53, what will characterize those who truly trust in Jesus? “But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a _____ of water springing into everlasting life. . . . He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his

_____ shall flow _____ of living water.” (John 4:14; John 7:38)

6. What awesome invitation does Jesus make to those who are thirsty? “And let him that is athirst _____ . And whosoever _____ , let him take the water of life _____ .” (Revelation 22:17)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #33 - Judging the Sheep and the Goats

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: DOA, pp. 637-641; Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 9:4-5; Mark 9:41-42; Zechariah 2:8

Introduction

The subject of study in this lesson is the parable of the sheep and the goats. There are several issues that we must consider as we move along in our study. Whom was Jesus addressing in this parable? Who are the brethren of Jesus? When will this scene taking place? What determines the reward of the righteous and of the wicked? How is Jesus depicted in the parable? We will seek to answer these and other questions as we proceed.

The Historical Setting

1. To whom did Jesus originally address the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13) and the ten talents (Matthew 25:14-30)? Was he addressing believers or unbelievers? _____.
2. Whom did Jesus say are His brethren? “For whosoever shall do the _____ of God, the same is my _____, and my sister, and mother.” (Mark 3:35)
3. According to Ellen White, in the strictest sense of the word, who are the brethren of Jesus? “All who have been _____ into the heavenly family are in a _____ sense the brethren of our Lord.” (DA, p. 638.1)
4. How did Jesus refer to His disciples after His resurrection from the dead? “Go to my _____, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and _____ Father; and to my God, and _____ God.” (John 20:17)

5. How does Jesus refer to those who have been sanctified? “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are _____ are all of one; for which cause he is not _____ to call them _____.” Hebrews 2:11)

6. In the broadest sense of the word, who are the brethren of Jesus? “He [Jesus] is the Son of man, and thus a brother to _____ son and daughter of Adam. His followers are not to feel themselves _____ from the perishing world around them. They are a part of the great _____ of humanity; and Heaven looks upon them as brothers to _____ as well as to _____.” (DA, p. 638.4)

When will This Scene Occur?

1. Where is Jesus seated as the parable begins and is He seated alone? Upon the “_____ of His _____.” Matthew 25:31)

Note: The glory of Jesus is mentioned twice in this parable. We are told that Jesus will “come in his glory” and that he will “sit upon the throne of His glory.” This cannot refer to the second coming because then Jesus will come “in the glory of His Father.” (Matthew 16:27)

2. With whom does Jesus come as the parable begins? With “all the _____ angels.” (Matthew 25:31)

3. Who will be gathered before the throne when Jesus comes with all the holy angels? “And before Him shall be gathered _____ nations.” (Matthew 25:32)

4. Who will be cast into the fire at the conclusion of this judgment? “Then shall he say also unto them on the _____ hand, Depart from me, ye _____, into everlasting _____.” (Matthew 25:41)

5. Who else will be cast into the fire when this judgment scene concludes? The everlasting fire has been prepared for the _____ and his _____. (Matthew 25:41)

6. What will God’s people receive at the conclusion of this judgment? “Come, ye blessed of my Father, _____ the _____ prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Matthew 25:34)

Note: This judgment does not take place at the second coming of Jesus as is commonly believed. For the following reasons, it is describing the great judgment which will take place at the conclusion of the millennium: **1)** It is at the conclusion of the millennium that Jesus will sit upon the throne of His glory and be crowned as King (Revelation 20:11; GC, p. 666.1). Before this, Jesus

was seated with His Father on His throne (Revelation 3:21). **2)** Though Jesus will come with all the holy angels at His second coming, He will also come with them at his “third coming” after the millennium (Zechariah 14:5; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10), **3)** It is after the millennium that all nations will be gathered before Christ’s throne (Revelation 20:7-9; GC, p. 670.1). However, each individual in those nations will be personally judged (Revelation 20:11-15), **4)** It is after the millennium that Satan, his angels and the wicked will be cast into the fire (Revelation 20:7-9; Revelation 20:15), **5)** It is only after the millennium that the saints will inherit the kingdom (Matthew 5:5; Revelation 21:1; Daniel 7:27)

The Sheep

1. What type of animal does Jesus use to describe His followers? “I am the good _____: the good shepherd giveth his life for his _____.” (John 10:11)
2. Which Old Testament text stands in the background of the separation process of Matthew 25:1-46? “Behold I _____ between cattle and cattle, between the _____ and the he _____.” (Ezekiel 34:17; study the entire chapter)
3. Where did Jesus place the sheep after He separated them from the goats? “And He shall set the sheep on his _____ hand.” (Matthew 25:33)

Note: The right hand is the side of God’s favor and blessing and the left hand is the side of God’s disfavor (see, Genesis 48:13-14; Mark 14:62; Mark 16:19; COL, p. 3:1). In Spanish speaking countries, a person who gets out of bed in a bad mood, got out of bed on his left foot. Also in Hispanic countries, the left side is the ‘*siniestra*’ side, that is, the sinister side! Significantly, Judas sat on Jesus’ left hand at the last supper while John the beloved disciple, sat at His right hand DA, p. 644.1)

4. According to Jesus, what did the sheep do to Him? “For I was an _____, and ye gave me meat; I was _____, and ye gave me drink; I was a _____ and ye took me in; _____, and ye clothed me; I was _____, and ye visited me; I was in _____, and ye came unto me.” (Matthew 25:35-36)

Note: The words of Jesus possess a profound spiritual meaning. He is not only stating that His followers must share their literal food, water, clothing, freedom and shelter with the needy. Food represents the Word of God. Water symbolizes the Holy Spirit. Visiting those who are in bondage means visiting those who are slaves to sin. Sharing our clothing represents sharing Christ’s righteousness. Taking in the homeless means to bring into the household of faith those who were “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise” (Ephesians 2:12)

5. What does Ellen White say to those who feel that they must visit the “holy land” in order to get closer to Jesus? “But we need not go to _____, to _____ or to _____, in order to walk in the steps of Jesus. We shall find His footprints beside the _____, in the hovels of _____, in the crowded alleys of the _____, and in every place where there are human hearts in need of consolation. In doing as Jesus did when on earth, we shall _____ in His steps.” (DA, p. 640.2)

6. What evidence do we have that the sheep did not serve Jesus with a mercenary spirit? (Read Matthew 25:37-39 and then answer the question) _____

Note: Those who are genuine followers of Jesus do not serve Him because they hope for reward. Their works of love for the needy are spontaneous.

7. In what sense did the righteous do these things to Jesus? “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my _____, ye have done it unto _____.” (Matthew 25:40)

8. What did Jesus say to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus? “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou _____?” (Acts 9:4)

9. What did Jesus say about those who shared a glass of water with his thirsty disciples? “For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye _____ to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his _____.” (Mark 9:41)

10. According to Zechariah, how does God look upon those who mistreat His children? “He that toucheth you, toucheth the _____ of His _____.” (Zechariah 2:8)

11. According to James, the brother of Jesus, what two elements characterize true religion? “Pure religion and _____ before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and _____ in their affliction, and to keep himself _____ from the world.” (James 1:27)

Note: Pure religion, like a coin, has two sides. One side is composed of practical religion, doing good to those who are in distress. The other side has to do with keeping oneself unspotted by the world. On the one hand we are to do good. On the other hand we must cease to do evil.

12. Is it necessary to be a Bible scholar in order to be commended in the judgment? “Those whom Christ commends in the judgment may have known little of _____, but they have cherished His principles.” (DA, p. 638.2)

13. Will Christians have a monopoly when Jesus passes out commendations in the final judgment? “Even among the _____ are those who have cherished the spirit of _____; before the words of life had fallen upon their ears, they have befriended the _____, even ministering to them at the peril of their own lives. . . . Among the heathen are those who _____ God ignorantly, those to whom the light is never brought by _____ instrumentality, yet they will not perish.” (DA, p. 638.2)

14. What will God’s faithful people inherit and from when was this inheritance prepared? “The meek shall _____ the earth.” Matthew 5:5). Come, ye _____ of my Father, _____ the kingdom prepared for you from the _____ of the world.” (Matthew 25:34)

The Goats

1. According to Jesus, did the goats actively mistreat His people? (Read verses 42-44 for the answer) _____. What will Jesus say to the goats? “Inasmuch as ye did it _____ to one of the least of these, ye did it _____ to me.” (Matthew 25:45).

Note: The wicked goats did not actively mistreat Christ’s brothers. Their sin was not of commission but of **omission**. Their evil consisted in **neglecting** to meet the needs of Christ’s brothers. In the allegory of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man did not mistreat Lazarus. He simply neglected to alleviate his suffering. We will be judged not only on the basis of what we did, but also on the basis of what we neglected to do.

2. According to Ellen White, why do the goats say: ‘Lord, when saw we thee and hungered or athirst, or a stranger or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?’ (Matthew 25:44) “Satan had _____ them; they had not perceived what they owed to their brethren. They had been _____, and cared not for others’ needs.” (DA, p. 639.3)

3. **Thought Question:** What implicit evidence do we have in the parable that Jesus keeps a record of our deeds? _____ (Hint: Notice the tense of the verbs in (Matthew 25:35-43)

Judgment Review and Execution

1. According to Ellen White, what will determine our eternal destiny in the final assize? “... there will be but two _____, and their eternal destiny will be determined by what they have _____ or have _____ to do for Him in the person of the poor and suffering.” (DA, p. 637.1)

2. According to Revelation 20:12-13, what is contained in the books that will be examined after

the millennium? _____

3. Which book (singular) will God bring to light after the millennium and why? (Revelation 20:15)

4. What kind of fire will the goats be cast into? _____ fire. (Matthew 25:41)

5. What is God called in Hebrews 12:29? "For our God is a _____ fire."

6. Because God is everlasting, the fire is also everlasting. What will the fire do to the wicked? "And _____ came down from _____ out of heaven, and _____ them." (Revelation 20:9)

7. How does Malachi describe the destruction of Satan and the wicked? "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall _____ as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do _____, shall be stubble, and that day that cometh shall _____ them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither _____ nor _____." (Malachi 4:1)

Note: Jesus said to His disciples: "I am the vine, you are the branches." On the other hand, Satan is the root of all evil and his followers are the branches.

8. What will happen to Satan when he is cast into the fire? "I will bring thee [Satan] to _____ upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be _____ at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and _____ more shalt thou be any more." (Ezekiel 28:18-19)

9. Who alone will be able to dwell with God who is an everlasting consuming fire? "He that walketh _____, and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding _____, that stoppeth his ears from hearing _____, and shutteth his eyes from seeing _____." (Isaiah 33:15)

Note: Only those who have developed a fire proof character will be able to dwell with God who is an everlasting consuming fire.

10. **Thought Question:** What does Ellen White mean when she says that "Love to man is the earthward manifestation of the love of God"? (DA, p. 641.3)

11. When will God's people be prepared for heaven? "...when we love the _____ as He has loved it, then for us His mission is accomplished. We are _____ for heaven; for we have

heaven in our _____.” (DA, p. 641.3)

12. What will happen on judgment day with those who have not worked for Christ? “In the great judgment day, those who have not worked for Christ, who have _____ along thinking of themselves, caring for _____, will be placed by the Judge of the whole earth with those who did _____. They receive the same condemnation.” (DA, p. 641.4)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #34 - The Parable of the Talents - Part I

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 325-333; Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-27

Introduction

In the next two lessons we will study the parable of the ten talents. In the present lesson we will analyze the details of the parable as found in Matthew 25:14-30. In the next lesson, we will study Ellen White’s assessment of the diverse gifts with which God has endowed each of His children. Let us begin by taking a look at the textual setting of the parable.

The Recipients and Setting

1. To whom was the parable of the talents particularly addressed? “And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the _____ came unto him _____, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto _____, Take heed that no man deceives _____.” (Matthew 24:3-4)

2. **Thought Question:** Though the parable applies to Christians of all ages, which generation does it particularly address? _____

Note: Though the principles of the parable apply to followers of Jesus from all generations, it especially addresses those who will be alive when Jesus comes. Matthew 24:4-44 presents the signs of the second coming. Then, in four parables, Jesus illustrates what His people should be doing while He tarries. (Matthew 24:45-51; Matthew 25:1-13; Matthew 25:14-30; Matthew 25:31-45)

The Master of the Servants

1. Who does the master of the servants represent and what is meant by his journey into a far country? “The man traveling into a far country represents _____, who, when speaking this parable, was soon to _____ from this earth to heaven.” (COL, p. 325.3)

2. To whom did the master deliver his goods before he left? “The kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his _____ servants, and delivered unto them his _____.” (Matthew 25:14)

Note: We should not overlook the fact that the parable is addressed directly to believers and describes the experience of believers. The servants of the parable have all entered the service of Christ. The word “own” is emphatic in the Greek. Jesus could have merely said: “he called his servants” but instead he said: “he called his **own** servants.” Ellen White well remarks: “It is those who profess to have accepted Christ’s service who in the parable are represented as His own servants.” (COL, p. 326.2)

3. What did the master deliver to His servants? _____ . (Matthew 25:14)

Note: None of what the servants received was theirs. The goods belonged to the master. The parable is not about ownership but rather about stewardship.

The Master’s Gifts

1. What is represented by the goods that the master delivered to his servants? “The talents that Christ entrusts to His church represent especially the _____ and blessings imparted by the Holy _____.” (COL, p. 327.1)

2. What did Jesus give to His followers when He ascended to heaven? “When he [Jesus] ascended up on high, he led _____ captive, and gave _____ unto men.” (Ephesians 4:8)

3. Make a list of the gifts which Jesus gave to His followers when He poured out the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:8-11; 1 Corinthians 12:27-28; Ephesians 4:11-13; Romans 12:6-8)

4. In a broader sense, what do the talents represent? “It includes all gifts and endowments, whether _____ or _____, natural or spiritual.” (COL, p. 328.2)

5. What is the true object of life? “Christ’s followers have been redeemed for _____. Our Lord teaches that the true _____ of life is ministry. . . . The law of service becomes the connecting _____ which binds us to God and to our fellow men.” (COL, p. 326.3)

6. How do our natural and acquired endowments become a blessing to others? “Learning, talents, eloquence, every natural and acquired _____, may be possessed; but without the _____ of the Spirit of God, no heart will be _____, no sinner be _____ to Christ.” (COL, p. 328.1)

Note: What Ellen White is saying is that our talents, time, strength, money, influence, speech, and other endowments will be of no avail unless they are sanctified by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. A worldly person may have all these endowments and gifts and use them for his own self-interest. But when they are baptized by the Holy Spirit they will prove to be a blessing to others. Regarding this, Ellen White remarks: “In becoming His disciples, we surrender ourselves to Him with all that we are and have. These gifts He returns to us purified and ennobled, to be used for His glory in blessing our fellow men.” (COL, p. 328.2)

Proportionate Bestowal of Gifts

1. Did all the servants receive the same number of talents? “And unto one he gave _____ talents, to another _____, and to another _____.” (Matthew 25:15)

2. What determined how many talents each servant received? “To every man according to his several _____.” (Matthew 25:15)

Note: God gives gifts according to the person’s capacity to receive and use them. Not everyone has the same degree of ability. Some people have less talents than others, due, partially at least, to inherited and cultivated tendencies. It would not be wise to put a Porsche engine in a Volkswagen Beetle. But you would expect a Volkswagen to function as a Volkswagen and a Porsche to perform as a Porsche.

3. What central lesson did Jesus seek to teach in this parable? “He that is faithful in that which is _____ is faithful also in _____: and he that is unjust in the _____ is unjust also in _____.” (Luke 16:10)

Note: “The question that most concerns us is not, How much have I received? but, What am I doing with that which I have? The development of all our powers is the first duty we owe to God and to our fellow men.” (COL, p. 329.2)

We either use what God has given us or we will lose it. God expects more from those who have received more and less from those who have received less. By way of example, God will expect far more from Seventh-day Adventists than He will from those who have not received the light and the privileges which we have.

4. **Thought Question:** What does the multiplication of the talents by the first two servants represent? _____

Note: As we use the gifts that God has bestowed upon us, we should improve and multiply them. That is to say, as we exercise His gifts, they are multiplied.

The Master's Delay

1. What do you think is represented by the long time that the master took to return? (Matthew 25:19) _____

2. What should we do while we are waiting for Jesus to return? "The time is to be spent, not in _____ waiting, but in _____ working." (COL, p. 325.1)

3. What did Jesus tell His servants in the parable of the pounds? "And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, _____ till I come." (Luke 19:13)

The Day of Reckoning

1. What does the reckoning day represent? "For we must _____ appear before the judgment seat of _____, that every one may receive the things done in his _____, according to that he hath done, whether it be _____ or _____." (2 Corinthians 5:10)

2. Will Jesus expect much where little has been given or be satisfied with little where much has been given? "For unto whomsoever _____ is given, of him shall be much _____: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." (Luke 12:48)

Note: Jesus will not expect as much, say, from Martin Luther in the judgment as he will expect from a Seventh-day Adventist. Luther never kept the Sabbath or practiced health reform but he used and multiplied all the resources God gave him to the utmost. He wrote, preached, taught, debated with all the knowledge and energy that God gave him.

3. With what words did Jesus commend his faithful servants? "Well done, _____ and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a _____ things, I will make thee ruler over _____ things, enter into the _____ of thy lord." (Matthew 25:23)

Note: These words will be as music to the ears! We cannot expect to reign with Jesus in the coming kingdom unless we have been faithful to His kingdom on this earth. If we have not been faithful here, how can we expect to rule there? Daniel and his three friends are an illustration of this principle. The Hebrew worthies were faithful in the matter of diet when they arrived in Babylon and therefore God placed them over greater responsibilities in the kingdom. If they had been unfaithful in the little things they would never have ruled over much! If we do not develop and multiply the resources God has given us in this life, how can God trust us to do so in the life to come?

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables” Lesson #35 - The Parable of the Talents - Part 2

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 325-365

Introduction

In our last lesson we studied the parable of the talents primarily from the perspective of Scripture. In this lesson we will consider what Ellen White has to say about how we should employ the various gifts that God has bequeathed to us. Let's begin by talking about the use and improvement of the mental faculties that God has given us.

Mental Faculties

1. What did Jesus mean when He said that we must love God with all our mind? “This lays upon us the _____ of developing the intellect to its _____ capacity, that with _____ the mind we may know and love our Creator.” (COL, p. 333.2)
2. How can a thorough education better prepare us to serve the Lord? “The uneducated man who is consecrated to God and who _____ to bless others can be, and is, used by the Lord in His service. But those who, with the same spirit of _____, have had the benefit of a thorough _____, can do a much more _____ work for Christ.” (COL, p. 333.3)
3. What should be the object of obtaining all the education that we can? “The Lord desires us to obtain all the education possible with the _____ in view of imparting our _____ to others.” (COL, p. 333.4)
4. What two things must the student of Scripture pursue? “Let every student take his Bible and place himself in _____ with the great Teacher. Let the mind be trained and disciplined to _____ with the _____ problems in the search for divine truth.” (COL,

p. 334.2)

5. What will an ordinary, self-disciplined mind be able to accomplish? “An _____ mind, well disciplined, will accomplish more and _____ work than will the most highly educated mind and the greatest _____ without self-control.” (COL, p. 335.1)

The Gift of Speech

1. Which gift of God has the greatest potential for blessing others? “Of all the gifts we have received from God, none is capable of being a greater _____ than this [speech].” (COL, p. 335.2)

2. Why is the gift of speech so important? “With the _____ we convince and persuade, with it we offer _____ and _____ to God, and with it we tell others of the Redeemer’s _____.” (COL, p. 335.2)

3. What three things must we do in order to perfect the gift of speech? “We should _____ to Jesus, the perfect pattern; we should _____ for the aid of the Holy Spirit, and in His strength we should seek to _____ every organ for perfect work.” (COL, p. 336.2)

4. How should we train ourselves to speak? “We should accustom ourselves to speak in pleasant _____, to use pure and _____ language, and words that are kind and _____. Sweet, kind words are as dew and gentle _____ to the soul.” (COL, p. 336.4)

5. What did the apostle Paul mean when he said that we should not allow corrupt communication to proceed out of our mouths? “A corrupt communication does not mean only words that are _____. It means any expression contrary to holy principles and pure and _____ religion. It includes impure _____ and covert _____ of evil. Unless instantly resisted, these lead to _____ sin.” (COL, p. 337.2)

6. What should we do when we are in the company of those who indulge in foolish talk? “When in the company of those who indulge in foolish talk, it is our _____ to change the _____ of conversation if possible. By the help of the grace of God we should quietly _____ words or introduce a subject that will _____ the conversation into a profitable channel.” (COL, p. 337.3)

7. Who’s responsibility is it to teach children proper habits of speech? “It is the work of parents to _____ their children to proper habits of speech. The very best _____ for this culture is the _____ life. From the earliest years the children should be taught to speak

_____ and lovingly to their parents and to one another.” (COL, p. 337.4)

8. What will occur when the mind and the heart are filled with the love of God? “If the mind and heart are full of the love of God, this will be revealed in the _____. It will not be a difficult matter to _____ that which enters into our spiritual life.” (COL, p. 338.1)

9. What is the highest work for which we can employ the gift of speech? (COL, p. 339.1) _____

The Gift of Influence

1. What is influence and what factors are involved in influence? “Every soul is surrounded by an _____ of its own. . . . By the atmosphere surrounding us, every person with whom we come in _____ is consciously or unconsciously affected. . . . Our _____, our acts, our _____, our deportment, even the expression of the _____, has an influence.” (COL, p. 339.3)

2. How does Ellen White illustrate the power of influence? “Throw a _____ into the lake, and a wave is formed, and _____ and another, and as they increase, the circle _____, until it reaches the very _____. So with our influence. Beyond our knowledge or _____ it tells upon others in blessing or in cursing.” (COL, p. 340.1)

3. What carries an almost irresistible influence? “Character is _____. The silent witness of a true, _____, godly life carries an almost _____ influence.” (COL, p. 340.2)

4. What danger lurks in the wrong use of influence? “To lose one’s own _____ is a terrible thing, but to cause the loss of other souls is still more _____. That our influence should be a savor of _____ unto death is a fearful thought, yet this is possible.” (COL, p. 340.3)

5. Who will help us when we are about to misuse our influence? “When unconsciously we are in danger of exerting a _____ influence, the _____ will be by our side, prompting us to a better _____, choosing our words for us and _____ our actions.” (COL, p. 341.2)

The Gift of Time

1. To whom does our time belong? “Our time belongs to God. Every _____ is His, and we are under the most solemn _____ to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has

given will He require a more _____ account than of our time.” (COL p. 342.1)

2. How may we redeem our time? “The only way in which we can redeem our time is by making the _____ of that which remains, by being _____ with God in His great plan of redemption.” (COL, p. 342.4)

3. Can donations of money ever take the place of time invested in the winning of souls? “All are to labor in the winning of souls to Christ. _____ of money _____ take the place of this.” (COL, p. 343.1)

4. What should we ever keep in mind as we seek to budget our time? “Life is too solemn to be _____ in temporal and earthly matters, in a _____ of care and anxiety for the things that are but an _____ in comparison with the things of _____ interest.” (COL, p. 343.3)

5. What three principles must be applied in the use of our time? “A resolute _____, persistent _____, and careful _____ of time, will enable men to acquire mental discipline which will qualify them for almost any position of influence and usefulness.” (COL, p. 343.4)

6. Is there any excuse for slow, bungling work? “There is no excuse for slow bungling at work of any _____. When one is always at work and the work is never done, it is because _____ and _____ are not put into the labor.” (COL, p. 344.1)

7. What must be done in order to use our time most efficiently? “Decide how _____ a time is required for a given _____, and then bend every effort toward accomplishing the work in the _____ time. The exercise of the _____ power will make the hands move deftly.” (COL, p. 344.1)

8. What grave mistake are parents in danger of committing? “Parents cannot commit a greater _____ than to allow their children to have _____ to do. The children soon learn to love _____, an they grow up shiftless, useless men and women.” (COL, p. 345.4)

The Gift of Health

1. How important is the conservation of physical strength? “Anything that _____ physical strength enfeebles the mind and makes it less _____ of discriminating between right and _____. We become less capable of _____ the good and have less _____ of will to do that which we know to be right.” (COL, p. 346.3)

2. Why is the misuse of our physical strength a moral issue? “The misuse of our physical powers _____ the period of time in which our _____ can be used for the glory of God.” (COL, p. 346.4)
3. What commandment is broken when we shorten our lives due to wrong health habits? “Those who thus _____ their lives and unfit themselves for service by disregarding nature’s laws, are guilty of _____ toward God. And they are _____ their fellow men also.” (COL, p. 346.4)
4. Is transgression of physical law less serious than transgression of moral law? “Transgression of physical law is transgression of the _____ law; for God is as truly the _____ of physical laws as He is the author of the moral law.” (COL, p. 347.1)
5. What is one of the most important branches of education? “The relation of the physical organism to the _____ life is one of the most important branches of education.” (COL, p. 348.1)
6. What happens when we remain in willing ignorance of God’s physical laws? “He who remains in willing _____ of the laws of his physical being and who _____ them through ignorance is _____ against God.” (COL, p. 348.1)
7. Why should we preserve and develop physical life? “The physical life is to be carefully _____ and developed that through humanity the _____ nature may be revealed in its _____.” (COL, p. 348.1)

The Gifts of Strength and Money

1. Is it possible to separate secular and religious life? “Religion and _____ are not two _____ things; they are one. Bible _____ is to be interwoven with all we do or say. Divine and human agencies are to _____ in temporal as well as in spiritual achievements.” (COL, p. 349.3)
2. What type of businessman does the world need? “There is need of businessmen who will _____ the grand principles of truth into all their _____. And their talents should be perfected by most thorough _____ and _____.” (COL, p. 350.5)
3. For how much of what we earn will God hold us accountable? “All we possess is the Lord’s, and we are _____ to Him for the use we make of it. In the use of every _____, it will be seen whether we love God _____ and our neighbor as ourselves.” (COL, p. 351.2)

4. Why is money of such great value? “Money has great value, because it can do great _____.” (COL, p. 351.3)

5. When does money become of no more value than sand? “But money is of no more value than sand, only as it is put to use in providing for the _____ of life, in blessing _____, and advancing the _____ of Christ.” (COL, p. 351.3)

6. What happens when money is hoarded? “Hoarded wealth is not merely _____, it is a _____.” (COL, p. 352.1)

7. What will we do when we realize that money is a talent from God? “He who realizes that his money is a talent from God will use it _____, and will feel it a _____ to save that he may give.” (COL p. 352.2)

8. Why is wasting our money a serious moral issue? “Every penny used _____ deprives the spender of a precious _____ of doing good. It is robbing God of the _____ and glory which should flow back to Him through the _____ of His entrusted talents.” (COL, p. 352.3)

Developing our Talents

1. According to Ellen White, how are talents multiplied? “Talents _____ are talents multiplied.” (COL, p. 353.1)

2. What attitude is illustrated by the man who buried his one talent? “If they could do some _____ thing, how gladly would they undertake it; but because they can serve only in the _____ things, they think themselves justified in doing _____.” (COL, p. 355.3)

3. What would the one talent man have done if he had received five talents? “Had he received five talents, he would have _____ them as he buried the one. His misuse of the one talent showed that he _____ the gifts of heaven.” (COL, p. 355.3)

4. What great lesson is taught by the man who buried his talent? “There are really no _____ in the Christian life.” (COL, p. 356.1)

5. Which Bible characters does Ellen White use to illustrate faithfulness in the little things of life and why? (COL, p. 356.3) _____

6. What two examples from the life of Jesus show that He considered the little things of life to be important? “When He raised from the dead the daughter of Jairus, He reminded her parents that she must have something to _____. When by His own mighty power He rose from the tomb, He did not disdain to _____ and put carefully in the proper place the grave clothes in which He had been laid away.” (COL, p. 357.2)

7. What is the greatest qualification for any man? “The greatest qualification for any man is to obey _____ the _____ of the Lord.” (COL, p. 359.1)

8. What does it mean to enter into the joy of the Lord? “They will enter into the joy of the Lord as they see in His kingdom those who have been _____ through their instrumentality.” (COL, p. 361.4)

9. What is it that wins the approval of God? “It is the _____, the _____ to God, the loving _____ that wins the divine approval.” (COL, p. 361.3)

10. What fits us for participation in God’s service in heaven? “And they are privileged to participate in His work there, because they have gained a _____ for it for it by participation in His work here.” (COL, p. 361.4)

11. What view do many people have of God and why are they wrong? “There are many who in their hearts charge God with being a _____ master because He claims their possessions and their service. But we can bring to God _____ that is not already His.” (COL, p. 362.3)

12. Why did God seem to agree with the remark of the lazy servant? “The master does not _____ the charge of the wicked servant, unjust as it is; but taking him on his own _____ he shows that his conduct is without excuse.” (COL, p. 362.4)

13. Does God expect more from us than what He gave us in the first place? “Our heavenly Father requires no _____ nor less than He has given us the _____ to do. He lays upon His servants no burdens that they are not able to _____.” (COL, p. 362.5)

14. What will happen on judgment day with those who have neglected to work for Christ? “In the great judgment day those who have not worked for Christ, those who have _____ along, carrying no responsibility, thinking of _____, pleasing themselves, will be placed by the judge of all the earth with those who did _____. They receive the same condemnation.” (COL, p. 365.1)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #36 - Storms on the Sea

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Suggested Reading: DA, pp. 333-341; 377-382; Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25; Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-52; John 6:14-21

Introduction

In our lesson today we will study two experiences that Jesus had on the Sea of Galilee with His disciples. The first took place when Jesus calmed a raging storm. The second transpired when Jesus walked upon the billows and then invited Simon Peter to come to Him upon the waters. We shall find that these episodes are loaded with spiritual meaning.

The First Episode: Jesus Calms a Raging Storm

(Don't forget to apply the details of the story to your own personal walk with Jesus)

The Historical Setting

1. Which parables had Jesus just spoken before the storm on the lake? “Beside the Sea of Galilee He had spoken His _____ parables, by familiar illustrations again explaining to the people the _____ of His kingdom and the _____ in which it was to be established.” (DA, p. 333.1)
2. What had Jesus been doing all day before he went to sleep in the boat? “All day He had been _____ and _____; and as evening came on the crowds still pressed upon Him.” (DA, p. 333.2)

Note: Ellen White adds: “Day after day He had ministered to them, scarcely pausing for food or rest.” (DA, p. 333.2).

3. How could Jesus go on for such extended periods time scarcely pausing for food and rest? Look up the answer to this question in John 4:31-34 _____

4. Why did Jesus decide to cross the lake? "The close of the day found Him so _____ wearied that He determined to seek _____ in some solitary place across the lake." (DA, p. 333.2)

The Storm on the Lake

1. **Thought Question:** Do you think the storm was natural or supernatural? If your answer is "supernatural" who do you suppose caused it and why? Document your answer. Can you think of other episodes when the life of Jesus was in danger? List some. Who do you think was behind these episodes? _____

2. Had the disciples battled similar storms before? "These _____ fishermen had spent their lives upon the lake, and had guided their craft _____ through many a storm." (DA, p. 334.3)

3. What state of mind were the disciples in as they struggled with this impressive storm? "They were _____ in the grasp of the tempest, and _____ failed them as they saw that their boat was filling." (DA, p. 334.3)

4. What did the disciples attempt to do before they looked unto Jesus? "Absorbed in their efforts to save _____, they had forgotten that _____ was on board." (DA, p. 334.4)

5. What did the disciples finally realize as they struggled in vain with the tempest? "Now seeing their labor _____ and only _____ before them." DA, p. 334.4)

6. What was the disciples' last and only hope? "In _____ was their _____ hope." (DA, p. 334.4)

7. What hid Jesus from the sight of the disciples? "But the dense _____ hid Him from their sight. Their voices were _____ by the roaring of the tempest, and there was no reply." (DA, p. 334.4)

Note: Are there any clouds and waves which hide Jesus from your sight? Does Satan roar so loudly that you are afraid that Jesus will not hear?

8. How many times did the disciples call on Jesus before He answered? _____ (DA, p. 334.4, (DA, p. 334.5)

Note: The Bible teaches that we must be persistent in prayer. Jesus does not always answer our prayers at once because he wants to teach us continual dependence upon Him.

9. What precarious and desperate condition did the disciples find themselves in? “Already their boat is _____. A _____, and apparently they will be swallowed up by the hungry waters.” (DA, p. 334.5)

Note: Have you ever found yourself in this condition, spiritually?

10. What cry did the disciples utter and how did Jesus respond? “‘Lord, _____ us; we _____.’ (DA, p. 335.1) Never did a _____ utter that cry unheeded.” (DA, p. 335.2)

11. What occurred when Jesus pronounced the words: “Peace, be still”? “The storm _____. The billows sink to _____. The clouds _____ away, and the stars shine forth.” (DA, p. 335.3)

12. What did the fishermen experience after Jesus calmed the storm? “In the calm that followed, _____ was forgotten.” (DA, p. 335.4)

13. What rebuke did Jesus utter to His disciples after His Father calmed the storm? “Why are ye yet _____? Have ye not yet _____?” (Mark 4:40)

Spiritual Lessons

1. How did Jesus face the storm when His disciples’ cries awakened Him? “When Jesus was awakened to meet the storm, He was in _____ peace. There was no trace of _____ in word or look, for no fear was in His _____.” (DA, p. 336.1)

2. Was Jesus in perfect peace because He knew that He possessed almighty power? “But He rested _____ in the possession of almighty power. It was not as the ‘Master of earth and sea and sky’ that He reposed in _____. That power he had laid down. . . . He trusted in the _____ might. It was in faith—faith in God’s love and care—that Jesus rested, and the power of that word which stilled the storm was the _____ of God.” (DA, p. 336.1)

3. What lesson can we learn from Jesus’ trust in His Father’s power? “. . . .so _____ are to rest in the care of our Savior. If the disciples had trusted in Him, they would have been kept in _____.” (DA, p. 336.2)

4. What did the disciples' fear reveal? "Their fear in the time of danger revealed their _____. In their efforts to save _____, they forgot Jesus; and it was only when, in _____ of self-dependence, they turned to Him that He could give them help." (DA, p. 336.2)

5. What do the tempest and the lightning represent? "When the tempests of _____ gather, and the fierce lightnings _____, and the waves sweep over us, we battle with the storm _____, forgetting that there is One who can help us." (DA, p. 336.3)

6. What happens when we cry out to Jesus in the midst of personal storms? "We trust to our own strength till our _____ is lost, and we are ready to _____. Then we remember Jesus, and if we call upon Him to save us, we shall not _____ in vain." (DA, p. 336.3)

7. What will living faith in the Redeemer do for us? "Living faith in the Redeemer will smooth the _____ of life, and will _____ us from danger in the way that He knows to be best." (DA, p. 336.3)

8. What Bible text compares the restlessness of the wicked with the troubled sea? _____ (DA, p. 336.4)

9. What will Jesus do if we trust in Him? "His grace, that _____ the soul to God, quiets the strife of human _____, and in His love the heart is at _____." (DA, p. 336.4)

The Second Episode: Jesus Walks on the Water

(As you study this story, make sure you think of how it parallels your own spiritual walk with Jesus)

The Historical Setting

1. What episode occurred immediately before Jesus walked on the water? _____ (John 6:1-15).

2. How did the populace look upon Jesus after He fed the five thousand? "He can satisfy every desire. He can _____ the power of the hated _____. He can deliver Judah and Jerusalem. He can heal _____ who are wounded in battle. He can supply whole armies with _____. He can conquer the _____, and give to Israel the long-sought dominion." (DA, p. 377.2)

3. What did the populace try to do with Jesus after He fed the five thousand? "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by _____, to make him a _____, he departed again into a mountain himself _____." (John 6:15)

4. How did the disciples react when Jesus refused to be crowned king? “They murmured because they had not been _____ to proclaim Him king. They blamed themselves for _____ so readily to His command.” (DA, p. 379.2)

The Storm on the Lake

1. What spirit overtook the disciples as they got into their boat to go to the other side? “. . .they brought upon themselves great _____ darkness. They questioned, Could Jesus be an _____, as the Pharisees asserted?” (DA, p. 380.1)

2. Why did Jesus allow the storm to overtake the disciples? “They were in the midst of troubled _____. Their thoughts were _____ and unreasonable, and the Lord gave them something else to _____ their souls and _____ their minds. . . . They forgot their _____, their unbelief, their _____.” (DA, p. 380.2)

3. What did the storm teach the disciples? “In storm and darkness the sea had taught them their own _____, and they longed for the _____ of their Master.” (DA, p. 380.3)

4. Who’s eye was on the disciples as they struggled with the tempest? “Jesus had not forgotten them. The _____ on the shore saw those fear-stricken men battling with the tempest. Not for a _____ did He lose sight of His disciples. With deepest solicitude His eyes _____ the storm-tossed boat with its precious burden; for these men were to be the _____ of the world.” (DA, p. 381.1)

5. What did the storm do for the disciples? “When their hearts were _____, their unholy _____ quelled, and in humility they _____ for help, it was given them.” (DA, p. 381.1)

Peter Walks on Water and Sinks

1. What allowed Peter to safely walk upon the stormy waters? “_____ unto Jesus, Peter walks _____.” (DA, p. 381.5)

2. What led Peter to sink into the furious waters? “. . .but as in _____ he glances back toward his _____ in the boat, his eyes are turned from the Savior. . . . For a moment Christ is _____ from his view, and his faith gives way. He begins to sink.” (DA, p. 381.5)

Note: The most vulnerable moments in our spiritual life come when we take our eyes off of Jesus and place them on ourselves. Even a momentary distraction will often lead us to put our eyes on the storms of life rather than on Jesus. These are the times when we sink into discouragement and depression.

3. Thought Questions: Can you think of other episodes in Peter’s life where he yielded to the same weakness? Can you recall moments in your own life when you experienced the same problem?

4. What agonizing cry did Peter utter and how did Jesus respond? “Lord, _____ me.” “_____ Jesus grasps the outstretched hand, saying, O thou of _____ faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” (DA, p. 381.5)

5. According to Ellen White, how does Peter’s experience compare with ours? “When trouble comes upon us, how often we are like Peter! We look upon the _____, instead of keeping our eyes _____ upon the Savior. Our footsteps slide, and the proud waters go over our _____.” (DA, p. 382.1)

6. What did Jesus seek to teach Peter through this experience? “. . .He desired to reveal to Peter his own _____ to show that his safety was in constant dependence on divine _____. Amid the storms of _____ he could walk safely only as in utter _____ he should rely upon the Savior.” (DA, p. 382.2)

7. What does God seek to teach us through the experiences of daily life? “By circumstances of daily life He is _____ them to act their part upon that wider _____ to which His providence has appointed them. It is the issue of the _____ test that determines their victory or defeat in life’s great crisis.” (DA, p. 382.3)

8. Thought Question: Which experience in Peter’s life particularly reveals the truthfulness of Ellen White’s statement in question #7?

9. How does Satan seek to gain an advantage over us? “But Satan is planning to take advantage of our _____ and _____ traits of character, and to blind our eyes to our own necessities and defects. Only through realizing our own _____ and looking steadfastly unto Jesus can we walk securely.” (DA, p. 382.4)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables” Lesson #37 - Healing the Paralytic at Capernaum

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: DA, pp. 201-213; 267-271; Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:3-12; Luke 5:18-26; John 5:1-47

Introduction

In His public ministry Jesus healed many paralytics. In the next two lessons we will focus on the two most notorious: The healing of the paralytic in Capernaum and the restoration of the paralytic by the Pool of Bethesda. We will find in our study that these two episodes do not simply describe Christ’s power to heal those who are physically maimed. They actually seek to teach that Jesus is able to heal those who are spiritually paralyzed by sin. Let’s begin our study with the event in Capernaum.

The Paralytic’s Desperate Plight

1. How do we know that this man’s physical paralysis was due to his sinful habits? “When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy _____ be forgiven thee.” “It was to manifest His power to _____ sins that the miracle was performed.” (Mark 2:5; DA, p. 267.1)

2. What was the paralytic’s state of mind? “Like the leper, this paralytic had _____ all hope of recovery. His disease was the result of a life of _____, and his sufferings were embittered by _____.” (DA, p. 267.2)

Note: Many people in the world today are in the same situation as the paralytic. Due to wrong physical habits, a life of sin and cankering remorse, they have just about lost hope.

3. From whom had the paralytic sought help and what was their response? “He had long before appealed to the Pharisees and doctors, hoping for _____ from mental suffering and

physical pain. But they _____ pronounced him incurable, and abandoned him to the _____ of God.” (DA, p. 267.2)

4. How much could the paralytic do for himself? “The palsied man was _____ helpless, and, seeing no prospect of _____ from any quarter, he had sunk into despair.” (DA, p. 267.3)

Note: The world is filled with people such as this paralytic. They have no power within themselves to remove their guilt and relieve their physical suffering. Their only hope is to receive help from a source outside themselves—Jesus Christ

Hope in Jesus

1. What gave the paralytic a glimmer of hope? “Then he _____ of the wonderful works of Jesus. He was told that others as sinful and helpless as he had been _____; even lepers had been cleansed.” (DA, p. 267.3)

2. Who encouraged the paralytic to seek out Jesus? “And the _____ who reported these things encouraged him to believe that he too might be _____ if he could be carried to Jesus.” (DA, p. 267.3)

Note: The paralytic could have ignored the counsel of his friends. In the depths of his despair he could have told them that he had lost hope. But he chose to listen to their counsel and to seek out Jesus. Frequently good counsel from friends can lead desperate souls to the feet of Jesus.

3. What was the paralytic’s deepest fear? “But his _____ fell when he remembered how the disease had been brought upon him. He feared that the _____ Physician would not _____ him in His presence.” (DA, p. 267.3)

Note: Today there are many who feel that they are too sinful to come to Jesus. But these are the very ones Jesus is attracting to Himself. The Savior has made the immutable promise: “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” (John 6:37)

4. Was physical healing foremost in the paralytic’s mind? “Yet it was not physical restoration he desired so much as relief from the _____ of sin. If he could see Jesus, and receive the _____ of forgiveness and _____ with Heaven, he would be content to live or die, according to God's will.” (DA, p. 267.4)

Note: The paralytic’s innermost desire stands in contrast to many of those who followed Jesus. Great multitudes often flocked to Jesus because they wished to be delivered from physical

suffering. John 6:1-2, for example, explains that many followed Jesus because of the signs which He performed. And today many people look upon Jesus as a faith healer and not as a deliverer from the stroke of sin.

The Paralytic Visits Jesus

1. Who came up with the idea to take the paralytic to Jesus? “He besought his _____ to carry him on his bed to Jesus, and this they _____ undertook to do.” (DA, p. 267.4)

Note: Though His friends spoke to Him about Jesus, the decision to visit the Lord was the paralytic’s. Our friends can encourage us to come to Jesus but the decision to actually come must be ours.

2. What type of audience was present when Jesus healed the paralytic? “Outside of these officials thronged the _____ multitude, the eager, the reverent, the curious, and the unbelieving. Different _____ and all _____ of society were represented.” (DA, p. 267.5)

3. How did the spirit of the Pharisees contrast with that of the paralytic? “The Spirit of life brooded over the assembly, but Pharisees and doctors did not _____ its presence. They felt no sense of _____, and the healing was not for them.” (DA, p. 267.5)

Note: What a contrast between the paralytic and the Pharisees. He discerned the presence of the Holy Spirit and was healed. They rejected the work of the Holy Spirit and were hardened!

4. Who suggested that the paralytic be let down from the roof? “At _____ suggestion his friends bore him to the top of the house and, _____ up the roof, let him down at the feet of Jesus.” (DA, p. 268.1)

Note: This man had a faith that was not to be denied. In spite of the apparently insurmountable obstacle of the crowd, he tenaciously sought out Jesus. We must not allow anything to stand in the way of finding Jesus!

5. Who convicted the paralytic of his sin and when? “He [Jesus] had _____ to Himself that perplexed and doubting spirit. While the paralytic was yet at _____, the Savior had brought conviction to his conscience.” (DA, p. 268.1)

Note: In the Gospel of John we find a description of this attracting power of Jesus: “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” (John 12:32)

Jesus Heals the Paralytic

1. How did the paralytic feel when Jesus made the declaration, "Your sins are forgiven"? "The burden of despair _____ from the sick man's soul; the peace of forgiveness rests upon his spirit, and _____ out upon his countenance." (DA, p. 268.3)

2. How had the Pharisees responded to this man's cries? "They recollected how the man had appealed to them for help, and they had _____ him hope or sympathy. Not satisfied with this, they had declared that he was suffering the _____ of God for his sins." (DA, p. 268.5)

3. What did the Pharisees fear most when Jesus healed this man? "They marked the _____ with which all were watching the scene, and they felt a terrible _____ of losing their own influence over the people." (DA, p. 268.5)

4 How complete was this man's physical healing? "Then he who had been borne on a litter to Jesus rises to his feet with the _____ and strength of youth. The life-giving blood bounds through his veins. Every _____ of his body springs into sudden activity. The glow of _____ succeeds the pallor of approaching death." (DA, p. 269.3)

5. By whose power was the paralytic healed? "It required nothing less than _____ power to restore health to that decaying body. The _____ voice that spoke life to man created from the dust of the earth had spoken life to the dying paralytic. And the same power that gave life to the body had _____ the heart." (DA, p. 269.5)

6. What does Ellen White say concerning the psychosomatic link between physical and spiritual illness? "The spiritual healing was followed by physical restoration. This lesson should not be overlooked. There are today thousands suffering from _____ disease, who, like the paralytic, are longing for the message, "Thy sins are forgiven." The burden of sin, with its unrest and unsatisfied desires, is the _____ of their maladies. They can find no relief until they come to the _____ of the soul. The peace which He alone can give, would impart vigor to the mind, and health to the _____." (DA, p. 270.1)

7. How does Ellen White describe the intimate link between our physical and spiritual natures? "Since the mind and the soul find _____ through the body, both mental and spiritual vigor are in great degree _____ upon physical strength and activity; whatever promotes" (CG, p. 360.4)

8. What effect did this healing have upon the Pharisees? " They were disconcerted and abashed, _____, but not _____, the presence of a superior being. The

stronger the evidence that Jesus had power on earth to forgive sins, the more firmly they _____ themselves in unbelief. From the home of Peter, where they had seen the paralytic restored by His word, they went away to invent new schemes for _____ the Son of God.” (DA, p. 270.4)

9. What is ever more terrible than physical disease? “Physical disease, however malignant and deep-seated, was healed by the power of Christ; but the disease of the _____ took a firmer hold upon those who closed their _____ against the light. Leprosy and palsy were not so terrible as _____ and unbelief.” (DA, p. 271.1)

10. How does Ellen White describe the complete physical healing of this man? “He stood before them in the full _____ of manhood. Those _____ that they had seen lifeless were quick to obey his will. The flesh that had been shrunken and leaden-hued was now fresh and ruddy. He _____ with a firm, free step. Joy and hope were written in every lineament of his _____; and an expression of purity and _____ had taken the place of the marks of sin and suffering.” (DA, p. 271.2)

11. What effect did the healing of the paralytic have upon his family? “This man and his family were ready to lay down their _____ for Jesus. No doubt dimmed their faith, no unbelief marred their _____ to Him who had brought light into their darkened home.” (DA, p. 271.2)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables” Lesson #38 - The Paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: DA, pp. 201-213; John 5:1-47; John 7:21-24; Luke 13:10-17; Mark 3:1-6

Introduction

In the present lesson we will study the story of the healing of the paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda. Our study will reveal that the central lesson of this miracle has little to do with healing from physical paralysis. In fact, we will find that the physical miracle merely provided Jesus with a springboard from which to teach profound spiritual lessons about redemption from the paralysis of sin. The miracle itself is recorded in John 5:1-9. The rest of the chapter provides an extended explanation of the reason for the miracle. Let’s begin our study with the miracle itself.

Jesus Heals the Paralytic

1. **Thought Question:** Do you think that the common belief of the people (John 5:4) was based on fact or superstition? (**Hint:** Would God promote a practice where only the swiftest could be healed? Would God employ a method which promoted such human selfishness?) If an angel did indeed descend, do you think he was sent by God? _____

Note: “At certain seasons the waters of this pool were agitated, and it was commonly _____ that this was the result of _____ power, and that whoever _____ after the troubling of the pool stepped into the waters, would be healed of whatever disease he had.” (DA, p. 201.2)

2. How does Ellen White describe the tragic scene beside the pool? “Hundreds of sufferers visited the place; but so great was the _____ when the water was troubled that they rushed forward, _____ underfoot men, women, and children, weaker than themselves.” (DA, p. 201.2)

3. Why did Jesus pick this particular case? "But the Savior saw one case of _____ wretchedness. It was that of a man who had been a helpless _____ for thirty-eight years." (DA, p. 202.1)

4. What was the cause of this man's paralysis? "His disease was in a great degree the result of his _____ sin, and was looked upon as a judgment from God." (DA, p. 202.1)

Note: Ellen White's view is corroborated by the words of Jesus to the paralytic: "Behold, thou art made whole: **sin no more**, lest a worse thing come unto thee." (John 5:14)

5. What was the paralytic's state of mind before Jesus healed him? "_____ and friendless, feeling that he was _____ out from God's mercy, the sufferer had passed long years of _____." (DA, p. 202.1).

6. How did this man reveal his faith? "Jesus had given him no _____ of divine help. The man might have stopped to _____, and lost his one chance of healing. But he believed Christ's word, and in _____ upon it he received strength." (DA, p. 203.1)

7. How does Ellen White describe the man's physical healing? "Every nerve and muscle thrills with new _____, and healthful action comes to his crippled limbs." (DA, p. 202.3)

8. What important role did this man's will play as he responded to Christ's word? "Without question he sets his _____ to obey the command of Christ, and all his muscles _____ to his will. Springing to his feet, he finds himself an active man." (DA, p. 202.3)

Spiritual Lessons

1. In what way is our spiritual condition similar to that of the paralytic? "By sin we have been severed from the life of God. Our souls are _____. Of ourselves we are no more capable of living a _____ life than was the impotent man capable of walking." (DA, p. 203.2)

2. What must we realize before Jesus can help us? "There are many who realize their _____, and who _____ for that spiritual life which will bring them into harmony with God; they are _____ striving to obtain it." (DA, p. 203.2)

3. What does Jesus offer to those who are struggling with sin? "The Savior is _____ over the purchase of His blood, saying with inexpressible _____ and pity, "Wilt thou be made whole?" He bids _____ arise in health and peace." (DA, p. 203.2)

4. How must our will respond to the call of Christ? “Do not _____ to feel that you are made whole. _____ His word, and it will be fulfilled. Put your _____ on the side of Christ. Will to serve Him, and in acting upon His word you will receive strength.” (DA, p. 203.2)

5. What will Jesus do with those who respond to His call? “He will impart _____ to the soul that is “dead in trespasses.” Ephesians 2:1. He will set _____ the captive that is held by weakness and misfortune and the _____ of sin.” (DA, p. 203.2)

6. On which day of the week did Jesus choose to deliver this man from his paralysis? “And immediately the man was made _____, and took up his bed, and walked and on the same day was the _____.” (John 5:9)

Reaction of the Pharisees

1. How did the Pharisees react to this man’s healing? “He was surprised at the _____ with which they listened to his story.” DA, p. 203.3) “With lowering _____ they interrupted him, asking why he was carrying his bed on the _____ day.” (DA, p. 203.4)

2. According to the Pharisees, which two sins did Jesus commit when He healed the paralytic? “In their judgment He had not only broken the law in _____ the sick man on the Sabbath, but had committed sacrilege in bidding him bear away his _____.” (DA, p. 203.4)

3. How had the rabbis distorted the meaning of the Sabbath? “The Jews had so perverted the law that they made it a _____ of bondage. . . . The scribes and Pharisees had made its observance an _____ burden.” (DA, p. 204.1)

Note: The fundamental reason why the Christian world today rejects the Bible Sabbath as a yoke of bondage is because they see the Sabbath through the eyes of the Pharisees. But the perverted sabbath of the Pharisees was not the blessed Sabbath of the Lord!!

4. While Jesus relieved the sick on Sabbath, what were the religious leaders planning to do? “Therefore did the Jews _____ Jesus, and sought to _____ Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath day.” (John 5:16)

Note: Irony of ironies, Jesus was condemned for healing on the Sabbath while the Pharisees were plotting to kill Him!

5. What prevented the religious leaders from slaying Jesus on the Sabbath? “Had the Jews at this time been an _____ nation, such a charge would have served their purpose for putting Him to death. This their subjection to the _____ prevented.” (DA, p. 204.4)

6. How did the character of Jesus differ from that of the Pharisees? “He spoke of God, not as an avenging _____, but as a tender _____, and He revealed the image of God as mirrored in Himself. His words were like _____ to the wounded spirit. Both by His words and by His works of mercy He was breaking the oppressive power of the old _____ and man-made commandments, and presenting the _____ of God in its exhaustless fullness.” (DA, p. 204.4)

7. What would have happened with the Jewish nation if the religious leaders had not interposed between Jesus and the people? “If the priests and rabbis had not interposed, His _____ would have wrought such a _____ as this world has never witnessed.” (DA, p. 205.1)

8. Whose idea was it to arraign Jesus before the Jewish Sanhedrin? “But the plans which these rabbis were working so zealously to fulfill originated in another _____ than that of the Sanhedrin. After _____ had failed to overcome Christ in the wilderness, he combined his forces to _____ Him in His ministry, and if possible to thwart His work.” (DA, p. 205.2)

Note: Each and every event in the earthly life of Jesus must be understood in the light of the great controversy. No occurrence in the life of Jesus had mere human causes. The visible events of his life must be explained as consequences of invisible forces at work. For example, Herod’s attempt to kill Jesus, the storm on the lake, the repeated attempts to stone Jesus and the attempt to throw Jesus off a cliff in Nazareth must all be understood as acts of Satan.

9. What strategy did Satan develop and implement when he was unable to overcome Jesus in the wilderness? “No sooner had he withdrawn from the conflict in the wilderness than in council with his _____ angels he matured his plans for still further _____ the minds of the Jewish people, that they might not recognize their Redeemer. He planned to work through his _____ agencies in the religious world, by imbuing them with his own _____ against the champion of truth.” (DA, p. 205.2)

Note: Here we have the explanation for the extreme hardheartedness of the Jewish leaders toward Jesus. By this means Satan intended to discourage Jesus in His mission.

Conflict Over the Sabbath

1. According to the prophet Isaiah, what was one of the purposes for the coming of the Messiah? “The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will _____ the law, and make it _____.”(Isaiah 42:21)

Note: Examples of this magnification of the law can be found in Jesus' definition of adultery and murder (Matthew 5:21-22; Matthew 5:27-28). Jesus did not come to abolish the Sabbath but rather to magnify its meaning and make it honorable.

2. What did Jesus come to do with the Sabbath? "He had come to _____ the Sabbath from those _____ requirements that had made it a _____ instead of a blessing." (DA, p. 206.1)

Note: Jesus not only came to deliver His creatures from bondage to sin. He also came to emancipate His blessed Sabbath from the traditions of the Pharisees that had turned the Sabbath into a day of slavery. Jesus did not come to abolish the Sabbath but rather to do away with the traditions of the rabbis which had turned the Sabbath into an intolerable burden.

3. **Thought Question:** Why did Jesus add insult to injury by telling this man to carry his bed on the Sabbath? "This would raise the _____ of what it was lawful to do on the Sabbath, and would open the _____ for Him to denounce the restrictions of the Jews in regard to the Lord's day, and to declare their _____ void." (DA, p. 206.2) "A wise purpose underlay _____ act of Christ's life on earth. Everything He did was _____ in itself and in its teaching." (DA, p. 206.2)

4. What did Jesus mean when he spoke the words: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (John 5:17)? "All _____ are God's, in which to carry out His plans for the human race. If the Jews' interpretation of the law was correct, then Jehovah was at _____, whose work has quickened and upheld every living thing since _____ He laid the foundations of the earth; then He who pronounced His work good, and instituted the Sabbath to commemorate its completion, must put a _____ to His labor, and _____ the never-ending routine of the universe." (DA, p. 206.3)

5. Do human beings have a work to perform on the Sabbath? "And man also has a _____ to perform on this day. The _____ of life must be attended to, the sick must be cared for, the wants of the _____ must be supplied. He will not be held guiltless who neglects to relieve _____ on the Sabbath." (DA p. 207.1)

6. Does God work even more on the Sabbath than any other day? "The demands upon God are even _____ upon the Sabbath than upon other days. His people then leave their usual employment, and spend the time in meditation and worship. They _____ more favors of Him on the Sabbath than upon other days. They demand His _____ attention. They crave His choicest blessings. God does not _____ for the Sabbath to pass before He grants these requests. Heaven's work _____ ceases, and men should never rest from doing good." (DA, p. 207.2)

7. What ritual example did Jesus give to prove that charitable work is proper on the Sabbath? "I have done one work, and ye marvel. Moses therefore gave unto you _____, (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers) and ye on the Sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the _____ day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit _____ on the Sabbath day?" (John 7:21-23)

8. Did Jesus ever break the Sabbath that He created? "The work of Christ in healing the sick was in perfect _____ with the law. It _____ the Sabbath." (DA, p. 207.2)

Note: If Jesus broke the Sabbath, as many Christians today believe, then the Pharisees were right and Jesus was wrong! The fact is that Jesus did not break the Bible Sabbath but rather the rabbinical Sabbath!

9. **Thought Questions:** Read Luke 13:10-17 and Mark 3:1-6. Did Jesus break the Bible Sabbath on these occasions? What was more important to the Pharisees than people? _____

Further Conflicts

1. What other declaration of Jesus further incensed the Pharisees against Him? "He had not only broken the law, according to _____ understanding, but in calling God "His own Father" had declared Himself _____ with God." (DA, p. 207.3)

2. Where did Jesus get His rationale and where did the Pharisees get theirs? "They could only cite their _____ and traditions, and these seemed weak and _____ when compared with the arguments Jesus had drawn from the _____ of God and the unceasing round of _____." (DA, p. 208.1)

3. What would have happened if the leaders had not feared the people? "Had they not feared the people, the priests and rabbis would have _____ Jesus on the spot. But the popular sentiment in His _____ was strong." (DA, p. 208.1)

4. With what words did Jesus justify this act of healing on the Sabbath? "The Son can do nothing of _____, but what He seeth the _____ do."? (John 5:19)

Note: As the Father was busy in heaven blessing the universe on the Sabbath, Jesus, in parallel fashion, was blessing the life of the paralytic. The work of Jesus on the Sabbath was in perfect harmony with that of His Father.

5. How dependent was Jesus upon His Father? "So _____ was Christ emptied of self that He made no _____ for Himself. He _____ God's plans for Him, and day by day the Father _____ His plans." (DA, p. 208.2)

6. Can we be as dependent upon the Father as Jesus was? "So should _____ depend upon God, that our lives may be the simple _____ of His will." (DA, p. 208.2)

Jesus' Unanswerable Arguments

1. In the context of His discussion with the Pharisees, why did Jesus say that the Father had committed all judgment unto Him? "The priests and rulers had set themselves up as _____ to condemn Christ's work, but He declared Himself their _____, and the judge of all the earth." (DA, p. 210.2)

2. Why is Jesus the only one who is qualified to serve as the judge of the human race? "Because He has _____ the very dregs of human affliction and temptation, and _____ the frailties and sins of men; because in our behalf He has _____ withstood the temptations of Satan, and will deal _____ and _____ with the souls that His own blood has been poured out to save,--because of this, the Son of man is appointed to execute the judgment." (DA, p. 210.3)

3. What further awesome statement was made by Jesus to the Pharisees and why? "Whatsoever things He [the Father] doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. . . . As the Father _____ up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son _____ whom He will." (John 5:19-21)

Note: What Jesus was saying is that He not only had the authority from His Father to restore this man's limbs on the Sabbath. He had the authority from His Father to resurrect the dead! Later in the chapter (verses 28 and 29) Jesus will amplify this point.

4. What did Jesus say concerning His relationship with the Sabbath? "The sabbath was _____ for man, and not man for the Sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is _____ also of the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27).

Note: The irony of the situation is that these religious leaders were questioning the manner of Sabbath observance of the Creator of the Sabbath!! As Ellen White well expresses it: "The Lord of the Sabbath was arraigned before an earthly tribunal to answer the charge of breaking the Sabbath law." (DA, p. 211.3) If Jesus made the Sabbath at creation, would He not be the best qualified to explain how it was to be kept?

5. What strategy did Jesus employ at the end of His defense before the Sanhedrin? "Instead of _____ for the act of which they complained, or explaining His purpose in doing it, Jesus turned upon the rulers, and the accused became the _____." (DA, p. 211.4)

6. How much of the Old Testament points to Jesus? "In _____ page, whether history, or precept, or prophecy, the Old Testament Scriptures are _____ with the glory of the Son of God. So far as it was of divine institution, the _____ system of Judaism was a compacted prophecy of the gospel. To Christ "give all the prophets witness." Acts 10:43." (DA, p. 211.5)

7. What mistake did the Jews commit as they studied the Old Testament Scriptures? "The Jews had the Scriptures in their possession, and supposed that in their mere _____ knowledge of the word they had eternal life. But Jesus said, 'Ye have not His word _____ in you.' Having rejected _____ in His word, they rejected Him in person. 'Ye will not come to Me,' He said, 'that ye might have life.'" (DA, p. 212.1)

8. Why do so many people go wrong in their study of Scripture? "The Jewish leaders had studied the teachings of the prophets concerning the kingdom of the Messiah; but they had done this, not with a _____ desire to know the truth, but with the purpose of finding evidence to _____ their ambitious hopes." (DA, p. 212.2)

Note: The reason why there are so many churches in the world today is because people go to the Bible to prove what they already believe rather than going to the Bible to find what God wants them to believe.

9. What did Jesus mean when He said: "I receive not honor from men."? "It was not the influence of the _____, it was not their sanction He desired. He could receive no _____ from their approbation." (DA, p. 212.3)

10. Why did Jesus say: "I am come in my Father's name and ye receive me not, if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."? (John 5:43) ". . . They would receive the false teacher because he _____ their pride by sanctioning their _____ opinions and traditions. But the teaching of Christ did not coincide with their ideas. It was spiritual, and demanded the sacrifice of _____; therefore they would not receive it." (DA, p. 212.4) "Because he who is seeking his own glory appeals to the desire for _____ in others. To such appeals the Jews could respond." (DA, p. 212.4)

11. What effect did the arguments of Jesus have upon the Pharisees as this episode came to an end? "They were _____ to take His life. They sent messengers all over the country to _____ the people against Jesus as an impostor. _____ were sent to watch Him, and report

what He said and did. The precious Savior was now most surely standing under the _____
of the cross." (DA, p. 213.4)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #39 - Gaining to Lose

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 252-259; Luke 12:13-30; 1 Timothy 6:9-10; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; James 5:1-3

Introduction

In our lesson today we will study the parable of the rich fool. Though the parable itself is found in Luke 12:15-21, the immediately preceding and succeeding contexts must also be taken into account. Immediately before Jesus told the parable, an event transpired that provided Him with the opportunity to tell the parable (Luke 12:13-14). Then, after telling the parable, Jesus further amplified its lessons (Luke 12:22-30) Let’s begin by taking a look at how Jesus handled a case of sibling rivalry.

The Parable’s Setting and Occasion

1. What was the innermost desire of many of those who heard Jesus? “But there were many who desired the grace of heaven only to serve their _____ purposes. . . . Would He [Jesus] not lend His power for their _____ benefit?” (COL, p. 252.2)
2. What did the law of Moses teach concerning the transmission of property from parents to children? “The eldest son received a _____ portion of the father's estate (Deuteronomy 21:17), while the _____ brothers were to share alike.” (COL, p. 253.1)
3. How did the younger brother hope to use Jesus for his own benefit? “He has heard Christ's stirring appeals, and His solemn _____ of the scribes and Pharisees. If words of such _____ could be spoken to this brother, he would not dare to refuse the aggrieved man his portion.” (COL, p. 253.1)

4. What attitude prompted this young man to seek Jesus as an arbiter? “He could appreciate that ability of the Lord which might work for the advancement of his own _____ affairs; but spiritual truths had taken no hold on his mind and heart. The gaining of the inheritance was his _____ theme.” (COL, p. 253.2)

5. What other Bible person had the same evil character trait? _____ In which particular sense were they alike? _____ . (COL, p. 253.2)

6. What was the Holy Spirit seeking to do with this young man? “The Holy Spirit was _____ with him to become an heir of the _____ that is ‘incorruptible, and undefiled, and that _____ not away.’ 2 Peter 1:4.” (COL, p. 253.2)

7. Why didn’t Jesus resolve this sibling feud? “Christ virtually said, It is not My _____ to settle controversies of this kind. He came for another _____, to preach the gospel, and thus to arouse men to a sense of _____ realities.” (COL, p. 254.1)

8. What lessons can Christ’s workers today learn from this episode? “They were not to settle the _____ affairs of the people. Their work was to _____ men to be reconciled to God. In this work lay their _____ to bless humanity.” (COL, p. 254.2)

9. In which way are both rich and poor many times alike? “The injustice of the rich toward the poor, the hatred of the poor toward the rich, alike have their root in _____, and this can be eradicated only through _____ to Christ. He alone, for the selfish heart of sin, gives the _____ heart of love.” (COL, p. 254.2)

10. What did Jesus say that got to the very root of this young man’s problem? “Take heed, and beware of _____; for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the _____ which he possesseth.” (Luke 12:15)

The Source of all Riches

1. What central lesson did Jesus seek to teach in the parable of the rich fool? “By the parable of the foolish rich man, Christ showed the _____ of those who make the _____ their all.” (COL, p. 256.1)

2. Who made it possible for the rich man to acquire riches? “This man had received _____ from God. The sun had been permitted to shine upon his land; for its rays fall on the just and on the unjust. The _____ of heaven descend on the evil and on the good. The Lord had caused vegetation to _____, and the fields to bring forth abundantly.” (COL, p. 256.1)

3. What solemn words of warning did Jesus speak to Israel in the Old Testament? “But thou shalt _____ the LORD thy God: for it is _____ that giveth thee power to get _____, that he may establish his covenant which he swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day.” (Deuteronomy 8:18)

Note: It is God who gives us life, strength, time, talents, influence, speech and other endowments. Without these blessings from on high we could not earn even one penny.

4. Why has God endowed us with wealth to any degree? “An extensive fortune, or any degree of wealth will not secure the _____ of God. All these bounties and blessings come from Him, to _____, test, and develop the _____ of man.” (FE, p. 39.1)

Hoarding Riches

1. Which personal pronoun did the rich man employ repeatedly to describe his plans for the future? “What shall ___ do, because I have no room where to bestow _____ fruits? And he said, This will ___ do: I will pull down _____ barns, and build greater; and there will ___ bestow all _____ fruits and _____ goods. And I will say to _____ soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.” (Luke 12:17-19)

Note: In the parable of the talents Jesus has made it abundantly clear that nothing we possess is really ours: The master “delivered unto his servants **his** goods” Matthew 25:14). The unfaithful servant hid “**his lord’s** money” Matthew 25:18) and then when his master called him to account, he said to him: “there thou hast that is **thine**” Matthew 25:25) The master later said to his servant “thou oughtest therefore to have put **my** money to the exchangers Matthew 25:27). We speak in terms of “my house, my car, my money” but absolutely nothing is really ours!

2. What did the rich fool fail to think of? “He did not think of _____ from whom all his mercies had come. He did not realize that God had made him a _____ of His goods that he might _____ the needy.” (COL, p. 256.1)

3. Had the rich fool employed honest business principles to acquire his wealth? “He had overreached in trade, had made _____ bargains, and had not exercised _____ or the love of God. He had _____ the fatherless and widow, and defrauded his fellow men, to add to his increasing _____ of worldly possessions.” (3T, p. 402.1)

Note: Like the rich man in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19; Luke 16:21), the rich fool did not necessarily mistreat people. He defrauded the needy by neglecting them! The sin of omission is just as serious in the sight of God as the sin of commission.

4. What should the rich man have done when his barns were bursting at the seams? “He could

easily have _____ himself of a portion of his abundance, and many homes would have been freed from _____, many who were hungry would have been fed, many naked clothed, many hearts made glad, many _____ for bread and clothing answered, and a melody of praise would have ascended to heaven.” (COL, p. 256.2)

5. What was this rich man’s philosophy of life? “This man’s aims were no higher than those of the _____ that perish. He lived as if there were no God, no _____, no future life; as if everything he possessed were his _____, and he owed nothing to God or man.” (COL, p. 257.1)

Treasures in Heaven

1. How did Jesus explain to the rich young ruler what it means to lay up treasures in heaven? “Yet lackest thou one thing: _____ all that thou hast, and _____ unto the poor, and thou shalt have _____ in heaven.” (Luke 18:22)

Note: Jesus made it crystal clear that the only way we can send our money on ahead to the “Bank of Heaven” is by investing it now on earth in the “Bank of Human Need”. After Jesus told the story of the rich fool he explained how to invest in heaven and what happens to our money when we invest it on earth: “Sell that ye have, and give alms, provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither the moth corrupteth.” (Luke 12:33)

2. According the Ellen White, how can God’s people today store up treasures in the bank of heaven? “Those who use their wealth in doing _____ will see no necessity for large accumulations in this world; for the treasure which is used to _____ the cause of God and which is given to the needy in Christ’s name is given to Christ, and _____ lays it up for us in the bank of heaven in _____ which wax not old.” (3I, p. 546.2)

Note: Many people in the church today are obsessed with hoarding for retirement. In doing this, they neither enjoy the present nor are investing for eternity. There is nothing wrong per se in saving for retirement, but when padding our 401K becomes an all-absorbing passion to the neglect of God’s cause and the needs of our fellow men, our priorities are skewed. According to Jesus, it is the Gentiles (those who do not claim to be Christians) who worry unceasingly about saving for a rainy day. (Matthew 6:32)

3. How is the rich man’s philosophy of life shared by many professed Christians today? “They [many present day Christians] have the _____ of believing that Christ is soon to come, that the end of all things is at hand; yet they have no spirit of _____. They are plunging deeper and deeper into the _____. . . . Yet these men profess to believe that this world is not their _____, that they are merely pilgrims and strangers upon the earth, preparing to

_____ to a better country.” (2T, p. 662.3)

4. How did the town folk look upon this rich man? “He is _____ by his fellow townsmen as a man of good _____ and a prosperous citizen.” (COL, p. 258.1)

Note: Is it just possible that many wealthy people in the church today are looked upon by others as model citizens and as a great blessing to the cause when in actuality their hearts are weighed down with covetousness? This man was rich in the sight of **men** but he was not rich toward **God**. (Luke 12:21)

4. What couldn’t this man’s money buy? “The wealth he has treasured can purchase no reprieve. In one _____ that which he has toiled through his whole life to secure becomes _____ to him. ‘Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?’ His broad fields and well-filled granaries _____ from under his control. ‘He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.’ Psalm 39:6” (COL, p. 258.2)

5. According to Ellen White, what relationship exists between love and life? “The only thing that would be of _____ to him [the rich fool] now he has not secured. In living for _____ he has rejected that divine love which would have flowed out in mercy to his fellow men. Thus he has _____ life. For God is love, and love is life.” (COL, p. 258.3)

6. What will money not do for man in the day of divine reckoning? “You may plan for merely selfish good, you may _____ together treasure, you may build _____ great and high, as did the builders of ancient Babylon; but you cannot build wall so _____ or gate so _____ as to shut out the messengers of doom.” (COL, p. 258.4)

7. When are riches of great value in the sight of God? “They have a value when used for the _____ of others and the _____ of God; but no earthly treasure is to be your portion, your _____, or your savior.” (5T, p. 261.1)

8. What cuts off the soul from life? “To live for _____ is to perish. Covetousness, the desire of benefit for self's sake, _____ the soul off from life.” (COL, p. 259.1)

9. **Thought Questions:** What do you think Solomon meant when he said: “There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.”? (Proverbs 13:7)

10. How does Solomon’s statement compare with Paul’s about Jesus: “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye

through his poverty might be rich.”? 2 Corinthians 8:9)

11. When the rich fool died, he took nothing with him. How does the apostle Paul amplify this thought in 1 Timothy 6:7-8? “For we brought _____ into this world, and it is certain we can carry _____ out. And having and let us be therewith content.”

12. How did the apostle Paul describe the potential danger of money? “But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful _____, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the _____ of money is the root of all evil, which while some _____ after, they have _____ from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” (1 Timothy 6:9-10; see also, Psalm 49:16-20)

13. **Thought Question:** At the conclusion of the parable, Jesus asked the rich fool the following open ended question: “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” (Luke 12:20). Who do you think got what the rich fool forfeited? (**Hint:** The answer is in the Parable of the Talents)

Note: As James well expresses it: “But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth, so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.” (James 1:10-11) The psalmist remarks: “Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: Surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.” (Psalm 39:6)

Recognizing God First

1. What great maxim did Jesus share with the populace after He told the story of the rich fool? “But seek ye _____ the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be _____ unto you.” (Matthew 6:33)

2. Had the rich man been faithful in the tithing principle? “That one _____ the rich man had _____ from God. If he had not done this, if he had loved God supremely instead of loving and serving himself, he would not have _____ so great treasures that there would be lack of room to _____ them.” (3T, p. 546.1)

3. What did Ellen White once say about a brother P and his similarity to the rich fool? “You have made yourself nearly as unimpressible as a piece of _____. Your gold and your silver are cankered, and have become an eating _____ to the soul. Had your benevolence

_____ with your riches, you would have regarded money as a _____ by which you could do good.” (3I, p. 547.3).

4. What is the only remedy that can cure the mortal disease of covetousness? “_____, self-denying benevolence is God's remedy for the cankering sins of selfishness and covetousness. . . . He has ordained that giving should become a _____, that it may counteract the dangerous and _____ sin of covetousness. Continual giving _____ covetousness to death.” (3I, p, 548.1)

5. What example did Jesus give to contrast those who give from their abundance with those who truly sacrifice? He pointed to a widow who put her two mites into the treasury and then said: “Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast _____ in, than all they which have cast into the treasury; for all they did cast in of their _____, but she of her want did cast in _____ that she had, even _____ her living.” (Mark 12:43-44)

Note: The widow’s generosity was not measured by the amount she gave but rather by what she had left after she gave. Sacrifice is not measured by the size of the gift but by the spirit with which it is given.

6. **Thought Question:** Study the story of the widow of Zarephath (1Kings 17:7-16). How did the spirit of this widow contrast with that of the rich fool? To whom did the widow give first? What did God do in response to her faithfulness? _____

Rich Fools at the End

1. What did James, the brother of Jesus, have to say about money hoarders at the end of time? “Go to now, ye rich men, _____ and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your _____ are corrupted, and your garments are moth eaten. Your gold and silver is _____; and the rust of them shall be a witness _____ you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire.” (James 5:1-3)

2. What terrible mistake did these money hoarders commit? “Ye have heaped _____ together for the _____ days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by _____, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the _____ of the Lord of sabaoth. (James 5:3-4)

3. What did these end-time rich fools do with their money? “Ye have lived in _____ on the earth, and been _____; ye have nourished your hearts.” (James 5:5)

4. What covetous spirit will spell the doom of end-time Babylon? “And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with _____, and with precious stones and _____! For in one hour so great riches is come to _____.” (Revelation 18:16-17)

Note: End-time Babylon represents the combined powers of the world whose philosophy of life is centered on money, power and prestige. All this will come crashing down when the judge of the earth shall measure what has been done with His assets.

5. Who is the real spirit behind Babylon’s obsession with material prosperity? “With thy [Lucifer’s] wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee _____, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy _____. By thy great wisdom and by thy traffick hast thou _____ thy riches, and thine heart is _____ up because of thy riches.” (Ezekiel 28:4-5)

6. According to Ezekiel, what will occur in the day of judgment with those who have hoarded riches? “They shall _____ their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to _____ them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not _____ their souls, neither _____ their bowels: because it is the stumbling block of their iniquity.” (Ezekiel 7:19)

7. When Jesus said to His disciples: “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!” (Mark 10:23), did He mean that it is morally wrong to be rich? “Children, how hard is it for them that _____ in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!” (Mark 10:24)

8. What did Jesus say about faithfulness in this life and the next? “If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous _____, who will commit to your _____ the true riches?” (Luke 16:11)

A Matter of Conversion

1. How did Zacchaeus’ concept of money change in consequence of his conversion? “And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the _____ of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him _____.” (Luke 19:8)

2. How did the disciples employ their possessions after they received the gift of the Holy Spirit? “And _____ their possessions and goods, and _____ them to all men, as every man had need.” (Acts 2:45)

3. What wise counsel does the apostle Paul give to those who are rich in this life? ? “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not _____, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who _____ us richly all things to enjoy; that they do _____, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good _____ against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” (1 Timothy 6:17-19)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables” Lesson #40 - Blindness: Literal and Spiritual

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: DA, pp. 463-475; John 9:1-41; Matthew 23:16-17; Matthew 23:19; Matthew 23:24; Matthew 23:26; Revelation 3:17-18; Acts 13:11

Introduction

The central focus of our lesson today will be the healing of the man who was born blind (John 9:1-41). As with so many other miracles of Jesus, we will find in our study that the primary lesson of this miracle is not the restoration of physical eyesight. In actual fact, Jesus used this miracle as a springboard to teach profound lessons about the loss and recovery of spiritual eyesight. Let's jump right into our study by taking a look at the historical setting of the story.

The Historical Occasion

1. Where had Jesus been before He healed the man who was born blind from birth? “And early in the morning he came again into the _____, and all the people came unto him, and he sat down, and taught them.” (John 8:2)
2. What profound words had Jesus spoken while He was yet in the temple? “I am the _____ of the world: He that followeth me shall not walk in _____, but shall have the light of life.” (John 8:12)
3. What did the Jews attempt to do with Jesus immediately before He healed the blind man? “Then took they up _____ to cast at him, but Jesus _____ himself, and went out of the temple, going _____ the midst of them, and so passed by.” (John 8:59)
4. What words of Jesus particularly incensed the Jews who heard Him? “Verily, _____, I say unto you, ‘Before _____ was, I am.’” (John 8:58)

5. Where was Jesus when He healed the blind man? “And as Jesus _____ by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.” (John 9:1)

Note: Acts 3:1-2 explains that people who were ill customarily waited at the entrance to the temple to beg for alms (see also, John 9:8). This would seem to indicate that the blind man was at the entrance to the temple when Jesus healed him.

Origin and Reason for the Disease

1. What mistaken notion did the disciples have concerning the origin of this man’s disease? “And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did _____, this man, or his _____, that he was born blind?” (John 9:2)

Note: “It was generally believed by the Jews that sin is punished in this life. . . . Satan, the author of sin and all its results, had led men to look upon disease and death as proceeding from God,-- as punishment arbitrarily inflicted on account of sin.” (DA, p. 471.1)

2. According to Jesus, why was this man born blind? “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the _____ of God should be made _____ in him.” (John 9:3)

Note: These words of Jesus leave us with the impression that the man was born blind specifically for this moment. That is to say, the Father had incorporated this event into the itinerary of Jesus before the blind man was even born!

3. What did Jesus mean by “day” and “night” in the expression, “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work”? (John 9:4) “Letters have come to me asking me if I have any special light as to the time when _____ will close, and I answer that I have only this message to bear, that it is now time to work while the _____ lasts, for the _____ cometh in which no man can work” (1SM, p. 191.2)

Note: While it is day, probation’s door is still open. But when the night comes, probation has closed. In its immediate historical context, the “day” here refers to the ministry of Jesus, the “night when no man can work” is a reference to the closing of probation’s door for the Jewish nation.

4. How did the apostle Paul metaphorically employ the words “day” and “night”? “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that _____ should overtake you as a _____. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the _____, nor of darkness.” (1Thessalonians 5:4-5)

Note: Clearly, the apostle Paul uses the words “day” and “night” in the same sense as Jesus did. But whereas Jesus was speaking about the closing of probation’s door for the Jewish nation, Paul was speaking about the closing of the door for the world. This seems to indicate that the story of the blind man’s healing has a broader meaning than its immediate historical setting.

A Sabbath Conflict

1. In the Pharisees’ estimation, what sin did Jesus commit by healing the blind man? “This man is not of _____, because he keepeth not the _____ day.” (John 9:16)

2. What did Jesus do on the Sabbath to exacerbate the anger of the Pharisees? “When he had thus spoken, he _____ on the ground, and made _____ of the spittle, and he _____ the eyes of the blind man with the clay.” (John 9:6)

Note: Actually, Jesus broke several rabbinical rules that were believed to be violations of the Sabbath. Among those were: healing on the Sabbath, spitting on the Sabbath, making clay on the Sabbath, and telling the man to wash in the pool of Siloam on the Sabbath. Jesus could have instantaneously healed this man but He chose a different approach. Was Jesus identifying himself as the Creator when He healed this man? When Jesus created man, he made him out of clay (Isaiah 64:8) and now Jesus recreated a man’s eyesight by using clay as well!

3. **Thought Question:** Why do you think Jesus did not heal this man outright but rather told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam? Would the man have been healed if he had not obeyed the command of Jesus? _____

Note: The Sabbath healings of Jesus were never, as far as we know, life and death cases. If the lives of those He healed had been in danger, the rabbis would not have quarreled with Him because rabbinical law allowed healing on the Sabbath in emergency cases. The question then remains: If Jesus could have waited until the Sabbath was over to perform His works of healing, why did He insist on performing them on the Sabbath? The answer is that Jesus wished to underline the importance of genuine Sabbath observance in contrast to the counterfeit sabbath which was based on rabbinical tradition.

4. Did Jesus ever break the Sabbath as He was accused by the Pharisees? “Wherefore it is _____ to do well on the Sabbath days.” (Matthew 12:12)

Note: Some religious leaders today claim that Jesus exercised His messianic authority and broke the Sabbath. If this were true, then the Pharisees were right!! Jesus did not employ His messianic authority to break the Sabbath but rather to define its proper observance. Only the Lord of the

Sabbath (Mark 2:27) is authorized to explain how to properly observe it.

5. When some Pharisees affirmed that Jesus could not be of God because He broke the Sabbath, what did others reply? “How can a man that is a sinner do such _____? And there was _____ among them.” (John 9:16)

Note: The crass hypocrisy of the Pharisees can be clearly seen in the fact that they sought to kill Jesus on the Sabbath (Mark 3:6) while Jesus brought healing. The greatest conflicts of Jesus with the religious leaders of His day had to do with the proper manner of Sabbath observance. In the days of Christ the religious leaders kept the right day but it was a counterfeit Sabbath because it was loaded down with the traditions of men.. At the end of time the greatest conflicts of God’s people with the world’s religious leaders will likewise involve Sabbath observance. But whereas the Pharisees kept the Sabbath in the wrong way, the religious world at the end will keep the wrong day!

Seeking Excuses to Disbelieve

1. When the Pharisees asked this man who had healed him, what did he reply? “He put clay upon mine _____, and I _____, and do see.” (John 9:15)

2. What did the blind man reply when the Pharisees asked him what he thought about Jesus? “What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a _____.” (John 9:17)

3. When the Pharisees refused to believe that this man had been born blind, to whom did they turn for corroboration? “They called the _____ of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your _____, who ye say was born blind? How then doth he now _____?” (John 9:18-19)

4. How did the parents reply to the Pharisees’ question? “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. But by what _____ he now seeth, we know not; or who hath _____ his eyes, we know not; he is of _____, ask him, he shall speak for himself.” (John 9:20-21)

5. What highhanded methods did the Pharisees employ with those who confessed their faith in Jesus? “These words spake his parents, because they _____ the Jews, for the Jews had agreed _____, that if any man did _____ that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.” (John 9:22)

6. How did the religious leaders seek to bias this man against Jesus? “Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the _____: We know that this man is a _____.” (John 9:24)

7. How did the blind man reply to the accusations of the Pharisees against Jesus? “Whether he be a _____ or no, I know not: _____ thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” (John 9:25)

8. When the Pharisees asked this man again how he had been healed, what comeback did the man give which incensed the Pharisees? “I have told you _____, and ye did not _____: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his _____?” (John 9:27)

Note: Remarkably, this man claimed to be Christ’s disciple even though he had not yet met him!

9. Whose disciples did the Pharisees claim to be? “Thou art his disciple; but we are _____ disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this _____, we know not from whence he is.” (John 9:28-29)

10. Were the Pharisees truly Moses’ disciples? “Do not think that I will _____ you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even _____, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have _____ me for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his _____, how shall ye believe my words?” (John 5:45-47)

11. What powerful Bible lesson did this man give the Pharisees? “Why herein is a _____ thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God _____ not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his _____, him he heareth. Since the _____ began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.” (John 9:30-32)

Note: The statement of the blind man was literally true. In the Old Testament the opening of the eyes of the blind was reserved for the messianic age. When Jesus opened up the eyes of this blind man, the Pharisees should have seen in Jesus the fulfillment of these messianic prophecies (see Isaiah 35:5; Luke 4:18)

12. What did the Pharisees do when this man confessed Jesus? “They answered and said unto him, ‘Thou wast altogether born in _____, and dost thou _____ us?’ And they cast him out.” (John 9:34)

Note: In today's language we would say that the Pharisees excommunicated or disfellowshipped this man. The Pharisees could not match his logic so they strong-armed him out of the synagogue.

The Man Encounters Jesus

1. When the blind man first saw Jesus, what remark did he make to show that he had grown in his understanding of who Jesus was? "Dost thou _____ on the Son of God? And he said, Lord I believe. And he _____ him." (John 9:35-38)

Note: The blind man had grown in his understanding of Jesus. At first he thought that Jesus was a prophet, but by the end of the story he was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God.

2. What cryptic statement did Jesus make after the blind man confessed Him? "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which _____ might not see, and that they which see might be made _____." (John 9:39)

3. When Jesus spoke the words of John 9:39, what did the Pharisees perceive? "And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, 'Are _____ blind also?' Jesus said unto them, 'If ye were blind, ye should have no _____; but now ye say, We _____, therefore your sin remaineth.'" (John 9:40-41)

Willful Blindness

1. Reflect on John 9:39 in the light of Matthew 13:13-15; Mark 4:12; Mark 8:18; Luke 8:10; Isaiah 6:10. In the light of these verses what did Jesus mean by His statement?

2. According to the Bible, is there a link between physical and spiritual eyesight? "The eyes of your _____ being enlightened; that ye may _____ what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the _____ of his inheritance in the saints." (Ephesians 1:18)

Note: In the Bible, physical eyesight is used as a metaphor to describe those who have spiritual discernment (see Genesis 3:4, 5; Ephesians 1:18).

3. What did David ask of the Lord? "Open thou mine _____, that I may _____ wondrous things out of thy law." (Psalm 119:18)

Note: The Pharisees thought they knew much about the law. Yet because they failed to see Jesus in the law, their rigorous casuistry became a farce. Only the Holy Spirit can reveal the limitless depths of His spiritual law.

4. What did God do to Israel when they apostatized from Him? “For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep _____, and hath closed your _____: the prophets and your rulers, the _____ hath he covered.” (Isaiah 29:10)

Note: It is no coincidence that Biblical prophets were called **seers**. When Israel apostatized from God, He withdrew the prophetic voice and she stumbled around in darkness.

5. What great commission did God give Saul of Tarsus upon his conversion? “To open their [the Gentiles’] _____, and to turn them from darkness to _____, and from the power of _____ unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” (Acts 26:18)

6. According to the apostle Paul, is God responsible for His peoples’ hardness of heart? “Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not _____; and seeing ye shall see, and not _____. For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have _____ closed; lest they should _____ with their eyes, and _____ with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.” (Acts 28:26-27)

7. **Thought Question:** Does God bring calamities upon people and harden their hearts and close their eyes? (**Hint:** Study 2Thessalonians 2:9-13; 2Chronicles 18:18-22; Job 1:11-12; Job 42:11)

8. What did Jesus say about the Pharisees? “Woe unto you, ye _____ guides. . . . Ye fools and _____. . . . Thou _____ Pharisee. . . .” (Matthew 23:16-17; Matthew 23:19; Matthew 23:24; Matthew 23:26)

9. What counsel did Jesus give His disciples in view of the blindness of the Pharisees? “Let them _____: they be blind leaders of the _____. And if the blind _____ the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” (Matthew 15:14)

10. What did Jesus say about those who hate their brothers? “But he that hateth his brother is in _____, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not _____ he goeth, because that darkness hath _____ his eyes.” (1 John 2:11)

11. Is there any chance that the Laodicean church could commit the same mistake as the Pharisees? “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with _____, and have need of nothing; and _____ not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and _____, and naked.” (Revelation 3:17)

12. Study the story of the men on the road to Emmaus. What is it that opens peoples’ spiritually blind eyes? “But their eyes were _____ that they should not know him. . . . And their eyes were _____, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.” (Luke 24:16; Luke 24:31)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #41 - Counting the Cost

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: Luke 14:27-33; Mark 12:41-44; Luke 18:22

Introduction

The central theme of our lesson today has to do with counting the cost before we choose to follow Jesus. The Gospels make it crystal clear that the cost of becoming Christ’s disciples is not cheap. In actual fact, following Jesus is the most expensive proposition of our lives because it costs us all that we have. We will find in the course of our study that many people accept Jesus on the spurt of the moment without realizing what their decision will cost them. For this reason many professed followers of Jesus fall by the wayside. It is because of this danger that Jesus told the parables of the man who builds a tower and the king who goes to war.

Christ’s Audience

1. To whom did Jesus address the passage of Luke 14:27-33? “And there went great _____ with him; and he turned, and said unto them. . . .” (Luke 14:25)
2. Why did the multitudes frequently follow Jesus? “And a _____ multitude followed him, because they saw his _____ which he did on them that were diseased.” (John 6:2)

Note: Many followed Jesus because they saw Him as a great miracle worker. While there were miracles and loaves and fishes the crowd was filled with excitement. But when the tough times came, most of these people forsook Him (John 6:66) They did not count the cost of discipleship. We might call them “fair weather Christians”.

Hating Father and Mother

1. What did Jesus say about family relations and discipleship? “If any man come to me, and _____ not his father, and mother, and wife and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own _____ also, he cannot be my _____.” (Luke 14:26)

2. What did Jesus mean when He spoke about his disciples **hating** their relatives? Was he using the word “hate” in its normal sense? “He that loveth father or mother _____ than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter _____ than me is not worthy of me.” (Matthew 10:37)

Note: Jesus is not saying that we must hate our relatives when we accept Him. What He is saying is that our relatives cannot occupy first place in our lives. If our relatives stand between us and Jesus, we must choose Jesus first (see Matthew 10:34). When I taught theology in Medellin, Colombia, a young woman came to the school because her parents disowned her for becoming a Seventh-day Adventist. She counted the cost and chose Jesus over her relatives!

3. What did Jesus mean in Luke 14:26 when He said that we must hate our own life? “For whosoever will _____ his life shall _____ it; but whosoever will lose his life for my _____, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose _____, or be cast away?” (Luke 9:24-25)

4. What did the apostle Peter tell his listeners on the Day of Pentecost? “We ought to _____ God rather than _____.” (Acts 5:29)

Note: The apostle Peter was not saying that we should not obey the legitimate authority of men. What he was saying is that we should never place the will of man above the will of God.

Bearing the Cross

1. According to Jesus, what must His true disciples be willing to do? “And whosoever doth not bear his _____, and come _____ me, cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:27)

2. How frequently must the cross be borne? “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross _____, and follow me.” (Luke 9:23)

3. According to the apostle Paul, what must we do after we have borne the cross? “I am _____ with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ _____ in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the _____ of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

4. What must the Christian crucify with Jesus? “And they that are Christ’s have _____ the _____ with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Galatians 5:24-25)

5. How frequently must self be crucified? “I die _____.” (1 Corinthians 15:31)

Two Illustrations

1. According to Jesus, what must be done before a tower is built? “For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and _____ the cost, whether he have _____ to finish it?” (Luke 14:28)

Note: Success in the Christian life depends upon four things: **1)** Counting the cost, **2)** Developing a plan, **3)** Being willing to pay the price, **4)** Looking forward to the reward. The *Tour de France* is a vivid illustration of these principles. The riders map out their strategy for months before the race begins. When the race begins, they ride their bicycles with relentless perseverance, willing to brave sun, rain, falls and excruciating pain. It is finally standing on the victor’s podium that drives the rider to excellence!!

2. What might happen if the tower cannot be finished because of a lack of resources? “Lest haply, after he hath laid the _____, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to _____ him, Saying, This man _____ to build, and was not able to finish.” (Luke 14:29-30)

Note: In the city of Caracas there is an impressive building which was erected in the early 1960's. Its name is “El Helicoide”. It was supposed to be a fancy shopping center for the rich. The basic structure is still there many decades later, but it was never finished. In fact, today it is a haven for the homeless. What happened? The simple fact is that the builders miscalculated the cost of the project and did not have enough money to finish it. I once heard a Venezuelan friend call this building “el monumento de los idiotas” (the monument of the idiots) Every time I have passed by El Helicoide, I am reminded of the parable of Jesus. Is it just possible that many Christians begin to build their characters upon Jesus but then fail to allow the Holy Spirit to finish the work?

3. According to the Parable of the Sower, what happened with the seeds which were sown in stony places? “Some fell upon stony places, where they had not _____ earth and _____ they sprung up, because they had to _____ of earth. And when they sun was up, they were scorched, and because they had no _____, they withered away.” (Matthew 13:5-6)

4. What do the “stony ground hearers” represent? “But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that _____ the word, and anon with _____ receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while, for when _____ or _____ ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.” (Matthew 13:20-21)

5. What did Jesus say about the need for His people to endure the tribulation to come? “But he that shall endure unto the _____, the same shall be saved.” (Matthew 24:13)

6. What awesome promise does God make to those who abide in Him? “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath _____ a good work in you will _____ it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6)

7. What other story did Jesus tell to illustrate the need to reckon the price of following Him? “Or what king, going to make war against another king, _____ not down first and _____ whether he be _____ with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace?” (Luke 14:31-32)

Note: Ellen White once wrote a letter about a Dr. Moran in which she quoted this parable. She remarked concerning him: “Dr. Moran has in view the building of a sanitarium, but he has not taken into consideration where the funds will come from to carry on his building enterprise. It is easy to work on suppositions, but it is not best to do so. It is not wise to launch out so suddenly. The bud must develop gradually into the full-blown flower. (17MR, p. 358.1)

“In the first place, let all connected with the establishment of this sanitarium make a most thorough study of the object for which it is to be established. Is it to be in every sense a memorial for the Lord? Is it to be a means of awakening conviction in regard to the nature of sin? Is it to be as means of saving souls from death—souls who through conversion will show a reformation in the life-practice, thus answering the question, ‘What shall I do to be saved?’” (17MR, p. 358.2)

The Cost of Discipleship

1. How much does it cost to be a disciple of Jesus? “So _____, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not _____ that he hath, he cannot be my _____.” (Luke 14:33)

2. What counsel did Jesus give the rich young ruler? “Yet thou lackest _____ thing: Sell _____ that thou hast, and distribute unto the _____, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, _____ me.” (Luke 18:22)

3. According to Jesus, how much does it cost to acquire the treasure of the Gospel? “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto _____ hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth _____ that he hath, and buyeth that field.” (Matthew 13:44)

4. What does it cost to acquire the Pearl of Great Price? “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a _____ man, seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold _____ that he had, and bought it.” (Matthew 13:45-46)

5. How much did James and John forsake when they chose to become disciples of Jesus? “And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook _____, and _____ him.” (Luke 5:11)

6. How much did Levi Matthew leave when he chose to follow Jesus? “And he left _____, rose up, and followed him.” (Luke 5:28)

7. What did the believers do with their possessions when they received the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost? “And _____ their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had _____. . . . And the multitude of them that believed were of _____ heart and of _____ soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had _____ things common.” (Acts 2:44-45; Acts 4:32)

8. How much was Saul of Tarsus willing to give up to gain Christ? “Yea, doubtless, and I count _____ things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of _____ things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.” (Philippians 3:8)

9. What made the donation of a widow more excellent than that of the religious leaders? “For all they did cast of their _____, but she of her want cast in _____ that she had, even _____ her living.” (Mark 12:44)

Judas Iscariot

1. What words of warning did Jesus speak to Judas when he offered to follow Jesus? “And Jesus said unto him, _____ have holes, and _____ of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to _____ his head.” (Luke 9:58)

2. What kind of kingdom did Judas envision? “When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by _____, to make him a _____, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.” (John 6:15)

Note: The tragic story of Judas illustrates what happens when a person fails to reckon the cost of following Jesus.

3. What will we receive when we choose to forsake all for Jesus? “He that spared not his own Son, but _____ him up for us all, how shall he not with him also _____ give us _____ things?” (Romans 8:32)

Note: Receiving Jesus is actually an investment. We give up all that we have that we may receive all that He has. The apostle Paul tells us that when we accept Jesus we become fellow heirs with Him of all things (see, Romans 8:17)

4. Is the path to the kingdom of God always a bed of roses? “Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to _____ in the faith, and that we must through much _____ enter into the kingdom of God.” (Acts 14:22)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #42 - What Defiles a Man

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: DA, p. 323; Matthew 15:1-20; Mark 7:1-23

Introduction

In this lesson we will study Jesus’ parable about what defiles a man. Jesus said to the multitude: “Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.” (Matthew 15:11) What did Jesus mean by this enigmatic statement? Was Jesus saying that it matters not what we eat or that it is not necessary to practice sound principles of hygiene? Scripture indicates that even the disciples failed to understand what Jesus meant. For this reason the apostle Peter, the spokesman of the disciples, entreated Jesus: “Declare unto us this parable.” (Matthew 15:15). Let’s seek to understand the profound spiritual lessons Jesus sought to teach through this parable.

Place and Audiences

1. Who entered into controversy with Jesus concerning the ceremonial washing of hands? “Then came together unto him the _____, and certain of the _____, which came from Jerusalem.” (Mark 7:1)

Note: This was most likely an official delegation from the Sanhedrin, dispatched for the specific purpose of undermining the confidence of the people in the ministry of Jesus.

2. To whom did Jesus speak a parable after His conflict with the Pharisees and scribes? “And when he called all the _____ unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and _____.” (Mark 7:14)

Note: Jesus thought it very important to explain to the multitude what He had said about ceremonial defilement lest the Scribes and Pharisees twist His words and turn the populace

against Him.

3. To whom did Jesus explain the meaning of His parable? “And when he was entered into the house from the people, his _____ asked him concerning the _____.” (Mark 7:17)

4. In what region was Jesus when he spoke this parable? “And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before _____, while he sent away the people.” (Mark 6:45)

Note: According to Mark 6:45 Jesus sent His disciples in a boat to Bethsaida. However, according to John 6:17 they traveled to Capernaum. Is there a contradiction? Not necessarily. The word Bethsaida means “fisher town”. It is highly probable that the name of the city was actually Capernaum while the nick name of the city was “the fisher town.” Even today we do the same thing when we call New York City the “Big Apple” or Chicago “the windy city”.

Tradition Versus Scripture

1. What controversy arose between Jesus and the Scribes and Pharisees? “And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with _____, that is to say, with _____ hands, they found fault.” (Mark 7:2)

Note: The word “defiled” (*koinos*) here should be more properly translated “common” or “ritually unclean”. At issue here is not whether we should wash our hands before we eat. Both Jesus and the Pharisees would have agreed that hygiene is vitally important before food consumption. At issue here is whether it was necessary to follow the rigorous and ridiculous ceremonial traditions of the elders before, during and after meals. You can read some of these absurd rules and regulations in the resource material at the end of this lesson.

2. In the estimation of the Scribes and Pharisees, which source of truth had been disobeyed by the disciples of Jesus? “For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the _____ of the _____.” (Mark 7:3)

Note: The conflict here is not over **what types** of food are proper or improper but rather over the manner in which hands should be ritually washed before food is consumed. Jesus is here condemning the deadly sin of ritualism.

3. What terminology did Jesus employ to describe the rabbinical concept of tradition? “_____ tradition of the _____ . . . which they have _____ to hold. . . . Making the word of God of none effect through you

tradition, which ye have _____” (Mark 7:3; Mark 7:4; Mark 7:13)

Note: This terminology is extremely important. The words “received, hand down, hold, delivered, tradition” are all technical terms which describe a particular rabbinical concept of the transmission of truth. The Jewish rabbis taught that there were many oral truths, not recorded in the writings of Moses, which were of equal authority to Scripture (in actual practice, of superior authority). In their view, these had been transmitted from generation to generation by an unbroken succession of elders. This view sounds strikingly similar to the Roman Catholic view of Apostolic Succession, the *Magisterium* and the Deposit of the Faith.

4. Was this the only practice required by the tradition of the elders? Jesus said: “and _____ other such _____ things ye do.” (Mark 7:8)

Note: Jesus is here indicating that the issue of ceremonially washing hands before breaking bread was only the tip of the iceberg. The whole of Jewish life was made unbearable by the stringent rules and regulations of the Scribes and Pharisees. For example, the Sabbath commandment was strangled by 613 rules added by human tradition. Keeping these rules, made the joyful observance of the Sabbath an impossibility!

5. How did Jesus respond to the accusation of the Scribes and Pharisees? “Well hath Esaias prophesied of you _____, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their _____, but their _____ is far from me.” (Mark 7:6)

Note: There is a difference between “lip religion” and “heart religion.” There is a distinction between religiosity and true religion. As we shall see in our next section, true religion must spring from the heart or else it is false religion.

6. According to Jesus, what happens when the commandments of men replace the commandments of God? “Howbeit in _____ to they _____ me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” (Mark 7:7)

Note: It is crucially important to realize that replacing the commandments of God with the traditions of men leads to vain worship.

7. What happens with the commandments of God when human tradition is placed above them? “Full well ye _____ the commandment of God, that ye may keep your _____ tradition.” (Mark 7:9)

8. What two things stand in contrast in this passage? “Making the _____ of God of none effect through your _____.” (Mark 7:13)

9. Which commandment did Jesus use to exemplify his point? “For Moses said, _____ thy father and thy mother, and whoso _____ father or mother, let him die the death.” (Mark 7:10)

10. **Thought Question:** How did the tradition of *corban* (the word means “dedicated”) annul the power of the fifth commandment? (Mark 7:11-13)

Note: One author very well remarks: “The parents were not permitted to touch anything thus ‘dedicated,’ yet the undutiful son was permitted to make use of it as long as he lived. He avoided his filial duty by a profession of superior piety.” (5BC, p. 624).

11. What other example did Jesus give to illustrate the absurd and contradictory casuistry of the Scribes and Pharisees? “Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the _____, it is nothing, but whosoever shall swear by the _____ of the temple, he is a debtor! Ye fools, and blind, for what is _____, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?” (Matthew 23:16-17)

12. **Thought Question:** Can you think of another commandment of God’s law which has been rejected by Christendom in order to follow human tradition? Draw a parallel between what Jesus said about the fifth commandment and what He would say today about the fourth commandment.

Heart Religion

1. What two types of religion did Jesus contrast in this episode? “This people honoureth me with their _____, but their _____ is far from me.” (Mark 7:6)

2. According to Jesus, from where do words flow? “For out of the abundance of the _____ the mouth speaketh.” (Matthew 12:34)

3. According to Jesus, where does the sin of adultery originate? “Whosoever _____ on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her _____ in his _____.” (Matthew 5:28)

4. When Jesus comes again, what kind of heart must His people have? “Blessed are the _____ in heart for they shall _____ God.” (Matthew 5:8)

5. What great truth did Jesus utter about a person's philosophy of money? "For where your _____ is, there will your _____ be also." (Matthew 6:21)

6. What great problem characterized the Scribes and Pharisees? "Ye blind guides, which strain at a _____, and swallow a _____. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye make clean the _____ of the cup and of the platter, but _____ they are full of extortion and excess." (Matthew 23:24-25)

7. What did Jesus say to the crowd in Mark 7:15? "There is _____ from without a man, that entering into him can _____ him. But the things which come _____ of him, those are they that defile the man."

Note: Jesus could not possibly have meant that there is nothing which we ingest that can defile us, because there are many things that do cause great physical harm. Jesus is saved from a great scientific inaccuracy when we realize that He is speaking about ceremonial ablutions before eating and not about the particular foods we consume.

8. What did Jesus mean when He stated that man is defiled by what comes out of him? "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the _____; and they defile the man. For out of the _____ proceed evil thoughts, _____, adulteries, fornications, _____, false witness, blasphemies." (Matthew 15:18-19)

Note: Each one of these sins is a transgression of one of the Ten Commandments. When the heart is wrong, the actions will be wrong as well. Our only hope for a change of lifestyle is found in a heart transplant! God offers to take remove our heart of stone and give us a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26-27). He then promises to write His law upon our hearts Jeremiah 31:31-34)

9. What do our words reveal? "The words are an indication of that which is in the _____. 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.'" (DA, p. 323.1)

10. How can our own words defile us? "But the words are more than an _____ of character; they have power to _____ on the character. Men are _____ by their own words." (DA, p. 323.1)

11. Why is it dangerous to utter that which we do not really believe? "Often under a momentary _____, prompted by Satan, they give utterance to jealousy or evil surmising, expressing that which they do not really _____; but the expression _____ on the thoughts. They are _____ by their words, and come to believe that true which was spoken at Satan's instigation." (DA, p. 323.1)

12. Why is it dangerous to express words of criticism? “It is dangerous to utter a word of _____, dangerous to question and _____ divine light. The habit of careless and irreverent criticism _____ upon the character, in fostering irreverence and unbelief.” (DA, p. 323.1)

13. What does Ellen White tell us about the famous skeptic, David Hume? “It is said that Hume, the skeptic, was in early life a conscientious _____ in the Word of God. Being connected with a debating society, he was appointed to present the arguments in favor of _____. He studied with earnestness and perseverance, and his keen and active mind became _____ with the sophistry of skepticism. Ere long he came to _____ its delusive teachings, and his whole afterlife bore the dark impress of infidelity. (CG, p. 196.2)

Clean and Unclean Foods

1. How do we know that Jesus was not abolishing the distinction between clean and unclean foods? “But to eat with _____ hands defileth not a man.” (Matthew 15:20).

Note: Matthew 15:20 makes it clear that the controversy is not over the types of food that we eat but rather the ceremonial manner in which they are eaten. However, a problem surfaces when we read the parallel account in Mark 7:19. The *New International Version* reads that “Jesus declared all foods ‘clean.’” The *New Century Version* reads: “When Jesus said this, he meant that no longer was any food unclean for people to eat.” The account in Mark seems to suggest that the issue was not only ceremonial washing but also the type of food that is eaten. However, several points must be taken into account. Most modern versions take unwarranted liberties with the text. The text does not say that Jesus ‘declared’ all foods clean. The word ‘declared’ is simply not in the text!

There are several reasons why we know that Jesus did not abrogate the dietary laws of the Old Testament:

- Matthew 15:20 clearly explains the issue at hand: It was the manner of eating, not the foods eaten.
- The dietary laws of Leviticus 11:1-47 and Deuteronomy 14:1-29 were not traditions of the elders but rather the written law of Moses.
- Peter did not understand that Jesus had abrogated the health laws as can be seen in Acts 10:12-48; Acts 11:1-30; Acts 12:1-25; Acts 13:1-52; Acts 14:1-3.
- The dietary laws of Leviticus and Deuteronomy were not part of the Hebrew sanctuary ritual, they were addressed to the entire congregation.

- Jesus was a Jew and it is inconceivable that He would have contradicted the health laws that God gave in the Old Testament.
- Even if Jesus had declared all foods clean, the Bible does not consider pigs, dogs, cats, mice, lobster, shrimp and roaches as food. For example, people can refer to the union of a man with a man and a woman with a woman as 'marriage' but in the sight of God it is not marriage. People can say that Sunday is the Sabbath but in the sight of God it is not the Sabbath at all. Likewise, people can call pork food but in the sight of God it is not food at all!

2. What wise counsel was given by the apostle Paul regarding eating and drinking? "Whether therefore ye _____, or _____, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the _____ of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #43 - Waiting and Watching for the Master

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: 2T, pp 183-199; Mark 13:33-37; Luke 12:35-40; Revelation 22:10-12; Matthew 24:37-39

Introduction

In this lesson we will study two very closely related parables of Jesus that describe what His people must be doing while they wait for their Master to return. The first of these parables is found in Mark 13:33-37 and the second is in Luke 12:35-40. We will also take into account some very important information written by Ellen White in *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, pp. 183-198. Let’s begin by taking a look at the historical context and the symbols of Mark 13:33-37.

Historical Context and Symbols

1. Mark 13:33-37 is the climax of a sermon that Jesus preached to His disciples on the Mount of Olives. What was the central subject of His sermon?

2. Who is represented by the **master** of the house who went on a long journey? The Son of _____. What is represented by the place where he journeyed to? _____
(Mark 13:34)

3. What task did the master give his **servants** during his absence? “[He] gave authority to his servants, and to every man his _____, and commanded the porter to _____.” (Mark 13:34)

Watching and Praying

1. In the parable of the watchful servant, what did Jesus tell His followers to do? “Take ye heed, _____ and _____ for ye know not when the time is.” (Mark 13:33)
2. What counsel did Jesus give to His servants as He concluded the parable of the ten virgins? “_____ therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” (Matthew 25:13)
3. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do as He was about to enter agony in Gethsemane? “_____ and _____, that ye enter not into _____. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (Matthew 26:41)
4. What solemn words did the apostle Paul address to Christians who would be waiting for their Master’s coming? “Therefore let us not _____, as do others, but let us _____ and be sober.” (1Thessalonians 5:6)
5. What warning did Jesus give to the church of Sardis? “If therefore thou shalt not _____, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what _____ I will come upon thee.” (Revelation 3:3)

Working While We Wait

1. What must God’s people be doing while they wait for their Master to come? Jesus spoke of a certain nobleman who left for a distant land and said to his servants, “_____ till I come.” (Luke 19:13)
2. **Thought Question:** What were the ten virgins supposed to do with their lamps while they waited for the groom to arrive? _____
(See Matthew 25:1-13)
3. In the parable of the talents, what were the servants to do while they waited for the master to return? “Thou oughtest therefore to have put _____ money to the exchangers, and then at my _____ I should have received mine own with _____.” (Matthew 25:27)
4. How must we treat our fellow servants while we wait for Christ’s return? “But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord _____ his coming, and shall begin to _____ his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he _____ not for him and in an hour that he is not aware of.” (Matthew 24:48-50; see also Matthew 25:31-46)

5. What did Noah do until the door of the ark closed? “And [God] spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a _____ of righteousness. . . . By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, _____ with fear, _____ an ark to the saving of his house.” (2 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 11:7)

6. What did Jesus say to the religious leaders who maligned Him for healing the man blind from birth? “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is _____; the _____ cometh, when no man can _____.” (John 9:4)

Being Ready

1. What did Jesus say His people must do while they wait for His return? “Let your _____ be girded about, and your _____ burning.” (Luke 12:35)

2. What did Jesus mean when He said that our loins must be girded and our lamps burning? “Therefore be ye also _____ for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man _____.” (Matthew 24:44)

3. How does Jesus make His people ready for His return? “And he [John the Baptist] shall go before him [Jesus] in the spirit and power of Elias, to _____ the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the _____ to the wisdom of the just, to make _____ a people prepared for the Lord.” (Luke 1:17)

4. How did John the Baptist perform this work of preparation? “Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . . Bring forth therefore _____ meet for repentance.” (Matthew 3:3; Matthew 3:8)

5. What does the book of Revelation say about God’s people being ready for the marriage supper of the lamb? “Let us be _____ and rejoice, and give honor to him for the _____ of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself _____.” (Revelation 19:7)

6. What will make God’s people ready for the marriage supper? “And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine _____, clean and white, for the fine linen is the _____ of saints.” (Revelation 19:8)

The Day and the Hour

1. According to Mark 13:33, why must God’s people be ready at all times? “Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the _____ is.” (Mark 13:33)

Read the following quotations and then answer the questions that follow:

"The righteous and the wicked will **still be living** upon the earth in their mortal state--men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, **irrevocable decision** has been pronounced in **the sanctuary above**. Before the Flood, after Noah entered the ark, God shut him in and shut the ungodly out; but for seven days the people, knowing not that their doom was fixed, continued their careless, pleasure-loving life and mocked the warnings of impending judgment. "So," says the Savior, "shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:39. Silently, unnoticed as the **midnight thief**, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man's destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy's offer to guilty men.

"Watch ye therefore: . . . lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping." Mark 13:35, 36. Perilous is the condition of those who, growing weary of their watch, turn to the attractions of the world. While the man of business is absorbed in the pursuit of gain, while the pleasure lover is seeking indulgence, while the daughter of fashion is arranging her adornments--it may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence: "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." Daniel 5:27." (GC, p. 491)

"Jesus has left us word: "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." We are waiting and watching for the return of the Master, who is to bring the morning, lest coming suddenly He find us sleeping. **What time is here referred to? Not to the revelation of Christ in the clouds of heaven to find a people asleep. No;** but to His return from His ministration in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, when He lays off His priestly attire and clothes Himself with garments of vengeance, and when the mandate goes forth: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous,

"When Jesus ceases to plead for man, the cases of all are forever decided. This is the time of reckoning with His servants. To those who have **neglected** the preparation of purity and holiness, which fits them to be waiting ones to welcome their Lord, the sun sets in gloom and darkness, and rises not again. **Probation closes;** Christ's **intercessions cease in heaven**. This time finally comes suddenly upon all, and those who have **neglected** to purify their souls by obeying the truth are found sleeping. They became **weary of waiting and watching;** they became **indifferent** in regard to the coming of their Master. They **longed not** for His appearing, and thought there was no need of such continued, persevering watching. They had been disappointed in their expectations and might be again. They concluded that there was **time enough** yet to arouse. They would be sure not to lose the opportunity of securing an earthly treasure. It would be safe to get all of this world they could. And in securing this object, they lost all **anxiety and interest** in the appearing of the Master. They became **indifferent and careless**, as though His coming were yet

in the distance. But while their interest was buried up in their worldly gains, the work closed in the heavenly sanctuary, and they were unprepared.

If such had only known that the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary would close so soon, how differently would they have conducted themselves, how earnestly would they have watched!" (2T, pp. 190, 191)

2. **Thought Question:** What event was Jesus referring to when He stated: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is."? (Mark 13:33)

3. How does the parable of the ten virgins underline the same truth? "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the _____ nor the _____ wherein the Son of man _____." (Matthew 25:13)

5. **Thought Question:** What event was Jesus referring to when He stated in the parable of the ten virgins, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh"? _____

3. What solemn warning did Jesus give to the church of Sardis? "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold _____, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not _____, I will come on thee as a _____, and thou shalt not _____ what hour I will come upon thee." (Revelation 3:3)

6. **Thought Question:** What event was Jesus referring to when He stated to the church of Sardis: "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee"? (Revelation 3:3)



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #44 - The Harvest Principle

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: COL, pp. 62-69; Mark 4:26-29; Revelation 14:14-20

Our lesson today centers around the parable that is recorded in Mark 4:26-29. Though the parable is short, we shall find that it teaches profound lessons concerning the work of saving souls. It also illustrates the process of spiritual birth, growth and maturation in the Christian life. We shall also discover in this parable the principal reason why the Second Coming of Jesus has been so long delayed since 1844. Let’s begin our study with the reason why Jesus told the parable in the first place.

Historical Occasion

1. Which parable had Jesus just uttered when He told this one? “The parable of the _____ excited much questioning.” (COL, p. 62.1)

2. In what sense had the populace misunderstood the parable of the sower? “Some of the hearers gathered from it that Christ was not to establish an _____ kingdom, and many were _____ and perplexed.” (COL, p. 62.1)

Note: The people of Christ’s day expected Him to establish an earthly kingdom. But in the parable of the sower, Jesus taught that the principles of His kingdom must be implanted in the heart before His literal kingdom could be established. This idea, being foreign to the hearers, left them deeply perplexed.

3. Why did Jesus tell the parable of Mark 4:26-29 to the perplexed crowd? “Seeing their perplexity, Christ used other _____, still seeking to turn their thoughts from the hope of a _____ kingdom to the work of God’s _____ in the soul.” (COL, p. 62.1)

Symbols of the Parable

1. Who is represented by the husbandman in this parable? "The husbandman. . . can be no other than _____." (COL, p. 62.3)

2. What is represented by the sower of the seed? "But the sower of the seed represents those who _____ in Christ's _____." (COL, p. 62.3)

Note: The sower in the parable of the sower is clearly identified as the Son of man. In this parable, however, the sower represents the followers of Christ. There is no contradiction. These two parables, taken together, teach that Christ sows the seed through human instruments.

3. Why can't the sower in this parable be a symbol of Christ? "Christ does not _____ over His charge, but watches it day and night. He is not _____ of how the seed grows." (COL, p. 62.3)

4. What does the seed represent? "The seed is the _____ of God." (Luke 8:11)

Physical Laws of the Harvest

1. What has God implanted within the seed? "The seed has in itself a _____ principle, a principle that God Himself has _____." (COL, p. 63.1)

2. What would happen if the seed were left to itself? ". . . left to itself the seed would have no _____ to spring up." (COL, p. 63.1)

3. What is man's part in the process of growing a crop? "Man has his part to act in promoting the growth of the grain. He must _____ and _____ the soil and _____ in the seed. He must _____ the fields." (COL, p. 63.1)

4. What is God's role in the process of growing a crop? "There is life in the seed, there is power in the soil; but unless an _____ power is exercised day and night, the seed will yield no returns. The _____ of rain must be sent to give moisture to the thirsty fields, the _____ must impart heat, electricity must be conveyed to the buried seed. The life which the Creator has implanted, He alone can _____ forth. Every seed grows, every plant develops, by the _____ of God." (COL, p. 63.2).

5. What are God's and man's roles in the task of growing an abundant harvest of souls? "While we are to _____ the word, we cannot impart the power that will _____ the soul, and cause righteousness and _____ to spring forth. In the preaching of the word

there must be the working of an agency _____ any human power. Only through the divine Spirit will the word be living and powerful to _____ the soul unto eternal life.” (COL, p. 63.3)

The Power of the Seed

1. What type of power does the Word of God possess? “Being born again, not of _____ seed, but of incorruptible, by the _____ of God, which liveth and abideth for _____.” (2 Peter 1:23)

2. What assurance does God give us that His Word will accomplish its intended purpose? “For as the rain cometh down, and the _____ from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my _____: it shall not return unto me _____, but it shall _____ that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:10-11)

3. What happened when the apostles preached the Word under the power of the Holy Spirit? “And the word of God _____; and the number of the disciples _____ in Jerusalem greatly; and a _____ company of the priests were obedient to the faith.” (Acts 6:7)

4. How is faith involved in the process of sowing the seed? “The work of the sower is a work of _____. The mystery of the germination and growth of the seed he cannot _____. But he has confidence in the _____ by which God causes vegetation to flourish.” (COL, p. 64.1)

5. What happens when the farmer gives up the seed? “In casting his seed into the ground, he is apparently throwing _____ the precious grain that might furnish _____ for his family. But he is only giving up a _____ good for a larger return. He casts the seed away, expecting to gather it _____ in an abundant harvest.” (COL, p. 64.1)

6. How does the life of Christ illustrate the principle in question #5? “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of _____ fall into the ground and _____, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth _____ fruit.” (John 12:24)

7. Must we expect immediate results when we cast forth the seed of truth? “The good seed may for a time lie _____ in a cold, selfish, worldly heart, giving no _____ that it has taken root; but afterward, as the Spirit of God _____ on the soul, the hidden seed _____ up, and at last bears fruit to the glory of God.” (COL, p. 65.1)

8. Should we be discouraged when the seed of truth does not produce immediate results? “In our lifework we know not which shall _____, this or that. This is not a question for us to _____. We are to do our work, and leave the _____ with God.” (COL, p. 65.1)

The Indispensability of Growth

1. What is represented by the germination and growth of the plant? “The germination of the seed represents the _____ of spiritual life, and the development of the plant is a beautiful figure of Christian _____.” (COL, p. 65.2)

2. How vital is growth to the plant? “As in nature, so in grace, there can be no _____ without growth. The plant must either grow or _____.” (COL, p. 65.2)

3. What parallel exists between the growth of the plant and growth in the Christian life? “As its [the seed’s] growth is _____ and imperceptible, but _____, so is the development of the Christian life.” (COL, p. 65.2)

4. Does the Christian grow **in** perfection or **toward** perfection? “At every _____ of development our life may be _____, yet if God’s purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be _____ advancement.” (COL, p. 65.2)

5. How long does it take to develop a sanctified life? “Sanctification is the work of a _____.” (COL, p. 65.2)

Note: It would be well to read the following texts which corroborate Ellen White’s view of sanctification; Romans 6:22; 1Thessalonians 4:3-4; 1Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Peter 1:2.

6. What strong words did the apostle Paul speak to the Hebrew Christians? “For when for the time ye ought to be _____, ye have need that one teach you again which be the _____ principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of _____, and not of _____ meat.” (Hebrews 5:12)

Note: The Hebrews should have been teachers of the Word but instead were babies who needed to be taught the ABC’s of doctrine. In the succeeding context [Hebrews 6:1-6], the apostle warns the Hebrews that if they do not grow, they will spiritually die and be rejected of God!

7. How does stunted spiritual growth affect our ability to sift between truth and error? “That we henceforth be no more _____, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every _____ of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to _____.” (Ephesians 4:14)

8. What did the apostle Peter encourage Christians to do? “But _____ in grace, and in the _____ of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.” (2 Peter 3:18)

The Proliferation of Christ

1. According to the apostle Paul, how does Jesus reproduce Himself in us? “But we all, with open face _____ as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are _____ into the _____ image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (2 Corinthians 3:18)

2. How does Ellen White describe the process whereby Christ reproduces Himself in us? “By beholding Christ, by _____ of Him, by beholding the _____ of His character we become changed. Changed from glory to glory. And what is _____? Character,—and he becomes changed from character to character. Thus we see that there is a work of _____ that goes on by beholding Jesus.” (SD, p. 337.5)

3. Once Christ has reproduced Himself in us, how does He reproduce Himself in others? “Christ is seeking to _____ Himself in the hearts of men; and He does this through those who believe in Him. The object of the Christian life is fruit bearing—the _____ of Christ’s character in the believer, that it may be _____ in others.” (COL, p. 67.1)

Note: When Christ died on the cross, He was the solitary seed which fell into the ground and died (John 12:24). But that solitary seed soon grew and produced much fruit. That fruit, in turn, produced ever more fruit. As the original seed reproduces itself in many more seeds, so Christ reproduces Himself ever more in those who believe in Him.

4. What does it mean to receive the Spirit of Christ? “As you receive the Spirit of Christ—the Spirit of _____ love and labor for others—you will grow and bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will _____ in your character. Your faith will _____, your convictions deepen, your love be made _____. More and more you will _____ the likeness of Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely.” (COL, p. 67.3)

A Fully Mature Generation

1. Which 19th century movement saw the greatest revival of primitive godliness since apostolic times? “Of all the great religious movements since the days of the apostles, none have been more free from human _____ and the wiles of Satan than was that of the autumn of _____.” (GC, p. 401.3; read pages GC, p. 400.1 to GC, p. 404.2 for the whole picture)

2. Were the members of this religious movement ready to meet their Lord? “But the people were not yet _____ to meet their Lord. There was still a work of _____ to be accomplished for them” (GC, p. 424.4)

Note: Ellen White then goes on to explain that the work which still needed to be accomplished was centered in the sanctuary service: “Light was to be given, directing their minds to the temple of God in heaven, and as they should by faith follow their High Priest in His ministration there, new duties would be revealed. Another message of warning and instruction was to be given to the church.” (GC, p. 424.4)

3. Could Christ have come shortly after 1844? “Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held _____ their faith and followed on _____ in the opening providence of God, proclaiming the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit _____ it to the world, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been _____, and Christ would have come ere this to receive His people to their reward.” (EV, p. 695.3)

4. Why has the second coming of Christ been so long delayed? “Christ is _____ with longing desire for the manifestation of _____ in His church. When the character of Christ shall be _____ reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.” (COL, p. 69.1)

5. When the remnant church is ready to meet her Lord, what will she look like? “That he might present it to himself a _____ church, not having _____, or _____, or any such thing; but that it should be _____ and without blemish.” (Ephesians 5:27)

6. How does the book of Revelation describe the end time generation which will be harvested by Christ at His coming? “And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy _____, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the _____ of the earth is _____.” (Revelation 14:15)

7. How does Ellen White describe this great outpouring of the latter rain? “_____ the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth [the seven last plagues] there will be among the people of the Lord such a _____ of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The _____ and power of God will be _____ out upon His children.” (GC, p. 464.1)

8. Will the process of sanctification of the end time generation be expedited? “Some of us have had _____ to get the truth and to advance step by step, and every step we have taken has given us strength to take the next. But now time is almost finished, and what we have been

_____ learning, they [11th hour Adventists] will have to learn in a few _____. They will also have much to _____ and much to learn again.” (EW, p. 67.2)

9. What will further happen to the faithful remnant during the time of trouble? “. . . it is needful for them to be placed in the _____ of fire; their _____ must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be _____ reflected.” (GC, p. 621.1)

10. What type of character will the faithful remnant possess? “Not even by a _____ could our Savior be brought to yield to the power of temptation. . . . This is the _____ in which those must be found who shall _____ in the time of trouble.” (GC, p. 623.1; read also, Revelation 14:1-5)

Saved or Lost?

1. What sad exclamation will some utter when probation closes? “The _____ is past, the summer is ended, and we are not _____.” (Jeremiah 8:20)

2. What assurance does God give that His people will see the fruit of their labors? “They that _____ in tears shall _____ in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with _____, bringing his sheaves with him.” (Psalm 126:5-6)

3. What great law will determine the destiny of each human being? “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man _____, that shall he also _____. For he that soweth to his _____ shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the _____ shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting” (Galatians 6:7-9)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #45 – The Kingdom in Miniature

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: Matthew 16:13-17:9; Luke 9:18-36; Mark 8:27-9:10; DA, pp. 419-425; EW, pp. 162-164

Introduction

Everything that Jesus did, every movement that He made, every word that He spoke had a reason. We must link each event of His life with the immediately preceding and succeeding events. Jesus did nothing by chance or by impulse. Every single event in His life had an intricate reason that God would have us discover. Let us then proceed to ask a few questions about one of the events of Jesus’ life, the transfiguration.

- Why did God the Father transfigure Jesus? What purpose did it serve?
- Why did the transfiguration take place almost at the end of Jesus’ ministry and not at the beginning or the middle?
- Why did Jesus take only three of His disciples to the top of the mount?
- Why did the Father send Moses and Elijah to speak with Jesus?
- What did Moses and Elijah speak with Jesus about on the mount?
- Why did Peter suggest the building of three booths on the mount, one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elijah?
- Why was God’s voice heard on the mount and what did it say?
- What does this episode have to say to us in the twenty-first century?

Historical Setting

1. Where was Jesus six days before His transfiguration? "When Jesus came into the region of _____ Philippi. . ." (Matthew 16:13)

Note: Jesus had left Galilee and moved north to Tiro and Sidon. He then moved south, pausing at Caesarea Philippi. This pagan city, which was just north of the borders of Galilee, was famous for its luscious vegetation and riotous society. It lay at the foot of the majestic Mt. Hermon, the source for the waters of the Jordan River. From here Jesus was to begin his southward journey toward Jerusalem where He would be rejected and crucified.

2. What did Jesus do before He asked His disciples two questions? "And it happened, as He was alone _____, that His disciples joined Him. . ." (Luke 9:18) "Stepping a little aside from them, the Man of Sorrows pours out His supplications with strong _____ and tears. He prays for _____ to endure the test in behalf of humanity. He must Himself gain a fresh hold on Omnipotence, for only thus can He contemplate the future. And He pours out His heart longings for His _____, that in the hour of the power of darkness their faith may not fail." (DA, pp. 420, 421)

Note: Surrounded by the luxuriant vegetation, with the imposing snow-capped peak before Him, Jesus poured out His heart in prayer to His Father. He prayed for Himself and for the faith of His disciples. His deep desire was that His disciples would not lose faith when He shared a great and disturbing truth with them.

3. After spending the greater part of the night in prayer, what preliminary question did Jesus ask His disciples and how did they respond? "When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, -saying, "_____ do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some _____, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." (Matthew 16:13, 14)

Two Questions

1. What all-important question did Jesus ask next? "He said to them, "But who do _____ say that I am?" (Matthew 16:15)

Note: The disciples needed to confess with their own lips their understanding of who Jesus was, because this would strengthen their conviction that He was the Messiah. Jesus was about to share the news about his rejection and crucifixion and the disciples needed to remember their confession that He was the Messiah. Regarding this Ellen White wrote: "The faith of the disciples was greatly strengthened at the transfiguration, when they were permitted to behold Christ's

glory and to hear the voice from heaven testifying to His divine character. God chose to give the followers of Jesus strong proof that He was the promised Messiah, that in their bitter sorrow and disappointment at His crucifixion, they would not entirely cast away their confidence. . . He pleads that they may witness a manifestation of His divinity that will comfort them in the hour of His supreme agony with the knowledge that He is of a surety the Son of God and that His shameful death is a part of the plan of redemption. (DA 419.4, EW, p. 162)

Peter's Response

1. How did Peter respond to Jesus' second question? "Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the _____, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16)

Note: The word 'Christ' means anointed. It is equivalent to the Hebrew word 'Messiah' (see John 1:41). Peter was confessing that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

2. How did Peter come to the realization that Jesus was the promised Messiah? "Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not _____ this to you, but My _____ who is in heaven." (Matthew 16:17)

Note: Peter's confession was no momentary intuition or personal insight. The Father revealed it to him and Peter did not understand his own confession. Like the other disciples, he expected the Messiah to destroy the hated Romans and to set up a worldwide kingdom with the Jewish nation at the top.

Peter's Misunderstanding

1. What distressing truth did Jesus share with the disciples after Peter's confession? "From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to _____, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be _____, and be raised the third day." (Matthew 16:21)

2. How did Peter express the sentiment of the disciples in his response to the words of Jesus? "Then Peter took Him aside and began to _____ Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" (Matthew 16:22)

Note: Peter's statement proves that he did not understand what kind of Messiah Jesus was. In Peter's mind, the Messiah would not die; He would destroy the national enemies and reign in and from Jerusalem!

3. What did Jesus say to Peter after he rebuked Jesus? "But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, _____! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." (Matthew 16:23)

Note: Jesus had just told Peter that the Father had given him the realization that Jesus was the Messiah. However, now Jesus tells Peter 'you are not mindful of the things of God but of men'. Jesus was not merely calling Peter 'Satan'. Satan was actually influencing Peter to distract Jesus from the way of the cross.

Travel toward the Mount

1. **Thought Question:** What do you think was the disciple's mood as they traveled from Caesarea Philippi to the Mount of Transfiguration? _____

Note: During the six days of travel between Caesarea Philippi and the Mount of transfiguration, the disciples were deeply troubled. Gloom, perplexity and fear inundated them. Peter had just confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus had congratulated Him and then He had spoiled it all by telling them that His own people would reject and kill Him! So Jesus prayed to His Father to give the disciples a glimpse of the glory after the Cross: "The Savior has seen the gloom of His disciples, and has longed to lighten their grief by an assurance that their faith has not been in vain." (DA, p. 421)

Note: After Peter's confession and Jesus' enigmatic comment about His sufferings and death, He led the disciples down the western bank of the Sea of Galilee. After traveling six days (eight days by inclusive reckoning), they came to Mt. Tabor on the southwest corner of the Sea. For six days, the disciples had been unable to rest or sleep. They moved with Jesus toward Jerusalem with dire forebodings.

2. How much time transpired between the events at Caesarea Philippi and the transfiguration? "Now after _____ days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother and led them up on a high mountain by themselves; 2 and He was transfigured before them." (Matthew 17:1, 2)

Note: This is the only time in the synoptic gospels where mention is made of a precise time interval between one event and another. This means that there must be a link between the events in Caesarea Philippi and those on the Mount.

An Enigmatic Statement

1. What enigmatic statement did Jesus make to all of the disciples six days before the transfiguration? "For the Son of Man will come in the _____ of His Father with His

angels, and then He will _____ each according to his works. Assuredly, I say to you, there are _____ standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." (Matthew 16:27, 28)

Note: This is a strange statement. Peter, James and John died long ago. How, then, could they have seen Jesus coming in the glory of the Father with all the holy angels?

Hiking up the Mountain

1. How many disciples did Jesus take to the top of the mountain? "Now after six days Jesus took _____, James, and _____ his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves. . ."

Note: Jesus did not take all of the disciples to the top of the Mount. Peter, James and John are the 'some' that Jesus had referred to six days before. Notably, these same three were closest to Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane when He uttered agonizing words to His Father and sweated great drops of blood (Matthew 26:37, 38). These three disciples needed special encouragement. They needed to understand that the cross was not the end of their hopes, that after the cross would come the glory! "Only the three who are to witness His anguish in Gethsemane have been chosen to be with Him on the mount." (DA, p. 420)

Jesus Prays

1. What did Jesus do immediately before the transfiguration? "Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to _____." (Luke 9:28)

Note: "Now the burden of His prayer is that they may be given a manifestation of the glory He had with the Father before the world was, that His kingdom may be revealed to human eyes, and that His disciples may be strengthened to behold it. He pleads that they may witness a manifestation of His divinity that will comfort them in the hour of His supreme agony with the knowledge that He is of a surety the Son of God and that His shameful death is a part of the plan of redemption." (DA, pp, 420, 421)

The Transfiguration

1. How do the synoptic gospels describe the transfiguration? "As He prayed, the appearance of His face was _____, and His robe became _____ and glistening. . . (Luke 9:29) ". . . and He was _____ before them. His face shone like the sun,

and His clothes became as white as the light.” (Matthew 17:2). “He was _____ before them. His clothes became _____, exceedingly white, like _____, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them.” (Mark 9:2, 3)

Note: The description of Jesus in the synoptic gospels is very similar to that of the glorified Christ in Revelation 1:16. Now we can understand why Jesus promised that ‘some’ of His disciples would not die until they saw Jesus coming in His kingdom. On the Mount of Transfiguration, the Father performed a miracle and Jesus appeared, as He will at His second coming. Matthew and Mark use the word ‘metamorphosis’ to describe the transformation of Jesus on the Mount. A metamorphosis is a radical change from one form to another. The same word appears in Romans 12:2 and 2 Corinthians 3:18.

Moses and Elijah

1. Who came to speak with Jesus on the Mount? “And behold, _____ and _____ appeared to them, talking with Him.” (Matthew 16:3)

2. Where did Elijah and Moses come from and why did they come? The gospel of Luke tells us that Moses and Elijah appeared ‘in glory’, that is, in their glorified form. After God buried Moses (Deuteronomy 34:5, 6), Michael and Satan disputed over his body (Jude 9). Michael the Archangel is a name given to Christ (see Daniel 12:1) who at His second coming will resurrect the dead! (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17). “Moses passed through death, but Michael came down and gave him life before his body had seen corruption. Satan tried to hold the body, claiming it as his; but Michael resurrected Moses and took him to heaven.” (EW, p. 164). Elijah was translated to heaven without seeing death (2 Kings 2:11, 12). Thus on the Mount we have a kingdom in miniature. Moses represents those who died and resurrect, Elijah represents those whom Jesus will translate to heaven without seeing death, and Jesus is the King who makes it all possible!

3. What was the subject of conversation between Jesus, Moses and Elijah? “And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of His _____ which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.” (Luke 9:30, 31)

Note: Although Moses and Elijah appeared to ‘them’, they spoke only to ‘Him’. Only the gospel of Luke tells us the subject of conversation. Although the translation ‘decease’ in the NKJV captures the connotation of the conversation, the actual word in Greek is *éxodon* from where we get the word exodus. Jesus had told his disciples that He was going to Jerusalem to suffer and die and this was the subject of conversation among Jesus, Moses and Elijah. If we remember, the event that marked the exodus from Egypt was the sacrifice of the Passover lamb. The Father sent Moses and Elijah to encourage Jesus to go forward with the plan to die for the sins of the world. God did not send angels to encourage Jesus. He sent two men who had been through severe

trials and tribulations and overcame (see DA, pp. 421-425)

“At the transfiguration the Lord sent Moses and Elijah to talk with Jesus concerning His sufferings and death. Instead of choosing angels to converse with His Son, God chose those who had themselves experienced the trials of earth.” (EW, p. 162)

A Miniature Kingdom

1. What will be the glorious fulfillment of the miniature representation on the Mount? “For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an _____, and with the trumpet of God and the _____ in Christ will rise first. Then we who are _____ and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17)

Peter’s Suggestion

1. What did Peter suggest after the transfiguration? “Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be _____; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” (Matthew 17:4)

Note: Peter did not yet understand. He was suggesting that instead of moving on to Jerusalem to suffer and die, Jesus should stay at the top of the Mount with them. He would soon understand that before the mountain comes the valley of the shadow of death!

The Voice from Heaven

1. What did God the Father say to Jesus and the disciples after the transfiguration? “While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a _____ came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved _____, in whom I am well pleased, hear Him!’” (Matthew 17:5)

Note: In several ways, God strengthened the faith of Jesus and the disciples for the trial ahead:

- Peter confessed his assurance that Jesus was the Messiah
- The Father transfigured Jesus
- Moses and Elijah came from heaven to encourage Jesus to go forward with His passion

and death in Jerusalem.

- The Father's own voice assured the disciples that He was pleased with Him.
- Although the disciples did not fully comprehend the idea of a suffering and dying Messiah, they were certain that God was with Him.

Four Important Lessons

The transfiguration teaches us four important lessons:

Lesson #1: The transfiguration provides firm evidence for the reality of a future kingdom: "The Savior's promise to the disciples was now fulfilled. Upon the mount the future kingdom of glory was represented in _____—Christ the King, Moses a representative of the _____ saints, and Elijah of the _____ ones." (DA, p. 422)

Lesson #2: There will be no pre-tribulation rapture before the glorious coming of Jesus: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will _____ with Him those who sleep in Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 4:14)

"And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the _____ of our Lord Jesus Christ _____ all His saints." (1 Thessalonians 3:12, 13)

Some have argued for a pre-tribulation rapture based on 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 13; 4:14. They say that Jesus cannot bring the saints with Him unless he took them to heaven beforehand. However, those who argue in this manner ignore the context. The saints that Jesus brings with Him at His second coming are not human beings but angels (Deuteronomy 33:2; Revelation 5:11; Mark 8:38; Zechariah 14:4, 5). Furthermore, a careful study of the text reveals that Jesus is not bringing the saints with Him from heaven to earth but rather the Father is bringing Jesus with the saints to heaven (see the additional material at the end of this lesson)

Lesson #3: The Word of God is more reliable than the testimony of our eyes and ears: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were _____ of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. ¹⁸ And this voice which came from heaven we _____, when we were with him in the holy mount. ¹⁹ We have also a _____ sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as

unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the Daystar arise in your hearts:
²⁰ Knowing this first that no prophecy of the scripture is of any _____
interpretation. ²¹ For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God
spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (2 Peter 1:16-21, KJV)

Lesson #4: Right in the middle of the transfiguration passage Jesus invited his followers to bear the cross as a precursor to receiving the crown. Bearing the cross is the prerequisite to wearing the crown. If we suffer with Him, we will also reign with Him: “Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his _____, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to _____ his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will _____ it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own _____? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and _____ He will reward each according to his works.” (Matthew 16:24-27)

“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery _____ which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's _____, that when His _____ is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.” (1 Peter 4:12, 13)

“But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have _____ a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. “ (1 Peter 5:10)

“If we _____, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.” (2 Timothy 2:12, KJV)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #46 – The Strong Man and the Seven Unclean Spirits

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: Luke 11:14-26; Matthew 12:43-45; DA, pp. 323-324; GC, pp. 17-38; 5BC, p. 1093; RH, January 24, 1893; RH, December 12, 1899; 17MR, pp. 313-314; Revelation 18:1-5

Expressions and symbols

1. What does the house represent? “The garnished house represents the self-righteous _____” (5BC, p. 1093)
2. Who is the strong man who originally lived in the house? “ _____ is driven out by Christ.” (5BC, p. 1093)
3. Who is the stronger man who cast out the strong man? “Satan is driven out by _____.” (5BC, p. 1093)
4. Who helps Jesus expel the original evil strong man? “But if _____ cast out demons by the _____ of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.” (Matthew 12:28)

Note: Clearly, Jesus and His Spirit are more powerful than the strong man and all His demons. When Jesus began His ministry, the demons revealed their great fear of Him when they asked, ‘have you come to destroy us?’ (Mark 1:23, 24). Moreover in Gadara, Jesus cast out a legion of evil angels from two demon possessed men. It behooves us to ally ourselves with the One who is stronger than the strong man!

5. Can the strong man and the stronger man dwell in the same house? "Every kingdom _____ against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand." (Matthew 12:25)

Note: Satan and Christ can no more dwell in the house together than light and darkness can co-exist. Jesus made it clear that one can serve two masters. The flesh and the Spirit cannot abide in the same place. "We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world." (DA, pp. 323, 324)

Expelling the Strong Man

1. Is the expelling of the strong man a once-for-all event or does it involve a continual battle? "We may leave off many bad habits, for the _____ we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by _____, we shall be overcome. Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a _____ communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end." (DA, pp. 323, 324)

"The garden of your heart must be cultivated. The poisonous, _____ plants must be uprooted, the soil must be prepared, thoroughly plowed by the word of God, and the precious seeds of truth must be sown and _____ by a wise, skillful gardener." (RH, January 24, 1893)

Note: When the farmer prepares the soil for planting, he pulls the weeds and 'cleanses' and fertilizes the field. However, the soil must constantly be cultivated and the weeds pulled or the weeds will eventually take over and damage or kill the crop. Likewise occurs with the heart. Jesus, through the work of the Holy Spirit, cleanses the soil of the heart. However if the 'weeds' are not regularly uprooted they will take over and kill the spiritual life.

The Strong Man's Recruits

2. Why do you think that the strong man goes to the dry land to recruit his seven companions?

Note: The Bible describes Satan and his angels as dwelling in a desolate, inhospitable, dry and infertile land (Revelation 20:1-3) In contrast, the Bible describes the Holy Spirit in the context of rain and fertility (John 4:13, 14; 7:37-39; 1 Corinthians 12:13).

3. What happens when the soul does not allow God to expel the garnishing of self-righteousness once-and-for-all? "The garnished house represents the self-righteous soul. Christ drives out

Satan. However, he _____ in the hope of finding entrance. He finds the house empty, swept, and garnished. Only _____ is abiding there. "Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and _____ there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first." (5BC, p. 1093)

"He has sometimes 'swept and garnished' his house, and put on the garments of joy and gladness. However, he did not surrender himself _____ for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and after time old _____ reasserted their power. He failed, and went back to his evil practices, and his condition became worse than it was before he made the attempt to reform." (17MR, p. 313)

4. What is the meaning of the word 'dwell'? "Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and _____ there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation."

Note: The parable does not use the word 'dwell' to describe the place where the strong man originally lived. The fact that the stronger man cast out the strong man from the house indicates that it was not the strong man's permanent dwelling at that point. However, when the strong man returned with the seven companions, the parable tells us that they 'dwelt' in the house. The word 'dwell' here refers to taking up permanent residence. It is used of the rebellious 'earth-dwellers' in the book of Revelation.

The Return of the Strong Man

5. What is the significance of the strong man returning with seven of his companions?

The number seven typifies totality of completeness as seen in the following examples:

- God created the entire world in _____ days.
- The blood sprinkled on the Mercy Seat _____ times totally cleansed the sanctuary.
- Israel marched _____ times around Jericho and the city was completely destroyed.
- Revelation describes Jesus as having _____ horns meaning that he has totality of power.
- Revelation also depicts Jesus as having _____ eyes, that is, fullness of wisdom.
- The _____ Spirits stand before God's throne representing the fullness of the Spirit.
- Naaman came out totally clean from the Jordan when he submerged himself _____ times.

When the strong man and his companions come to **dwell** in the house, they take total and complete (as denoted by the number 7) control and, as a result, the state of the house is worse off than when the strong man originally lived there.

6. Must a person choose to serve the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion? "It is not necessary for us _____ to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light." (DA, pp. 323, 324)

The Destruction of Jerusalem

1. To whom did Jesus originally address this parable? "Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. _____ shall it also be with _____ wicked generation." (Matthew 12:45)

2. What happened to that wicked generation for refusing to allow Jesus to dwell in their hearts? After describing the calamities that would befall Jerusalem, Jesus told His disciples: "Assuredly, I say to you, this _____ will by no means pass away till all these things take place" (Matthew 24:34).

3. How does Ellen White describe the spiritual condition of Jerusalem immediately before its destruction?

"The great sin of the Jews was their _____ of Christ; the great sin of the Christian world would be their rejection of the law of God, the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. The precepts of Jehovah would be despised and set at naught. Millions in _____ to sin, slaves of _____, doomed to suffer the second death, would refuse to listen to the words of truth in their day of visitation." (GC, pp. 22, 23)

4. Who possessed the nation immediately before the destruction of Jerusalem?

"Satan aroused the fiercest and most debased passions of the _____. Men did not reason; they were beyond reason--controlled by impulse and blind rage. They became _____ in their cruelty. In the family and in the nation, among the highest and the lowest classes alike, there was suspicion, envy, hatred, strife, rebellion, murder. . . _____ was at the head of the nation, and the highest civil and religious authorities were under his sway." (GC, pp. 28-29, 35-36)

5. What warning does God give us in the destruction of Jerusalem?

“Every ray of light rejected, every warning despised or unheeded, every passion indulged, every transgression of the law of God, is a seed sown which yields its unfailing harvest. The Spirit of God, _____ resisted, is at last _____ from the sinner, and then there is left no power to control the evil passions of the soul, and no protection from the malice and enmity of _____. The destruction of Jerusalem is a fearful and solemn warning to all who are _____ with the offers of divine grace and resisting the pleadings of divine mercy.” (GC, p. 36)

Individual Illustrations

1. What happened with Saul when God called him to be the first king of Israel?

“Then the _____ of the Lord will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into _____ man. . . . So it was, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, that God gave him another _____; and all those signs came to pass that day. 10 When they came there to the hill, there was a group of prophets to meet him; then the _____ of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.” (1 Samuel 10:6, 9)

2. How did Ellen White describe Saul’s early experience? “As Saul united with the prophets in their worship, a great _____ was wrought in him by the Holy Spirit. The light of divine purity and holiness shone in upon the darkness of the _____ heart. He saw himself as he was before God. He saw the beauty of holiness. He was now called to _____ the warfare against sin and Satan, and he was made to feel that in this conflict his strength must come _____ from God.” (PP, pp. 610, 611)

3. What happened to Saul when he persistently disobeyed God? “But the Spirit of the Lord _____ from Saul, and an _____ spirit from the Lord troubled him and Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an _____ spirit from God troubleth thee.” (1 Samuel 16:14-15, KJV)

Note: Saul failed to keep the strong man out and as a result, an evil spirit persistently tormented him and at the end of his life, Satan made his abode in his heart to point of consulting a witch. His life ended when he committed suicide.

4. Did Korah and his fellow conspirators receive a direct revelation of the divine glory? “Korah and his fellow conspirators were men who had been _____ with special manifestations of God's power and greatness. They were of the number who went up with Moses into the mount and _____ the divine glory.” (PP, p. 396)

5. What happened in the course of time with Korah and his cohorts? “However, since that time a _____ had come. A temptation, slight at first, had been _____, and had strengthened as it was encouraged, until their minds were controlled by _____, and they ventured upon their work of disaffection. Professing great interest in the _____ of the people, they first whispered their discontent to one another and then to leading men of Israel.” (PP, p. 396)

6. What was the tragic end of Korah? “So they and all those with them went down alive into the _____; the earth closed over them, and they _____ from among the assembly.” (Numbers 16:33-34)

7. Was Balaam always the covetous person that Numbers 22-24 describes? “Balaam was once a _____ man and a _____ of God; but he had apostatized, and had given himself up to _____; yet he still professed to be a _____ of the Most High. . . The sin of covetousness, which God declares to be idolatry, had made him a timeserver, and through this _____ fault, _____ gained _____ control of him. It was this that caused his _____.”

8. What great lesson did Balaam fail to learn? “No man can serve _____ masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and _____.” Matthew 6:24

9. What was Judas’ attitude in his early encounter with Jesus? “He [Judas] _____ the Great Teacher, and desired to be with Him. He felt a desire to be _____ in character and life, and he hoped to experience this through _____ himself with Jesus.” (DA, p. 717)

10. What led to the apostasy of Judas? “He [Judas] was _____ in heart. He loved the praise of the world. He refused to give up the _____ for Christ. He never committed his eternal interests to Christ. He had a _____ religion, and therefore he speculated upon his Master and betrayed Him to the priests, being fully persuaded that Christ would not allow Himself to be taken.” (5BC, pp. 1101, 1102)

11. What was Judas’ tragic end? “Now after the piece of bread, _____ entered him. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.” (John 13:27)

Note: When Judas left the Upper Room into the darkness of the night, his heart became the abode of the prince of darkness. Like Saul, he ended up committing suicide.

Serving God with a Divided Heart

1. What did Ellen White have to say about serving Jesus with a divided heart?

“But He will not _____ a divided heart. If it be given to the service of mammon, if selfishness and pride fill its chambers, there will be no _____ for the heavenly Guest; He will not take up His _____ with us until the soul-temple has been _____ and cleansed. (OHC, Chapter 49)

“Gatherings for amusement confuse faith and make the motive mixed and uncertain. The Lord accepts no _____ heart. He wants the _____ man.” (AH, p. 515.2)

“Many are on the enchanted ground of the _____. Things of the least importance—foolish social parties, singing, jesting, joking—engross their minds and _____ they serve God with a _____ heart. . . . The declaration of Christ, “No _____ man can serve two masters,” is unheeded.” (OFC, p. 94)

“God will not occupy a _____ heart or reign from a divided _____. Every _____ that holds the affections and diverts them from the God of love must be _____. The Lord demands _____ that there is of us, and there must be no reserve.” (TMK, chapter 57)

“The time has come when every soul must stand or fall according to his own merits. A few righteous acts, a few good impulses, may be presented to the mind as evidences of righteousness, but God requires the _____ heart. He will accept no _____ affections. The _____ being must be given to Him or He will not receive the offering.” (UL, p. 32)

“What does the text mean which says, ‘Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded’? It means that some have been serving God with a _____ heart. They esteem God _____, but themselves _____. (RH, July 12, 1887)

“Half-hearted Christians are worse than infidels; for their deceptive words and non-committal position may lead many astray. The infidel shows his colors. The luke-warm Christian deceives both parties. He is neither a good worldling nor a good Christian. _____ uses him to do a work that no one else can do.” Spaulding Magan Collection, 260

The Testimony of Peter and Paul

1. How did the apostle Paul describe those who once walked with Jesus but turned away?

“For it is impossible for those who were once _____, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become _____ of the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have _____ the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ if they fall _____, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.” (Hebrews 6:4-6)

2. What example from nature does Paul provide to illustrate the end of those who turn away from the Lord?

“For the earth which drinks in the rain that _____ comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives _____ from God; ⁸ but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being _____, whose end is to be burned.” (Hebrews 6:7, 8)

3. How does the apostle Peter describe those who once escaped the pollutions of the world and then backslid?

“For if, after they have _____ the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again _____ in them and overcome, the latter end is _____ for them than the beginning. ²¹ For it would have been _____ for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to _____ from the holy commandment delivered to them. ²² But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A _____ returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter 2:20-22)

The Seed in Stony Places

“There were many in Christ's day, as there are today, over whom the control of Satan for the _____ seemed broken; through the grace of God they were set free from the evil spirits that had held dominion over the soul. They rejoiced in the love of God; but, like _____ - _____ hearers of the parable, they did not abide in His love. They did not surrender themselves to God daily, that Christ might dwell in the heart; and when the evil spirit returned, with "seven other spirits more wicked than himself," they were _____ dominated by the power of evil.” (DA, pp. 323, 324)

There are two problems with this kind of soil. Luke 8:6 explains that this soil lacked _____ (a symbol of the Holy Spirit). Matthew 13:5-6 underlines the fact that the soil

in stony places had “no _____ of earth” and therefore when “the _____ was up” the plant “was _____.”

In the people represented by this soil, “_____ of the natural heart underlies the soil of their good _____ and _____.” (COL, p. 46.3)

“This class may be easily _____ and appear to be bright converts, but they have only a _____ religion.” (COL, p. 46.3)

Note: These are the people who have a form of godliness but lack the power thereof (1 Timothy 3:5). They are half-hearted Christians. They want to serve Christ and self simultaneously. They serve Christ with a divided heart. And no one can serve two masters!“ Half-hearted Christians are worse than infidels; for their deceptive words and non-committal position may lead many astray. The infidel shows his colors. The luke-warm Christian deceives both parties. He is neither a good worldly nor a good Christian. Satan uses him to do a work that no one else can do.” Spaulding-Magan Collection, p. 260

“It is not because men receive the word _____, nor because they _____ in it, that they fall away They do not consider what the word of God _____ of them. They do not bring it [the word of God] face to face with all their _____ of life, and yield themselves fully to its control.” (COL, p. 46.4)

Note: Most of the disciples of Jesus left their professions immediately to joyfully follow Jesus. But before they did this they considered the cost. This is why Jesus told Judas to count the cost before he decided to follow Him: “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has no place to lay his head.” (Luke 9:58). Judas chose to immediately follow Jesus but he did not count the cost. The end result was suicide! Ananias and Sapphira fall into this same category.

The scorching sun which withers the plant represents _____ and _____ which arise because of the _____. Matthew 13:21)

Note: “Stony ground” hearers are those who enthusiastically receive Christ in the good times. They expect that Christianity will spare them from trials and tribulations. While things go well, they appear to be good Christians but when they are required to make a sacrifice for what they believe, they fall away. In Matthew 10:34-39 Jesus warned that following Jesus involved great sacrifices yet in the end the dividends would be eternal (read Mark 10:28-31)!

This kind of soil represents those who “rejoice for a _____, for they think that religion will free them from difficulty and trial.” But when trials come, “they _____ beneath the fiery test of temptation. They cannot bear reproach for Christ’s sake. When the word of God points out some _____ sin, or temptation, or requires _____ or sacrifice, they are offended. It would cost them too _____ effort to make a radical _____ in their life.” (COL, p. 47.2)

God cannot accept half a heart. "Christ asks for an _____ consecration, for _____ service. He demands the _____ the _____, the _____, the strength. Self is not to be cherished. He who lives to _____ is not a _____." (COL, p. 48.4)

Note: Commenting on this parable, Ellen White wrote: "Then He added a warning to those who had been impressed by His words, who had heard Him gladly, but who had not surrendered themselves for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is not only by resistance but by neglect that the soul is destroyed."

Emptying and Filling

1. Is it sufficient to merely empty the mind of evil or must it be filled with the Word?

"This **Book of the Law** shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall _____ in it **day and night**, [result] _____ you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." (Joshua 1:8)

"The parable of the man from whom an evil spirit had been cast out, who did not _____ the soul with the love of Christ, illustrates the necessity of not only emptying the heart, but of supplying the _____ with a divine occupant." (RH, January 24, 1893 par. 14)

2. How can we can barricade our souls after the strong man has been expelled? "May God help us to gather up the jewels of his promises, and deck _____ hall with the gems of his Word. We should be _____ with the promises of God. Our souls should be _____ with them. When Satan comes in with his darkness, and seeks to fill my soul with gloom, I repeat some precious _____ of God." (RH, March 11, 1890)

3. How can we make sure that we keep the citadel of our heart clean? "By beholding Christ, by talking of Him, by beholding the _____ of His character we become _____. Changed from glory to glory. And what is glory? Character—and he becomes changed from character to character. Thus we see that there is a work of _____ that goes on by beholding Jesus." (SD, p. 337)

4. What happens when we fail to daily invite Jesus to dwell in our heart? "There are those over whom the control of Satan seems for a _____ to be broken; through the grace of God they are set _____ from the evil spirit that has held dominion over the soul. However, they do not surrender themselves to God _____, that Christ might dwell in the

heart; and when the evil spirit returns with "seven other spirits more wicked than himself," he is _____ dominated by the power of evil." (17MR, pp. 313, 314)

The Global End Time Application

As we have seen, the parable of Jesus applies to individuals and to the Jewish nation when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. But there is a third and broader application still. It describes the apostate religious world when God withdraws His Holy Spirit.

1. How does Ellen White apply the parable to the end time generation?

"It is as true now as when Christ was upon the earth, that every inroad made by the gospel upon the enemy's dominion is met by fierce opposition from his vast armies. The conflict that is right upon us will be the most terrible ever witnessed. But though Satan is represented as being as _____ as the strong man armed, his overthrow will be complete, and everyone who _____ with him in choosing apostasy rather than loyalty will perish with him." (6T, p. 407.3)

2. What will be the condition of the religious world shortly before the second coming? "The forces of darkness will unite with human agents who have given themselves into the _____ of Satan, and the same scenes that were exhibited at the trial, rejection, and crucifixion of Christ will be _____. Through yielding to satanic influences, men will be transformed into _____; and those who were created in the image of God, who were formed to honor and glorify their Creator, will become the habitation of _____, and Satan will see in an apostate race his _____ of evil-men who reflect his own image. (RH, April 14, 1896 par. 7)

3. How does the book of Revelation describe the demon possessed religious world? "And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a _____ place of demons, a prison for every _____ spirit, and a cage for every _____ and hated bird!" (Revelation 18:2, 3)

4. How does Ellen White describe the condition of the religious world just before the close of probation? "A terrible condition of the _____ world is here described. With every rejection of truth the minds of the people will become _____, their hearts more stubborn, until they are entrenched in an infidel _____. In defiance of the warnings which God has given, they will continue to trample upon one of the precepts of the Decalogue, until they are led to persecute those who hold it sacred. Christ is set at nought in the contempt placed upon His word and His people. As the teachings of spiritualism are accepted by the churches, the _____ imposed upon the carnal heart is removed, and the profession of religion will become a cloak to conceal the

_____ iniquity. A belief in spiritual manifestations opens the door to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and thus the influence of evil angels will be felt in the _____." (GC, pp. 603, 604)

5. What will happen when Jesus ceases to intercede for the human race? "The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has _____ control of the finally impenitent." (GC, p. 614)

6. Why will God allow Satan to fully possess an apostate race? "The world has rejected His _____, despised His _____, and trampled upon His _____. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn." (GC, p. 614)

7. What will happen with a world that is fully possessed by the forces of darkness? To what historical event does Ellen White compare it? "Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no _____ from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the _____ winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon _____ of old." (GC, p. 614.1)

8. What heavenly message does God send to the religious world just before Satan takes full control of the impenitent? "After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was _____ with his glory." (Revelation 18:1)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #47 – Seeking Places of Honor

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: Luke 14:7-11; Matthew chapters 6 and 23; 5T, p. 502

The Parable

“So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the **best places**, saying to them: ⁸ “When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; ⁹ and he who invited you and him come and say to you, ‘Give place to this man,’ and then you begin with **shame** to take the **lowest** place. ¹⁰ But when you are invited, go and sit down in the **lowest** place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, go up **higher**.’ Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. ¹¹ For whoever _____ himself will be humbled, and he who _____ himself will be exalted.” (Luke 14:7-11)

A Message to the Pharisees

1. To whom and in what context did Jesus tell this parable? “Now it happened, as He went into the _____ of one of the rulers of the _____ to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely.” (Luke 14:1)

Note: This parable was spoken to the guests that were invited to partake of a meal in the house of a Pharisee.

2. What further evidence do we have that this parable was directed at the Pharisees? “Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, ² saying: “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in _____ seat [a position of power, prestige and authority]. ⁵ But all their works they do to be _____ by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments [parchments with scriptures tied on the forehead]. ⁶ They love the

_____ places at feasts, the _____ in the synagogues, ⁷ _____ in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, _____, Rabbi. (Matthew 23:2, 5-7)

Note: The expression 'Moses' Seat' refers, not to a literal chair but rather to an elevated position of power that supposedly authorized the scribes and Pharisees to teach.

3. What counsel did Jesus give to these arrogant spiritual leaders? "And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. ¹¹ But he who is _____ among you shall be your _____. ¹² And whoever exalts _____ will be humbled, and he who humbles _____ will be [**passive, someone else does it**] exalted." (Matthew 23:10-12)

Note: It is important to note the attitude of the Pharisees. While the Pharisees exalted themselves (active voice) someone else would humble them (passive voice). Likewise, those who humbled themselves (active voice) would be exalted by another (passive voice).

4. With what kind of attitude did the Pharisees do charitable deeds and pray? "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be _____ by them, otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ⁵ "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be _____ by men. (Matthew 6:1, 5)

5. What kind of attitude did the publican manifest in contrast to the Pharisee? "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house _____ rather than the other; for everyone who _____ himself will be humbled, and he who _____ himself will be exalted." (Luke 18:13, 14)

Strife among the Disciples

1. What were the disciples arguing about on the last journey to Jerusalem? (Mark 9:33-35; see also Luke 9:46; 10:29-31) "Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, "What was it you _____ among yourselves on the road?" ³⁴ But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the _____. " (Mark 9:33, 34)

2. What surprising counsel did Jesus give to his disciples when they disputed about who among them would be the greatest? "And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "If anyone desires to be _____, he shall be _____ of all and servant of all." ³⁶ Then He took a little _____ and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him

in His arms, He said to them, ³⁷ "Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me." (Mark 9:35-37)

Note: The disciples did their best to keep the children away from Jesus because they considered that they were not worthy of notice. In their mind they were young, inexperienced, a nuisance! After all, what could a simple child teach them? Yet Jesus taught them that they needed the humility of a child.

3. What request did the Mother of James and John's present to Jesus? "Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. ²¹ And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your _____ hand and the other on the _____, in Your kingdom." (Matthew 20:20, 21)

4. How did the other disciples feel about the mother's request? "And when the ten heard it, they were greatly _____ with the two brothers." (Matthew 20:24)

5. What counsel did Jesus give to the disgusted disciples? "But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles _____ it over them, and those who are great exercise _____ over them. ²⁶ Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become _____ among you, let him be your _____. ²⁷ And whoever desires to be _____ among you, let him be your slave ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to _____ His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:25-28)

The First and the Last

1. After Jesus encountered the rich young ruler what did He promise His disciples if they gave up all for Him? "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. ³⁰ But many who are _____ will be last, and the _____ first." (Matthew 19:28-30)

2. What words did Jesus speak at the end of the parable of the vineyard workers? "So the _____ will be first, and the _____ will be last." (Matthew 20:16)

The Bible's Two Mysteries

These days the world is full of people who have a thirst for power, riches and recognition. Theirs is a serious case of an insatiable desire for upward mobility at the expense of service to others.

Where did this spirit originate and where does it ultimately lead? In order to answer this question we must pay a visit to life in heaven before the creation of the world.

1. What was the ruling principle in heaven before the inception of sin? "Before the entrance of evil there was peace and joy throughout the universe. All was in perfect harmony with the Creator's will. _____ for God was supreme, _____ for one another impartial." (GC, p. 493)

Mystery #1: The Mystery of Iniquity: Upward mobility followed by downward:

"Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, ⁴ who opposes and _____ himself _____ all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing _____ that he is God. . . For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. . ." (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4)

Note: Those who abide by the principles of the Mystery of Iniquity are unable to comprehend how anyone would want to be 'second fiddle'. The mindset of the world is to ascend, to get rich, to accumulate power, to flaunt academic degrees. Ellen White explained: "The religion of the Bible is simply the mystery of godliness; no human mind can fully understand it, and it is utterly _____ to the unregenerate heart." (FLB, p. 54.4)

1. What type of mobility did Lucifer come to exhibit in heaven? "For you have said in your heart: 'I will _____ into heaven, I will _____ my throne _____ the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the _____; I will _____ above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most _____.'"

2. According to the prophet Isaiah, what type of mobility will Satan suffer because of His desire to ascend? "How you are _____ from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut _____ to the ground, you who weakened the nations. . . Yet you shall be brought _____ to Sheol, to the _____ depths of the Pit." (Isaiah 14:12-15)

3. According to Ezekiel, what spirit did Lucifer exhibit in heaven? "Your heart was lifted _____ because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor." (Ezekiel 28:17)

Note: Ellen White vividly wrote about Lucifer's desire for upward mobility:

"Little by little Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-_____. The Scripture says, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason

of thy brightness." Ezekiel 28:17. "Thou hast said in thine heart, . . . I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. . . . I will be like the Most High." Isaiah 14:13, 14. Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself. Not content with his _____, though honored above the heavenly host, he ventured to covet _____ due alone to the Creator. Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections and allegiance of all created beings, it was his endeavor to secure their service and loyalty to himself. And coveting the glory with which the infinite Father had invested His Son, this prince of angels aspired to _____ that was the prerogative of Christ alone." (PP, p. 35)

4. What mobility will Lucifer finally suffer for wanting to ascend to a higher position of power? "I cast you to the _____, I laid you before kings, that they might gaze at you. "You defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by the iniquity of your trading; therefore I brought fire from your midst; it devoured you, and I turned you to _____ upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you. All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; you have become a horror, and shall be no _____ forever." (Ezekiel 28:17-19)

Assets and liabilities

It has been said that sometimes our greatest assets are also potentially our greatest liabilities. God created Lucifer with four sterling assets. God created Lucifer with four great assets: Beauty, wisdom, riches and a high position of responsibility. These assets were meant to bring honor and glory to the Creator but he appropriated them to himself:

"Your heart was lifted up because of your _____; you corrupted your _____ for the sake of your splendor. . . With your wisdom and your understanding you have gained _____ for yourself, and gathered gold and silver into your treasuries; By your great wisdom in trade you have increased your riches, and your heart is lifted up because of your riches). . . For you have said in your heart: '_____ will ascend into heaven, _____ will exalt my throne above the stars of God; _____ will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; _____ will ascend above the heights of the clouds, _____ will be like the Most High.' (Ezekiel 28:17, 4, 5; Isaiah 14:13-14)

Mystery #2: The Mystery of Godliness: Downward mobility followed by upward:

1. How does the apostle Paul describe the Mystery of Godliness? "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the _____ [incarnation], justified in the _____ [resurrection], seen by _____ [at his ascension], _____ among the Gentiles [Acts of the Apostles], believed on in the world [the gospel work finished], received [taken up] up in _____ [goes to heaven with His people]." (1 Timothy 3:16)

Note: In the Mystery of Godliness, voluntary downward mobility is followed by upward mobility. Jesus humbled Himself to take human flesh and as a result the Father took Him up into glory.

2. How did the apostle Paul describe the voluntary downward mobility of Jesus? “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in the form of _____, thought it not robbery to be _____ with God: ⁷ But made _____ of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a _____, and was made in the likeness of men: ⁸ And being found in fashion as a man, he _____ himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Philippians 2:5-8, KJV)

Note: Ellen White wrote that when Jesus came to this earth He was fully divine and ‘commanded the homage of angels and called forth the adoration of the universe of God.’ RH, February 20, 1893. And yet He did not consider equality with God as something to be grasped so on His **own volition** he chose to humble **Himself** and to ‘give back the scepter into the Father's hands, and to step _____ from the throne of the universe’ (DA, p. 22, 23). The Lord became the servant! Yet after He took human flesh, He humbled Himself even further by dying on the cross.

3. What did the Father do to Jesus for being willing to come down and humble Himself? “Wherefore _____ also hath highly exalted him, and given him a _____ which is above every name: ¹⁰ That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; ¹¹ And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:9-11, KJV)

Note: Because Jesus **voluntarily** chose to come down, humble **Himself** and become a servant, the **Father** highly exalted Him and gave Him a name that is above every name and commanded that every knee should bow and confess that Jesus is Lord! That is, downward mobility is followed by upward!

4. What did Jesus say to the astonished disciples after washing their feet? “You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an _____, that you should do as I have done to you.” (John 13:14, 15)

Nebuchadnezzar’s Arrogance

1. What king of Babylon manifested an extreme case of upward mobility? “At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. ³⁰ The king spoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that _____ have built for a royal dwelling by _____ mighty power and for the honor of _____ majesty?” (Daniel 4:29, 30)

2. What did God do to the arrogant king? "While the word was still in the king's _____, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! ³² And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you _____ that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses." (Daniel 4:31, 32)

3. How did the king interpret what God did to him? "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and _____ and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in _____ He is able to put _____." (Daniel 4:37)

Korah, Dathan and Abiram

1. Who was Korah and to which position did he aspire? "Korah, the leading spirit in this movement, was a Levite, of the family of Kohath, and a cousin of Moses; he was a man of ability and influence. Though appointed to the service of the tabernacle, he had become dissatisfied with his _____ and _____ to the dignity of the priesthood." (PP, p. 395)

2. Who were Dathan and Abiram, Korah's fellow conspirators? "These princes readily joined in his _____ schemes. Being descendants from the eldest son of Jacob, they claimed that the civil authority belonged to them, and they determined to divide with Korah the _____ of the priesthood." (PP, p. 395)

3. How did the life of these upwardly mobile conspirators end? "The eyes of all Israel were fixed upon Moses as they stood, in terror and expectation, awaiting the event. As he ceased speaking, the solid earth parted, and the rebels went _____ alive into the _____, with all that pertained to them, and "they perished from among the congregation."

Note: Among many today, the spirit of Korah, Dathan and Abiram is alive and well. It is seen in the politicking at constituency sessions. It is seen when ministers attempt to outdo other ministers in popularity. It is seen in the desire to ordain individuals whom God has not called to the ministerial vocation. It is seen in the attempt to bring others down that we might ascend.

"In the rebellion of Korah is seen the working out, upon a _____ stage, of the _____ spirit that led to the rebellion of Satan in heaven." (PP, p. 403)

Absalom's Upward Mobility

1. To what high position did Absalom, David's very son, aspire? "Moreover Absalom would say, "Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice."

Note: Absalom did not even respect the position of his own father. He conspired to overthrow him just like Lucifer in heaven had conspired to overthrow God from His throne.

2. What finally happened to the upwardly mobile Absalom? "And they took Absalom and cast him into a large _____ in the woods, and laid a very large heap of stones over him." (2 Samuel 18:17)

Nature teaches that the law of service is the law of life:

- **The Sierra Nevada** on the eastern side of the San Joaquin Valley is beautiful.
- In winter the **clouds** give their snow to the mountains.
- The **mountains** give their snow to the **brooks, the streams, the rivers, the reservoirs** the soil and the **ocean**.
- The ocean gives its water to the clouds and the cycle begins all over again.
- If the **clouds should say**: "We look so **fluffy and beautiful**, we are not giving my snow to anyone, it's our snow, all would die.
- If the **mountains** said: "We are **so beautiful** with this snow. If we give it we will look **jagged and ugly**. We will **keep our snow**. All would die as a result.
- At each stage you have the principle of **giving** and **servicing**.
- The water **comes down** and then it goes **up again!** This is the principle of the mystery of godliness. It is the **secret of life**. **Hoarding** leads to death, **giving** leads to continual life.

Application to Us

"The followers of Jesus will not be popular, but will be like their Master, meek and lowly of heart. You are **seeking to climb** to the highest seat, but will find yourselves at last in the **lowest**. If you seek to deal justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God, you will be partakers with Christ of His sufferings and sharers with Him of His glory in His kingdom." (5T, p. 502)

1. What practical counsel did Jesus give? "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you _____.²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and _____ in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:28, 29)

2. What counsel did the once arrogant Peter give? "Therefore _____ yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may _____ you in due time." (1 Peter 5:6)

3. What did James have to say about downward and upward mobility? "_____ yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will _____ you up." (James 4:10)

4. What wise counsel did the apostle Paul give to the Philippians? "Let this _____ be in you that was in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:5)

In closing, read the following beautiful passage from *The Desire of Ages* on the great universal law of life:

"There is nothing, save the selfish heart of man, that lives **unto itself**. No bird that cleaves the air, no animal that moves upon the ground, but **ministers** to some other life. There is no leaf of the forest, or lowly blade of grass, but has its **ministry**. Every tree and shrub and leaf pours forth that element of life without which neither man nor animal could live; and man and animal, in turn, **minister** to the life of tree and shrub and leaf. The flowers breathe fragrance and unfold their beauty in blessing to the world. The sun sheds its light to gladden a thousand worlds. The ocean, itself the source of all our springs and fountains, receives the streams from every land, but takes to give. The mists ascending from its bosom fall in showers to water the earth, that it may bring forth and bud.

The angels of glory find their joy in giving,--**giving** love and tireless watch care to souls that are fallen and unholy. Heavenly beings woo the hearts of men; they bring to this dark world light from the courts above; by gentle and patient **ministry** they move upon the human spirit, to bring the lost into a fellowship with Christ which is even closer than they themselves can know.

But turning from all lesser representations, we behold God in Jesus. Looking unto Jesus we see that it is the glory of our God to **give**. "I do nothing of Myself," said Christ; "the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father." "I seek not Mine own glory," but the glory of Him that sent Me. John 8:28; 6:57; 8:50; 7:18. In these words is set forth the great principle which is the **law of life for the universe**. All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: through the beloved Son, the Father's life flows out to all; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. And thus through Christ the circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life." (*DA*, pp. 20, 21)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #48 – The Salt of the Earth

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: PK, p. 231-234; Matthew 5:13; Mark 9:49, 50; Luke 14:34; Genesis 19:26; Leviticus 2:13; Judges 9:45; 2 Kings 2:19-22; 2 Chronicles 13:5; Job 6:6; Ezekiel 16:3, 4; Colossians 4:6; James 3:11, 12; PK 231-234

Few people realize the multiple uses and value of salt. We shall find in our study of the parable of the salt that it not only seasons but also, among other things, preserves, cleanses, heals, seals covenants and saves.

Historical Setting

1. Where was Jesus as he told the parable of the salt? “As they listened to the words of Christ, the people could _____ the white salt glistening in the pathways where it had been cast out because it had lost its _____ and was therefore useless.” (MB, p. 36)
2. In the original historical context of the parable, who were the ones that had lost their savor? “It well represented the condition of the _____ and the effect of their religion upon society.” (MB, p. 36)
3. How does Jesus describe the tastelessness of the scribes and Pharisees? “The teaching of the scribes and Pharisees was a continuous repetition of _____ and childish traditions. Their opinions and ceremonies rested on ancient maxims and _____ sayings which were frivolous and _____. With what astonishment did the people listen to the words that fell from the lips of the divine Teacher! Christ did not dwell on weak, _____ sayings and theories of men.” (RH, December 15, 1896)

The Salt Symbolism

1. Symbolically speaking, what is the salt? “No renewed heart can be kept in a condition of sweetness without the daily application of the salt of the _____. Divine grace must be _____ daily, or no man will stay converted.” (LDE, pp. 65, 66)

Note: By a study of the word of God we receive the salt of Christ’s righteousness and then we become His ‘salt shakers’ to the world.

2. What is represented by the savor of the salt? “The savor of the salt is divine _____. All the efforts made to advance the truth are of but little value unless the Spirit of God accompanies them.” (3T, p. 559)

Note: When we assimilate Christ’s righteousness in the Word we are ready to add the savor of the salt to a flavorless world.

“Let your speech always be with _____, seasoned with _____, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.” (Colossians 4:6)

“The _____ of the salt represents the vital power of the Christian--the love of Jesus in the heart, the righteousness of Christ _____ the life.” (MB, p. 36)

3. What is represented by the mingling of the salt with the meal? “Salt must be _____ with the substance to which it is added; it must penetrate, _____ it, that it may be preserved. So it is through _____ contact and association that men are reached by the saving power of the gospel. They are not saved as masses, but as individuals. Personal influence is a power.” (CC, p. 224.3)

Receiving to Give

1. Once the salt has savored the believer (the salt shaker) what must the believer do? “The love of Christ is _____ and aggressive. If it is dwelling in us, it will flow _____ to others. We shall come close to them till their hearts are warmed by our unselfish interest and love. The sincere believers diffuse vital energy, which is _____ and imparts new moral power to the souls for whom they labor. It is not the power of the man himself, but the power of the Holy Spirit that does the _____ work.” (MB, p. 36.2)

2. What is represented by the spring of bitter waters that was made sweet by the salt? “The salt mingling with the polluted spring purified its waters and brought life and blessing where before had been blighting and death. When God compares His children to salt, He would teach them

that His purpose in making them the subjects of His grace is that they may become _____ in _____ others. . . . When the Lord chose Abraham, it was not simply to be the special friend of God, but to be a _____ of the peculiar privileges the Lord desired to bestow upon the nations.” (PK, p. 231.4)

Functions of Salt

The cleansing nature of salt:

As I was doing research for this lesson I came across an article on the internet on the multiple uses of salt. I found that among other things, salt can be used to remove wine stains from carpet, to polish brass and copper, to clean grease stains from rugs, to remove water marks from wood, to clean oven spills, to clean greasy iron pans, to clean discolored glass, to erase tea and coffee stains, to clean an iron’s metal soleplate, and to remove perspiration stains from shirts.

1. What did Abimelech do after he conquered the city of Shechem? “So Abimelech fought against the city all that day; he took the city and killed the people who were in it; and he demolished the city and sowed it with _____.” (Judges 9:45)

Note: It seems like Abimelech’s act of spreading salt over Shechem was to cleanse it from the defilement of the previous inhabitants.

2. What was done with a newborn infant in biblical times? 'Thus says the Lord God to _____: "Your birth and your nativity are from the land of Canaan; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. ⁴ As for your _____, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed in water to cleanse you; you were not rubbed with _____ nor wrapped in swaddling cloths." (Ezekiel 16:3, 4)

Note: When Israel was born no one was there to cleanse her with water and sterilize her with salt so God took matters into His own hands.

3. What did Ellen White write about the cleansing nature of spiritual salt? “The Christian's life should awaken in the hearts of worldlings high and elevated views of the _____ of the Christian religion. This will make believers the salt of the earth, the _____ power in our world; for a well-developed Christian character is harmonious in all its parts.” (Con 67.3)

The healing nature of salt:

1. What happened when Elisha poured salt into the polluted waters of a river? "Then he [Elisha] went out to the source of the water, and cast in the _____ there, and said, "Thus says the Lord: 'I have _____ this water; from it there shall be no more death or barrenness.'" ²² So the water remains _____ to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke. " (2 Kings 2:21-22)

Note: Salt is not only necessary in the diet to maintain physical health but it also has healing qualities. Salt is used to relieve insect stings, bites and poison ivy. Salt can also be used to get rid of dead skin particles and to boost circulation. For many years my father has suffered from low blood pressure. When we lived in Venezuela sometimes his blood pressure got so low that he became sluggish and disoriented. However, when this happened, my mother would give my father salted cod and within a few minutes his blood pressure was normal.

2. What lessons can we learn from Elisha's act of casting salt into the bitter waters of a river? "The _____ stream represents the soul that is separate from God. . . . Through sin, the whole human organism is deranged, the mind is perverted, the imagination corrupted; the faculties of the soul are _____. There is an absence of pure religion, of heart holiness. The converting power of God has not wrought in _____ the character. . . . (CC, p. 224.4)

3. Does Elisha's act bear any relationship with the parable of Jesus? "In casting salt into the _____ spring, Elisha taught the _____ spiritual lesson imparted centuries later by the Savior to His disciples when He declared, "Ye are the salt of the earth." The salt _____ with the polluted spring _____ its waters and brought life and blessing where before had been blighting and death. When God compares His children to salt, He would teach them that His purpose in making them the subjects of His grace is that they may become agents in saving others. . . . (CC 224.2)

Note: "Many are the spiritual lessons to be gathered from the story of the healing of the waters. The new cruse, the salt, the spring--all are highly symbolic." (PK, p. 231.3) The cruse that contained the salt represents the genuine believer. The waters into which the salt was poured represents multitudes, nations, tongues and peoples. The salt represents the sweet character of Jesus as revealed in His Word.

The saving qualities of salt:

1. What was added to every offering in the sacrificial service? "And every offering of your grain offering you shall _____ with salt; you shall not allow the salt of the

_____ of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt." (Leviticus 2:13)

2. Why was salt required with every offering? "In the ritual service, salt was added to _____ sacrifice. This, like the offering of incense, signified that only the _____ of Christ could make the service acceptable to God. Referring to this practice, Jesus said, "Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another." All who would present themselves "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Romans 12:1), must receive the _____ salt, the righteousness of our Savior." (DA, p. 439)

Note: The salt represents the righteousness of Christ. No one can be saved unless their life is permeated with the righteousness of Jesus. In this sense it teaches the same lesson as the incense that was added to the prayers of the saints (Revelation 8:3, 4). Only the righteousness of Christ can make our prayers acceptable to God.

The seasoning properties of salt:

1. What meaningful question did Job ask? "Can _____ food be eaten without salt? Or is there any _____ in the white of an egg?" (Job 6:6)

2. Symbolically speaking, what is the seasoning function of salt? "The _____ salt, the savor of the Christian, is the _____ of Jesus in the heart, the righteousness of Christ pervading the soul." (YRP, 163.2)

Note: Those who do not have the righteousness of Christ live a tasteless and insipid life—like eating egg whites without any salt. However, when the salt of Christ's righteousness savors the life of the Christian, he experiences and radiates joy.

"Religion should not be made to appear _____ and unattractive, something calculated to detract from their happiness, making life _____ and unenjoyable. Those who really enjoy the love of God will have joy and peace. Religion was never designed to make one _____." (1MR, p. 381)

The preserving qualities of salt:

It is common knowledge that salt has preserving qualities. It prevents mold on cheese, preserves fish as well as other foods. Spiritual salt does likewise.

1. What function do the lives of Christians play in preserving society from corruption? "Then they become "the salt of the earth," restraining _____ among men, as salt _____ from corruption. Matthew 5:13. But if the salt has lost its savor; if there is only a profession of godliness, without the love of Christ, there is no power for good. The life can exert no saving influence upon the world. (DA, p. 439.2)

2. What do the light, the salt and the leaven represent? "The Spirit of Christ _____ the soul is represented by the light, which dispels all darkness; it is compared to salt, because of its _____ qualities; and to leaven, which secretly exerts its _____ power. (GW92, p. 45.1)

3. Why didn't God spare the city of Sodom? "So the Lord said, "If I find in Sodom _____ righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. . . So He said, 'If I find there _____, I will not destroy it'. . . I will not do it for the sake of _____. . . 'I will not do it if I find _____ there'. . . 'I will not destroy it for the sake of _____'. . . And He said, 'I will not destroy it for the sake of _____.' (Genesis 18:26-33)

4. What did Ellen White write about the preserving qualities of the righteous in society? "Jesus used salt as an illustration of the Christian's life and teachings upon the world. Were it not for the _____ righteous who inhabit the earth, the wrath of God would not be delayed a moment from punishing the wicked. But the _____ and good works of the people of God _____ the world; they are the savor of life." (MB, p. 36.1)

"Though the wicked know it not, they owe even the blessings of this life to the _____, in the world, of God's _____ whom they despise and oppress." (DA, p. 306)

"The followers of Christ are represented by him as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Without the saving influence of Christians, the world would _____ in its own corruption." (CTBH, p. 87)

Salt ratifies a covenant and confirms friendship:

In Palestine and surrounding countries salt was used in making covenants. If people dined together on food with salt in it, they became friends, though they may have been enemies before. The Arab expression, "There is salt between us," or "He has eaten of my salt," means partaking of the hospitality which cements friendship. Covenants were generally confirmed at **sacrificial** meals and salt was always present. The covenant of salt pictured the everlasting friendship between God and His people (Numbers 18:19)

1. How did God confirm a perpetual covenant with the house of David? “Should you not know that the Lord God of Israel gave the dominion over Israel to David forever, to him and his sons, by a covenant of _____?” (2 Chronicles 13:5-6)

2. As pointed out before, each sanctuary sacrifice had to be salted, why? “Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ For this is My blood of the new _____, which is _____ for many for the remission of sins.” (Matthew 26:27-28)

God’s covenant with Israel was a covenant of salt because salt was added to the flesh of the sacrificial victim.

3. As noted before, if two enemies dined with salt added to a meal, they became friends. What did we become as a result of the sacrifice of Christ? “For if when we were _____ we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been _____, we shall be saved by His life.” (Romans 5:10-11)

Losing its Savor

1. What happens when salt loses its savor? “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt _____ its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for but to be thrown out and _____ underfoot by men.” (Matthew 5:13)

2. What happened to Lot’s wife when she lost her spiritual savor? “But his wife looked _____ from behind him, and she became a pillar of _____.” (Genesis 19:26)

3. Why did Lot’s wife lose her savor? “The wife of Lot was a selfish, _____ woman, and her _____ was exerted to separate her husband from Abraham. But for her, Lot would not have remained in Sodom, deprived of the counsel of the wise, God-fearing patriarch. . . .” (CC, p. 57.4)

4. What solemn message did Jesus give to those who will go through the final tribulation? “In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn. ³² _____ Lot’s wife”. (Luke 17:31, 32)

5. What did Ellen White have to say about salt that has lost its savor? “But if Christians are such in _____ only, they are like the salt that has lost its _____. They have no influence for good in the world. Through their misrepresentation of God they are _____ than unbelievers.” (DA, p. 306, ChS, p. 22.3)

“But if the salt has lost its savor; if there is only a _____ of godliness, without the _____ of Christ, there is no power for good. The life can exert no saving influence upon the world.” (DA, p. 439)

“But if Christians are only so in name, if they have not virtuous _____ and godly _____, they are like the salt that has lost its savor. Their influence upon the world is bad; they are worse than unbelievers.” (ZSP, p. 214.1)

6. What did Ellen White have to say to a certain preacher had no savor of salt? “There is a lack in his preaching, and his converts lack that which would prove their rock and defense in the day of God's anger. His preaching _____ the salt, the savor. He does not bring out souls thoroughly _____ to the truth, separating them from the _____, and uniting them with God's _____ people. His converts have no anchor to hold them, and they drift here and there, until many of them are bewildered and lost in the world.” (1T, p. 336)

7. How does Ellen White connect the parable of the salt with the message to Laodicea? Savorless salt “represents the life of every soul from whom the power of the _____ of God has departed and who has become cold and _____. Whatever may be his profession, such a one is looked upon by men and angels as _____ and disagreeable. It is to such that Christ says: "I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth." (Revelation 3:15, 16.” MB, pp. 36, 37)

“The message to the Laodicean church applies most decidedly to those whose religious experience is _____, who do not bear decided witness in favor of the truth.” (Letter 98, 1901). (7BC, p. 962.2)

“The saving salt is the pure first _____, the love of Jesus, the _____ tried in the fire. When this is left out of the religious experience, Jesus is not there; the light, the sunshine of his presence, is not there. What, then, is the religion worth?--Just as much as the salt that has lost its savor. It is a _____ religion. Then there is an effort to supply the lack by _____ activity, a zeal that is Christless.” (Bible Echo, March 1, 1892)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #49 – The Unfaithful Steward

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: Luke 16:1-9; COL, pp. 366-375; DA, pp. 634-636

The Parable

“He also said to His disciples: “There was a certain **rich man** who had a **steward**, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting **his** goods. ² So he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an **account** of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’ ³ “Then the steward said within himself, ‘What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot **dig**; I am ashamed to **beg**. ⁴ I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may **receive me** into their houses.’ ⁵ “So he called every one of his master’s debtors to him, and said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ So he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ ⁷ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ So he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ ⁸ So the **master commended** the unjust steward because he had dealt **shrewdly**. For the sons of **this world** are more shrewd in their generation than the **sons of light** ⁹ “And I say to you, **make friends** for yourselves by unrighteous mammon [like the steward did after he saw the light], that when you fail, **they** may **receive you** into an everlasting home. ¹⁰ He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. ¹¹ Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous **mammon**, who will commit to your trust the **true riches**? ¹² And if you have not been faithful in what is **another man’s**, who will give you what is **your own**? ¹³ “No servant can serve **two masters**; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve **God** and **mammon**.” (Luke 16:1-13)

The Symbols

After finishing this lesson, fill in the following blanks to identify what/who the symbols in the parable represent:

The Master _____

The unfaithful steward _____

The children of the light _____

The children of this world _____

The day of reckoning _____

Those who receive the faithful into the everlasting home _____

The Historical Context

1. What condition among the Jews motivated Jesus to tell this parable? Christ's coming was at a time of intense _____. Men were subordinating the _____ to the _____, the claims of the _____ to the affairs of the _____. They were mistaking _____ for realities, and realities for phantoms. They did not behold the _____ world by faith. Satan presented before them the things of this life as ____ - _____ and all-absorbing, and they gave heed to his temptations." (COL, p. 366.1)

2. What was one of the reasons that Jesus come to this earth "Christ came to _____ this order of things. He sought to break the _____ by which men were infatuated and ensnared. In His teaching, He sought to adjust the claims of heaven and earth, to turn men's thoughts from the _____ to the future. From their pursuit of the things of _____, He called them to make provision for eternity." (COL, p. 366.2)

The Dishonest Steward

1. Did the steward really own anything? "He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain _____ man who had a _____, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting _____ goods." (Luke 16:1)

2. What three options were open to the dishonest steward? "With the prospect of discharge before him, the steward saw three paths open to his choice. He must _____, beg, or _____." (COL, p. 367)

3. Did the unfaithful steward choose any of these options or in his shrewdness did he devise a fourth way? "I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they [his friends] may receive me into their _____." (COL, p. 367)

Note: The dishonest steward was worldly shrewd. He decided to give his lord's clients a discount on the merchandise that they had already purchased, but had not yet paid for. By doing this, he was defrauding his lord but at the same time, making provision for the clients to receive him into their houses once his lord released him from employment.

4. Was the unfaithful steward's method honest? "This unfaithful servant made others sharers with him in his _____. He _____ his master to advantage them, and by accepting this advantage they placed themselves under obligation to receive him as a friend into their homes. (COL, p. 367.2)

5. Did God commend the shrewd but dishonest practice of the unfaithful steward? "And the lord [lower case] commended the unjust steward, because he had done _____." The worldly man praised the sharpness of the man who had defrauded him. However, the rich man's commendation was not the commendation of God." (COL, p. 367.3)

Note: Jesus was not commending the unfaithful steward's dishonest method but rather his shrewdness and foresight in planning for his future.

6. Who spoke the following words, Jesus or the steward's master? "Make to yourselves friends by means of the _____ of unrighteousness, that when it shall fail, they may receive you into the _____ tabernacles." (COL, p. 367)

The Recipients of the Lesson

1. Did Jesus create this story from scratch or did it already exist? "Christ did _____ commend the unjust steward, but He made use of a _____ known occurrence to illustrate the lesson He desired to teach." (COL, p. 367)

2. What group was Jesus interested in reaching with the lessons from this parable? "There had been among the _____ just such a case as that represented in the parable, and in Christ's description they recognized their own _____." (COL, p. 368)

3. What lesson did Jesus want the publicans to learn from His parable? "Christ was seeking by every means to win them to _____ aims and nobler principles. This _____ He had in mind in the story of the unfaithful steward." (COL, p. 368)

4. Did the publicans learn the lesson that Jesus sought to teach them? "Their _____ was arrested, and from the picture of their own dishonest practices many of them _____ a lesson of spiritual truth." (COL, p. 368.1)

5. To whom else did Jesus directly speak this parable? "The parable was, however, spoken directly to the disciples." (COL, p. 368)

6. To what other group did Jesus also speak this parable and why? “And the Savior was speaking also to the _____. He did not relinquish the hope that they would perceive the force of His words. Many had been deeply _____, and as they should hear the truth under the dictation of the Holy Spirit, not a _____ would become believers in Christ.” (COL, p. 369.1)

“The _____ had tried to bring Christ into disrepute by accusing Him of mingling with publicans and sinners. Now He turns the rebuke on these accusers. The scene known to have taken place among the _____. He holds up before the Pharisees both as representing _____ course of action and as showing the only way in which they can _____ their errors. (COL, p. 369.2)

7. In its broadest sense to whom did Jesus address this parable? “The lesson of this parable is for _____. Everyone will be held responsible for the grace given him through Christ. Life is too solemn to be absorbed in _____ or earthly matters. The Lord desires that we shall _____ to others that which the _____ and unseen communicates to us. (COL, p. 373.3)

8. Why had the master entrusted his goods to the care of the steward and what did the steward do with them? “To the unfaithful steward his lord's goods had been entrusted for _____ purposes; but he had used them for _____.” (COL, p. 69)

9. Whom does the unfaithful steward represent corporately? “So with _____. God had chosen the seed of Abraham. With a high arm He had delivered them from bondage in Egypt. He had made them the depositaries of sacred truth for the _____ of the world. He had entrusted to them the living oracles that they might _____ the light to others. But His stewards had used these gifts to enrich and exalt _____. (COL, p. 369.3)

10. Which group among the Jews especially misappropriated the Lord's goods? “The _____, filled with self-importance and self-righteousness, were _____ the goods lent them by God to use for His glory.” (COL, p. 369.4)

11. What was the thinking of the unfaithful steward while he worked for his master? “The servant in the parable had made no provision for the _____. The goods entrusted to him for the benefit of others he had used for himself; but he had thought only of the _____. When the stewardship should be taken from him, he would have _____ to call his own.” (COL, p. 369)

12. How did the thinking of the unfaithful steward change when he faced bankruptcy and disgrace? “But his master's goods were still in his hands, and he determined to use them so as to _____

secure himself against _____ want. To accomplish this he must work on a _____ plan. Instead of gathering for himself, he must impart to _____.” (COL, p. 370)

13. How did the change in attitude of the unfaithful steward apply to the Pharisees? “Thus he might secure _____, who, when he should be cast out, would receive him. So with the _____. The stewardship was soon to be _____ from them, and they were called upon to provide for the _____. Only by seeking the good of _____ could they benefit themselves. Only by imparting God's gifts in the _____ life could they provide for _____.” (COL, p. 369.5)

14. What counsel of the apostle Paul parallels the lesson that Jesus thought to teach the Pharisees? “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a _____, is working for us a far more exceeding and _____ weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are _____, but at the things which are not _____. For the things which are seen are _____, but the things which are not seen are _____.” (2 Corinthians 4, 17, 18)

The Children of the Light

1. Who are the ‘children of the light’ in the parable of Jesus? “So it was in Christ's day. So it is _____. Look at the life of many who _____ to be Christians.” (COL, p. 370.1)

2. What did Jesus mean when He said that ‘the children of this world’ are in their generation, wiser than the ‘children of light’? “That is, worldly-wise men display more wisdom and earnestness in serving themselves than do the _____ children of God in their service to Him.” (COL, p. 370.1)

3. What endowments has Jesus given to those who profess to follow Him and for what reason? “The Lord has endowed them with capabilities, and power, and influence; He has entrusted them with money, that they may be _____ with Him in the great redemption. All His gifts are to be used in _____ humanity, in relieving the suffering and the needy.” (COL, p. 370)

4. What are the professed followers of Jesus doing with the goods that God has entrusted to them to bless humanity? “Alas, how many are appropriating to themselves the gifts of God! How many are adding _____ to house and land to land. How many are spending their _____ for pleasure, for the gratification of appetite, for _____ houses, furniture, and dress. Their fellow beings are left to misery and crime, to disease and death. Multitudes are perishing without one pitying _____, one word or deed of sympathy.” (COL, p. 371.1)

5. How does God refer to his professed followers who use His goods for personal benefit? “They are _____ His entrusted goods.” (COL, p. 371, 372) Imagine! God refers to these as embezzlers!

6. The unfaithful steward had to render an account to his master. When will the professed followers of Jesus be required to render an account to Jesus? “Everyone will be required to render up his entrusted gifts. In the day of final _____ men's hoarded wealth will be worthless to them. They have nothing they can call their own.” (COL, p. 372.1)

7. Who are the children of the light in the parable and how do they compare to the children of this world? “Those who spend their lives in laying up worldly treasure show less _____, less thought and care for their _____ well-being, than did the unjust steward for his _____ support. Less wise than the children of this world in their generation are these _____ children of the light.” (COL, p. 372)

8. What has God given to the children of the light and for what reason? “The Lord has endowed them with capabilities, and power, and influence; He has entrusted them with _____, that they may be co-workers with Him in the great redemption. All His gifts are to be used in _____ humanity, in relieving the suffering and the needy.” (COL, p. 372)

9. Who are the friends that Jesus mentioned in the following statement: “And I say to you, make _____ for yourselves by unrighteous mammon [like the steward did after he saw the light], that when you fail, _____ [the friends] may receive you into an everlasting home?”

10. How does the NIV capture well the meaning of verses 8 and 9? “The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the _____ of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the _____ of the light.⁹ I tell you, use _____ wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it [the wealth] is gone, you will be welcomed into _____ dwellings.”

11. Who are the friends that the sons of the light should make in order to dwell in their everlasting home? “God and Christ and angels are all ministering to the afflicted, the suffering, and the sinful. Give yourself to God for this work, use His _____ for this _____, and you enter into partnership with heavenly _____. Your heart will throb in sympathy with theirs. You will be assimilated to them in character. To you these dwellers in the eternal _____ will not be strangers. When earthly things shall have passed _____, the _____ at heaven's gates will bid you welcome.” (COL, p. 373.1)

12. According to Ellen White, what life and death choice does God place before those who profess to follow Him? "God desires us to choose the _____ in place of the earthly. . . . When the riches that moth devours and rust corrupts shall be _____ away, Christ's followers can rejoice in their heavenly treasure, the riches that are _____." (COL, p. 374.2)

13. According to the great Bible commentator, Albert Barnes, what must we do in this present world so that our friends can welcome us to our heavenly home? "This may be done by using our riches as we 'should do;' that is, by not suffering them to entangle us in cares and perplexities dangerous to the soul, engrossing the time, and stealing away the affections; by employing them in works of mercy and benevolence, aiding the poor, contributing to the advance of the gospel, bestowing them where they will do good, and in such a manner that God will 'approve' the deed, and will bless us for it."

14. Do those who have squandered God's goods still have an opportunity to secure lasting riches in the everlasting home? "To those who have squandered His goods, Christ still gives _____ to secure lasting riches. He says, "Give, and it shall be given unto you." "Provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth." Luke 6:38; 12:33. "Charge them that are rich in this world, . . . that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to _____, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on _____ life." 1 Timothy 6:17-19. (COL, pp. 374, 375)

15. What connection is there between Luke 16:9 and verses 10-13? "He who is faithful in what is least [the riches in this life] is faithful also in much [the riches in the world to come]; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. ¹¹ Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon [the worldly wealth in this life], who will commit to your trust the true riches [the riches of wealth in heaven]? ¹² And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own? ¹³ "No servant can serve two masters [love the Lord and hoard worldly riches]; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon [claim to serve God and yet hoard riches in this life that don't belong to you]."



“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #50 – Lambs Among Wolves

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: Matthew 7:15; 10:16:10:3; John 10:12; Ezekiel 22:26-28; Zephaniah 3:1-4; Luke 10:3; 2 Corinthians 11:1-3; Ezekiel 34; GC 492-504; PP 33-43; Acts 20:28, 29; Genesis 3:1-5; 13; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-13; Matthew 24:23, 24

Introduction

In this lesson, we will study about lambs among wolves. There are two senses in which the word ‘wolf’ is used in the Bible, one covert and the other overt. When one hears the howling of a wolf and sees its snarling mouth and sharp fangs there is no doubt about its main objective—to eat you! However, the Bible also uses the word ‘wolf’ to describe individuals who are wolves inside while on the outside they appear like sheep. The objective of these is also to destroy but they are more subtle and deceptive in accomplishing their objective. Jesus spoke about both kinds of wolves.

Two Kinds of Wolves

1. How did Jesus describe wolves that overtly reveal their true nature? "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. 12 But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the _____ coming and leaves the sheep and _____; and the wolf catches the sheep and _____ them. 13 The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep." (John 11:11-13)

2. How did Jesus describe the covert wolves who cloak their true nature? "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves." (Matthew 7:15)

The Unfaithful Under Shepherds

1. What did Jesus say about the sad condition of the sheep in His day? "But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with _____ for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no _____." (Matthew 9:36-37)

2. Who were the under shepherds in Christ's day that were supposed to care for the Shepherd's sheep? "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of _____, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds: "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the _____? (Ezekiel 34:3, 2)

3. How did David, the faithful shepherd care for his father's sheep? "But _____ said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's _____, and when a _____ or a bear came and took a lamb out of the _____, ³⁵ I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. ³⁶ Your servant has _____ both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised _____ will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God." (1 Samuel 17:34-36)

Note: The story of David and Goliath has a profound symbolism. David's father represents God, David represents God's under shepherds, the lions and bears represent Satan and the sheep represent Israel.

4. What happened to the sheep because of the unfaithfulness of the under shepherds? "You eat the _____ and clothe yourselves with the _____; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. 4 The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and _____ you have ruled them. 5 So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became _____ for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered." (Ezekiel 34:3-5)

5. What did God promise to do to the unfaithful under shepherds? "Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will _____ My flock at their hand; I will cause them to _____ feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them." (Ezekiel 34:10)

6. What did God promise to do for His persecuted sheep? "I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild _____ to cease from the land; and they will dwell _____ in the wilderness and sleep in the woods." (Ezekiel 34:25)

Lambs among Wolves

1. What did Jesus say to the twelve just before he sent them out two by two? "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of _____. Therefore be _____ as serpents and _____ as doves." (Matthew 10:16)

Note: In the following verse's Jesus explained what he meant by 'sheep in the midst of wolves'. He predicted that wolves would persecute his sheep and they would have to give a reason for their faith before councils and kings. However, they were told not to worry about what to say because the Spirit of the Father would speak through them (Matthew 10:17-23)

2. What similar words did Jesus speak to the seventy just before he sent them out to preach the gospel? "Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among _____." (Luke 10:3)

The Alpha Wolf's Methods in Heaven

1. The name of the leader of a wolf pack is 'alpha'. What kind of covert methods did the Alpha Wolf use in heaven to deceive one third of the angels? "Leaving his place in the immediate presence of God, Lucifer went forth to diffuse the spirit of discontent among the angels. Working with mysterious _____, and for a time _____ his real purpose under an _____ of reverence for God, he endeavored to excite dissatisfaction concerning the laws that governed heavenly beings, intimating that they imposed an unnecessary restraint." (GC, p. 495)

2. How does Ellen White further describe the covert methods of the 'Alpha' Wolf in heaven? "Thus while working to excite opposition to the law of God and to instill his own discontent into the minds of the angels under him, he was _____ seeking to remove dissatisfaction and to reconcile disaffected angels to the order of heaven. While _____ fomenting discord and rebellion, he with consummate craft caused it to _____ as his sole purpose to promote loyalty and to preserve harmony and peace." (PP, p. 38.2)

Note: The terminology that Ellen White uses in Patriarchs and Prophets and The Great Controversy to describe Satan's devious methods in heaven is significant. Here are some of them. 'mysterious secrecy', 'concealed his purpose', 'subtle deceptions', 'misconstruing and distorting', 'sophistry and fraud', 'disguising himself in a cloak of falsehood', 'perplex with subtle arguments', 'shrouded in mystery', 'artful perversion', 'flattery and deceit', 'misrepresented', 'concealing his real purpose under an appearance of reverence for God', 'false claims', 'misrepresentation', 'artfully made it appear'.

3. When the Alpha Wolf failed to persuade two thirds of the angels in heaven through camouflage and deception, how did he change his tactics? (Revelation 12:7-9) “And war broke out in heaven: _____ and his angels fought with the _____; and the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸ but they [Satan and his angels] did not _____, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. ⁹ So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who _____ the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

Note: So to speak, God expelled Satan and his pack of wolves from heaven. Some have thought that the war in heaven was simply an ideological war. However, Ellen White wrote, “the battles waging between the two armies are as real as those fought by the armies of this world, and on the issue of the spiritual conflict eternal destinies depend.” (PK, p. 176). Satan did not leave heaven on his own volition; Michael and His angels expelled him!

Alpha Wolf's Methods on Earth

1. How did the Alpha Wolf deceive Eve in the Garden? “And the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent _____ me, and I ate.’” (Genesis 3:13) “But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent _____ Eve by his _____, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” (2 Corinthians 11:3)

2. Does Satan always use covert methods to destroy God's people? “Be sober and vigilant, because your adversary the devil walks about like a _____ lion, seeking whom he may _____.” (1 Peter 5:8)

Note: Satan will do his utmost to deceive God's people by cunning, but if he is unsuccessful, he will persecute and attempt to destroy them by force.

Alpha Wolf's Wolf Pack

1. What did the insiders do with God's flock in Old Testament times? “Her _____ have violated My _____ and profaned My holy things; they have not _____ between the holy and unholy, nor have they made known the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they have hidden their eyes from My _____, so that I am profaned among them. ²⁷ Her princes in her midst are like _____ tearing the prey, to shed blood, to destroy people, and to get dishonest gain.” (Ezekiel 22:26-27)

“Woe to her who is rebellious and polluted, to the oppressing city! ² She has not obeyed His voice, she has not received correction; she has not trusted in the Lord, she has not drawn near to her God. ³ Her _____ in her midst are roaring lions; her judges are evening _____ that leave not a bone till morning. ⁴ Her _____ are insolent, treacherous people; her priests have _____ the sanctuary, they have done violence to the _____.” (Zephaniah 3:1-4)

2. According to Jesus, who are the covert wolves in sheep’s clothing? “Beware of false _____, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.” (Matthew 7:15)

Note: The succeeding context of Matthew 7:15 indicates that while the false prophets say ‘Lord, Lord’ claiming to follow Jesus, they trample upon the law of God. They even perform great signs and wonders, cast out demons, and utter prophecies in Jesus’ name! (see Matthew 7:21-23)

3. According to Ellen White, who are the covert wolves in sheep’s clothing? “Teachers of _____ will arise to draw you away from the narrow path and the strait gate. Beware of them; though _____ in sheep's clothing, inwardly they are ravening wolves. . . .” (FLB, p. 322.4)

4. Jesus identified the covert wolves as false prophets. Read the description that God gives of a false prophet in Deuteronomy 13:1-5 and write down the characteristics: _____

5. How did the apostle Paul describe these fraudulent counterfeit apostles? “For such are _____ apostles, _____ workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder for _____ himself transforms himself into an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore it is no great thing if his _____ also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)

6. What did Paul say about wolves that would arise from within the church after his departure? “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the _____, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to _____ the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ For I know this, that after my departure savage _____ will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also, from among _____ men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw _____ the disciples after themselves.” (Acts 20:28-30)

Note: These wolves were not of the overt kind. They would rise within the church, teaching perverse things and drawing followers after themselves.

7. Besides infiltration, what overt method would Satan use against the church after the ascension of Jesus? "He [Jesus] knew He was about to be separated from them, to leave them as sheep among _____. He knew that they would suffer _____, that they would be cast out of the synagogues, and would be thrown into prison." (AA, p. 21)

Facing the Wolves

1. What attitude should characterize Christ's disciples when they face the wolves? "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be _____ as serpents and _____ as doves." (Matthew 10:16)

2. What should be the attitude of God's people when they stand before wolves to give a reason for their faith? "You cannot do this and follow your own ideas and your own plans. You must modify your method of labor. You need not feel that _____ the truth is to be spoken to unbelievers on any and every occasion. You should plan carefully what to _____ and what to leave _____. This is not practicing deception; it is working as Paul worked. He says, "Being crafty, I caught you with guile." Your method of labor would not have that effect." Testimonies to South Africa, 16.1

3. How did Luther face the ecclesiastical wolves in Worms who wanted to devour him? "Luther's prayer was heard. His courage and faith returned as he met his enemies. Meek as a _____, he stood, surrounded by the great men of the earth, who, like angry _____, fastened their eyes upon him, hoping to awe him with their power and greatness. However, he had taken hold of the strength of God, and feared not. His words were spoken with such _____ and power that his enemies could do nothing against him." (GW, p. 92, p. 60)

4. What did Jesus say to His disciples after warning them that they would be like lambs among wolves? "But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and _____ you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ You will be brought before governors and _____ for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ However, when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should _____. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; ²⁰ for it is not you who speak, but the _____ of your Father who speaks in you". (Matthew 10:17-20)

Note: The followers of Jesus were to be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. They were to pray fervently that God would give them the proper words at the proper time.

Wolves in the End Time

1. What will distinguish the wolves from the sheep in the final crisis? "Christ warns His followers, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening _____." He exhorts us not to be deceived when _____ shepherds present their _____. These men tell us that the commandments of God abolished at the death of Christ. Shall we believe them, these men who _____ to be sanctified, while they refuse to obey God? They say the Lord has told them that they need not keep the _____ Commandments; but has the Lord told them this? No, God does not lie." (Ev, pp. 597, 598)

Alpha Wolf's Methods at the End

1. What covert method will Alpha Wolf use against God's people at the end of time? "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. ²⁴ For false christs and false _____ will rise and show great signs and wonders to _____, if possible, even the _____. ²⁵ See, I have told you beforehand. (Matthew 24:23-25)

1. What overt method will the Alpha wolf use when his covert method does not work? "He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be _____. (Revelation 13:15)

"They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service." (John 16:2)

"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and _____ you, and you will be _____ by all nations for My name's sake. ¹⁰ And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹ Then many false _____ will rise up and _____ many. ¹² And because _____ will abound, the love of many will grow cold." (Matthew 24:9-12)

3. What will be the central issue in the final battle? "The coming of the _____ one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and _____ wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous _____ among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved." (2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10)

4. What will characterize God's end time remnant? "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the _____ of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Revelation 12:17, KJV)

5. What will it be like to live in the world after the close of probation? "The forces of darkness will unite with human agents who have given themselves into the control of _____, and the same scenes that were exhibited at the trial, rejection, and crucifixion of Christ will be _____. Through yielding to satanic influences, men will be transformed into fiends; and those who were created in the image of God, who were formed to honor and glorify their Creator, will become the habitation of dragons, and Satan will see in an apostate race his masterpiece of evil,--men who reflect his own image". (RH, April 14, 1896 par. 7)

The Litmus Test

1. How will God's people be able to distinguish between a sheep and a disguised wolf? "To the _____ and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no _____ in them." (Isaiah 8:20)

2. According to Ellen White, how do we test teachers to determine if they are sheep or wolves? "Our Savior warned his followers to "beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening _____. Ye shall know them by their fruits." Jesus does not bid us to prove them by their fair _____ and exalted professions. They are to be judged by the _____ of God. The true disciples of Christ will bear the divine impress. Their _____ will be in harmony with the teaching of the Son of God. Their character will be molded after the great pattern. What _____ do they bring? Does it lead you to reverence and fear God? Does it lead you to manifest your love for him by loyalty to his _____? If they tell you that they are not concerned about _____ or observing the _____, be afraid of them, even though they heal the sick and cast out devils. They are doing the very work that _____ with the prince of darkness, the enemy of God. The beginning of all the sin and woe and death that have deluged our earth, was this very disregard for the plain commandment of God." (SI, April 13, 1888 par. 5)

“The End Time Dimension of the Parables”

Lesson #51 – New Cloth and New Wine

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

Recommended Reading: Matthew 9:14-17; Mark 2:18-22; Luke 5:33-39; DA 278-280; 1SM, pp. 386-388

The Parable’s Symbols

After you have studied the lesson, fill in the blanks with the proper meaning of these symbols:

Old wineskins and old garment _____

New wineskins and new garment _____

Piece of new cloth _____

Old wine _____

New wine _____

1. How many real life illustrations did Jesus use when the Pharisees asked Him why His disciples did not fast? "Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast? And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the _____ mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? However, the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. "No one puts a piece of unshrunk _____ on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. Nor do they put new wine into old _____, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved." (Matthew 9:14-17)

Note: Jesus used three illustrations to make His point, one from marriage, one from textiles and the other from grape husbandry.

The Matter of Fasting

1. What were the Pharisees and the disciples of John doing when Jesus gave His three illustrations? "The Pharisees and John's disciples were _____ when the latter came to Jesus with the inquiry, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but Thy disciples fast not?" (DA, p. 276.4)

2. Why were John's disciples fasting at this particular time? "The disciples of John were at this time in great _____. It was before their visit to Jesus with John's message. Their beloved teacher was in _____, and they passed their days in _____ and Jesus was making no effort to release John, and even appeared to cast _____ on his teaching. (DA, p. 276.3)

3. What motivated the Pharisees and the disciples of John to fast? "They observed many of the rules prescribed by the rabbis, and even hoped to be _____ by the works of the law. The Jews practiced fasting as an act of _____, and the most rigid among them fasted two days in every week." (DA, p. 276.4)

4. Did John the Baptist believe that his disciples should be fasting at that particular time? "He who has the bride is the bridegroom [Jesus]; but the _____ of the bridegroom [John the Baptist], who stands and hears him, _____ greatly because of the bridegroom's _____. Therefore, this _____ of mine is fulfilled. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3:29)

Note: The presence of Jesus brought joy to John the Baptist and the disciples of Jesus. The new had replaced the old and it was time to feast, not to fast. The Pharisees were fasting when they should have been feasting!

5. When would be the time for the disciples to mourn and fast? "When they should see their Lord betrayed and _____, the disciples would mourn and fast." (DA, p. 277.3)

Note: "A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me. Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." John 16:19, 20."

The Textile Illustration

1. Could the teachings of John and the Pharisees be interwoven?

“The _____ of John the Baptist [the new, unshrunk patch] was not to be interwoven with _____ and superstition [the old garment]. An attempt to _____ the pretense of the Pharisees with the devotion of John would only make more evident the breach between them.” (DA, p. 278.3)

Note: Jesus was saying that it was unwise to put a patch of new unshrunk cloth on an old garment because upon washing the garment, the patch would shrink and tear it. The Bible commentator **Albert Barnes** paraphrased Jesus’ meaning: “. . . my ‘new’ doctrines do not MATCH with the old rites of the Pharisees. . . Their doctrines require much fasting. In my system it would be incongruous; and if my new doctrines were to be attached to their old ones, it would only make the matter worse.” **Ellen White** concurred with Barnes: “When the warp and woof of religion will not stand the test of trial, the material of which it is composed is worthless. Moreover, an effort to patch the old cloth with a new piece does not better the condition of things; for the worn-out, flimsy material breaks away from the new, leaving the rent much larger than before. Patching will not do. The only way is to discard the old garment and procure a new one.” (OHC, p. 336)

2. What further lesson did Jesus want to teach through the textile illustration? “Nor could the principles of Christ's teaching be _____ with the forms of Pharisaism. . . He would make more _____ the separation between the old and the _____. Jesus further illustrated this fact, saying, "No man puts new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish." (DA, p. 279)

The Wineskin Illustration

1. Why was it not wise to pour new wine into old wineskins? “The skin bottles which were used as vessels to contain the new wine, after a time became dry and _____, and were then worthless to serve the same purpose again.” (DA, p. 278)

Note: The Bible commentator Albert Barnes wrote: “By long usage, however, bottles of skins became tender and would be easily ruptured. New wine put into them would ferment, and swell and burst them open. New skins or bottles would YIELD to the fermenting wine, and be strong enough to hold it from bursting.”

2. What does wine symbolize in the Bible? “Canvassers, remember that in the books you handle you are presenting, not the cup containing the wine of Babylon, _____ of error dealt to the kings of the earth, but the cup full of the preciousness of the _____ of redemption.” (CM, p. 48)

“The _____ of Christ, though it was represented by the new wine, was not a new _____, but the revelation of that which had been taught from the beginning.” (DA, p. 279)

Note: While the pure fruit of the vine represents true doctrine, fermented wine represents the false traditions and doctrines of Babylon (see GC, p. 389; TM, pp. 61, 62)

3. Whom do the old wineskins represent? “In this familiar illustration, Jesus presented the condition of the Jewish leaders. Priests, scribes and rulers were fixed in a rut of ceremonies and traditions. _____ hearts had become contracted, like the dried-up wine skins to which He had _____ them.” (DA, pp. 278, 279)

4. What does new wine in the old wineskins represent? “While they remained satisfied with a legal religion, it was impossible for them to become the _____ [wineskins] of the living truth [new wine] of heaven. They thought their own righteousness all-sufficient, and did not desire that a _____ element should be brought into their religion.” (DA, p. 279)

5. What lesson did Jesus teach with the wine in the wineskin illustration? Albert Barnes explained: “It is not ‘fit’ that my doctrine should be attached to or connected with the old and corrupt doctrines of the Pharisees. New things should be put together, and made to MATCH.”

6. Was the ‘new wine’ of Jesus technically ‘new’? “The teaching of Christ, though it was represented by the new wine, was _____ a new doctrine, but the revelation of that which had been taught from the _____. (DA, p. 279.2)

7. For whom was the teaching of Jesus new? “The Pharisees “professed to have respect for the religion of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Moses. But, although Christ taught the original truths that had been committed to the fathers, his teaching was new to the, because they had perverted, and misinterpreted, and burdened down the requirements of God, until the truth had its original significance and beauty.” (ST, September 19, 1892 par. 5)

8. Whom did Jesus choose as new wineskins in which He could pour His new wine? “The Savior turned away from them to find others who would receive the message of heaven. In the untutored _____, in the _____ at the market place, in the woman of _____, in the _____ people who heard Him gladly, He found His new bottles for the new wine.” Jesus “could make _____ [His disciples] as new bottles for the new wine of His kingdom.” (5BC, p. 1088.9)

9. Why could Jesus pour His new wine into His disciples and not into the priests and rulers? “They [disciples] were truly _____ men, and became the new bottles into which Jesus could pour the new wine of His kingdom.” (LHU, p. 259.3)

“These were the _____ to whom the Father could reveal spiritual things; but the priests and rulers, the scribes and Pharisees, who claimed to be the depositaries of knowledge, could give no room for the principles of Christianity, afterward taught by the apostles of Christ. The chain of truth, link after link, was given to those who realized their own _____, and were willing to learn of the great Teacher. (5BC, p. 1088.9)

10. Were the disciples to weave their own traditions into the teachings of Jesus? “It was His design that His disciples should take the plain, _____ truth for the guide of their life. They were not to _____ to His words, or give a _____ meaning to His utterances. They were not to put a _____ interpretation upon the plain teaching of the Scriptures, and draw from _____ stores to build up some man-made theory.” (RH, June 2, 1896)

11. Why is it unwise to pour the new wine of truth into the old wine of tradition? “The faith that works by love and purifies the soul could find no place for union with the religion of the Pharisees, made up of ceremonies and the injunctions of men. The effort to unite the teachings of Jesus with the established religion would be _____. The vital truth of God, like fermenting wine, would _____ the old, decaying bottles of the Pharisaical tradition.” (DA, p. 278.4)

12. Who are the only ones that God can use effectively to preach of the gospel? “The instrumentalities to be used in the gospel work are those souls who _____ receive the light which God sends them. These are His agencies for imparting the knowledge of truth to the world. If through the _____ of Christ His people will become new bottles, He will fill them with new wine.” (DA, p. 279.1)

13. According to Jesus (Luke 5:39), how does the teaching of old traditions destroy the appreciation of truth? “Jesus pointed out the power of teaching to destroy the appreciation and desire for truth. ‘No man,’ He said, ‘having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.’

14. What needed to happen to the Pharisees before Jesus could fill them with His new wine? “Until _____ of the old traditions, customs, and practices, they had no place in mind or _____ for the teachings of Christ. They clung to the dead _____, and turned away from the living truth and the power of God. (DA, p. 279.3)

Note: Some members of the Jewish Sanhedrin later became new bottles into which Jesus could pour His new wine. Among them were Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimatea, Gamaliel and Saul of Tarsus

15. How can a person become a new bottle into which Jesus can pour His new wine? “Man must be _____ of self before he can be, in the fullest sense, a believer in Jesus. When self is _____, then the Lord can make man a new _____. New bottles can contain the new wine. The love of Christ will animate the believer with new life. In him who looks unto the Author and Finisher of our faith the character of Christ will be manifest.” (DA, p. 280.4)

16. What is the downside of a merely legal religion? “A legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a _____, Christless religion. Fasting or prayer that is actuated by a self-justifying spirit is an _____ in the sight of God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposing sacrifice, proclaim that the doer of these things regards himself as righteous, and as entitled to heaven; but it is all a _____. Our own works can never purchase salvation.” (DA, p. 280.2)

A Message to the End Time Church

1. With what message in the book of Revelation does Ellen White link with the wineskin illustration? “As it was in the days of Christ, so it is _____; the Pharisees do not know their spiritual destitution. To them comes the message, ‘Because you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and do not know that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel you to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness do not appear.’” (Revelation 3:17, 18, DA, p. 279)

2. How does the Laodicean church feel about herself? “Because you say, ‘I am _____, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’” (Revelation 3:17)

3. How does Jesus assess the Laodicean church? “. . . and do not _____ that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. (Revelation 3:17)

4. Where is Jesus when He comes to the Laodicean Church? “Behold, I stand at the _____ and knock. If anyone hears My voice and _____ the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.” (Revelation 3:20)

5. What awesome warning does Jesus give to the Laodicean Church? “So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will _____ you out of My mouth.” (Revelation 3:16)

6. What are the remedies for Laodicea’s disease? “I counsel you to buy from Me _____ refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white _____, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye _____, that you may see.” (Revelation 3:18)

7. To whom does the Laodicean message specifically apply? “The message to the Laodiceans is applicable to _____ - _____ Adventists who have had great light and have not walked in the light. It is those who have made great _____, but have not kept in step with their Leader, that will be spewed out of His mouth unless they repent.” (2SM, p. 66) “The message to the church of the Laodiceans is a startling denunciation, and is applicable to the people of God at the _____ time.” (3T, p. 252)

8. What experience is needful to the remnant church? “The _____ church is called to go through an experience _____ to that of the Jews; and the True Witness, who walks up and down in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, has a solemn message to bear to His people. . . The love of God has been waning in the church, and as a result, the love of _____ has sprung up into new activity. With the loss of love for God there has come the loss of love for the brethren.” (1SM, pp. 387, 388)

9. Do many today have the same problem that characterized the Pharisees?

“Thousands are making the same _____ as did the Pharisees whom Christ reproved at Matthew's feast. Rather than give up some _____ idea, or discard some idol of _____, many refuse the truth which comes down from the Father of light.” (DA, p. 279)

10. Who are the bottles into whom Jesus can pour His new wine? “The mold of Christ will be upon each individual _____ of His body, and His people will be new _____ into which He can pour His new wine, and the new wine will not break the bottles. (1SM, p. 386.1) “If through the _____ of Christ His people will become new bottles, He will fill them with the new wine. God will give additional light, and old truths will be _____, and replaced in the frame-work of truth; and wherever the laborers go, they will triumph.” (SD, p. 259)

11. How only can Jesus pour His new wine into the new bottles? “Jesus came to impart to the human soul the Holy Spirit, by which the love of God is shed abroad in the heart; but it is

impossible to endow men with the Holy Spirit, who are _____ in their ideas, whose doctrines are all _____ and unchangeable, who are walking after the traditions and commandments of _____, as were the Jews in the time of Christ. The gospel of Christ could not be placed in their hearts; for there was no _____ to contain it. They could not be the new bottles into which he could pour his new wine.” (RH, March 20, 1894)

Appendix: First Thessalonians 4:14 and the Rapture

Two Promises

Jesus made two promises to His faithful people:

- He promised to take them to His Father's house (John 14:1-3)
- He promised that the meek would inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5)

How can Jesus fulfill both promises, first, to take His people to heaven and to give them the earth as their inheritance?

The Futurist Scenario:

- Jesus will rapture His saints to heaven before the tribulation where they will spend seven years.
- After the seven years in heaven Jesus will return to earth with his saints and give them the earth as their inheritance.

The Biblical Scenario:

- At the second coming Jesus will take His saints to heaven where they will be for one thousand years.
- After the thousand years Jesus will come back to earth with His saints and give them the earth as their inheritance.

A Controversial Verse

One of the favorite verses that futurists use to defend the rapture idea is **1 Thessalonians 4:14**. However, every verse has a context so we must look at what comes before and after this verse. As we look at the context, we notice that the central theme for both Jesus and His saints is death, resurrection and ascension:

"But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again [was caught up to heaven], even so [in the same way] God will bring with Him [with Jesus to heaven] those who sleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain [represented by Elijah] until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep [represented by Moses]. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a

shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God and the **dead in Christ will rise first**.¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be **caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord **in the air**. And thus we shall **always be with the Lord**.¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

The problem of verse 14

"For if we believe that Jesus **died and rose again, even so [in the same way]** God will **bring with Him** those who sleep in Jesus."

Those who teach a pre-tribulation rapture of the church argue in a way that seems to make **logical sense**:

The text tells us that Jesus will **bring** the saints with Him from heaven and He **cannot bring** them unless he **took them** to heaven in the first place. Those who favor this view find what they consider to be **persuasive support** in 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 13:

"And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you,¹³ so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ **with all His saints**."

Once again, this **text seems** to say that when Jesus comes again, **He will bring His people** with Him. However, the question is, are these **saints human or are the angelic?**

Who are the saints that Jesus comes with?

The Bible refers to **angels** as '**saints**'. When God came from heaven to reveal His holy **Ten Commandment Law**, He did not come alone but with **ten thousands** of saints:

"The Lord came from Sinai, and dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, and He came with **ten thousands of saints** [**'holy ones' in the NIV**]; from His right hand came a fiery law for them." (Deuteronomy 33:2)

There can be little doubt that the expression 'ten thousand' **refers to angels** because both the **Old and New Testaments** use this depiction to describe the angelic hosts. The prophet **Daniel** described the angels that surround God's throne:

"A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; **ten thousand** times **ten thousand** stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened." (Daniel 7:10)

Moreover, **John** in the book of Revelation also applies the expression 'ten thousand' to angels:

*"Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was **ten thousand** times **ten thousand**, and thousands of thousands."* (Revelation 5:11)

In the gospel of **Mark**, refers to the angels as '**holy**':

*"For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes **in** the glory of His Father [**Hebrews 1:3**] **with** the **holy** angels."* (Mark 8:38)

Clearly, the clouds that Paul refers to in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 are angels because in Scripture clouds are **symbolic of angels** (Psalm 104:3, 4; Hebrews 1:7; Revelation 1:7). The apostle Paul elsewhere states that Jesus will come from heaven with His mighty angels (**2 Thessalonians 1:7**). Thus, the saints that Jesus comes with are not human but angelic.

The Experience of Jesus at the First Coming

After Jesus [1] **died** and [2] **resurrected** a cloud of angels [3] **came** from heaven to earth. The cloud of angels [4] **caught Jesus up** and [5] took Him **to heaven** This scenario is sustained by the following two texts:

*"Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He **was taken up** [**passive voice**], and a **cloud received Him** out of their sight."* (Acts 1:9)

*"She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron and her Child was **caught up** [**passive voice**] to **God** and His throne."* (Revelation 12:5-6)

In Summary:

- Jesus **died**
- Jesus **rose again**
- A **cloud of angels** descended from heaven
- Jesus was **caught up** in **the cloud**
- God **brought Him** to heaven with the clouds

The Experience of Christ's People at the Second Coming

By using the expression 'even so' in 1 Thessalonians 4:14 the apostle Paul was drawing a parallel between the experience of Jesus at the first coming and that of His people at the second. Luke uses a similar expression in Acts 1:11 where He wrote that Jesus will come 'in like manner' as the disciples saw Him go to heaven:

"Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up [passive voice] from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11)

Therefore, if we know what happened to Jesus at the first coming we will know what will occur with His faithful followers at the second coming.

So let us examine the experience of the righteous dead:

- The righteous died in Christ.
- At the second coming, God will send clouds of angels from heaven with Jesus:

"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen." (Revelation 1:7)

"For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father [Hebrews 1:3] with the holy angels." (Mark 8:38)

- Jesus will then resurrect those who died in Him.
- The clouds will catch up the resurrected dead to meet Jesus in the air.
- Finally, God the Father will bring them to heaven with Jesus.

The passage is clear that Jesus will not bring the righteous dead from heaven to earth but rather the Father will bring the righteous dead with Jesus to heaven. Let us now look again at the entire passage with explanatory notes in brackets:

"But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again [and was caught up to heaven by the angelic cloud], even so [in the same way] God will bring with Him [God who is in heaven will bring the resurrected saints with Jesus to heaven] those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until

the coming of the Lord will by no means precede **[in going to heaven]** those who are **asleep**, for the Lord Himself will **descend** from heaven **[where He went with the angels at his ascension]** with a **shout**, with the **voice** of an archangel, and with the **trumpet** of God and the **dead in Christ will rise** first, then we who are alive and remain shall be **caught up** together with them in the **clouds [like Jesus was at His ascension]** to meet the Lord **in the air** and thus we shall **always be with the Lord.**" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17)

The **New Living Translation** captures well the meaning of verse 14:

*"For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, **God [the Father] will bring back [to heaven] with him [with Jesus]** the believers who have died."*

God the Father does not come

Someone might object: **Where is the evidence** that God the Father will **remain in heaven** at the second coming **to bring Jesus with the saints**? Here is the answer:

*"The sacrifice of our Savior has made ample provision for every repenting, believing soul. We are saved because God loves the purchase of the blood of Christ; and not only will He [God] pardon the repentant sinner, not only will He **permit him to enter heaven**, but He, the Father of mercies, **will wait at the very gates** of heaven to **welcome us**, to give us an abundant entrance to the mansions of the blest." **RH**, September 21, 1886*

Ellen White agrees with the biblical record. **Acts 3:19-21** tells us that God will **send Jesus:**

*"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He [God] may **send** Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom **heaven must receive until** the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."*

But does not the Bible state that Jesus will come in the **glory of the Father**? Indeed it does (see **Mark 8:38**). However, it is not the same to say that Jesus will come in the glory of His Father as to say that the **Father will come in glory!** The reason why Jesus will come in the glory of His Father is that **Jesus is 'the brightness of his [the Father's] glory**, and the express image of his person' (**Hebrews 1:3**).

Summary and Conclusion

So let us summarize the parallel between the experience of Jesus and that of His saints:

The Experience of Jesus:

- Jesus died
- Jesus resurrected
- God sent a cloud of angels from heaven to **bring** Jesus
- Jesus was caught up in the cloud
- God brought Him with the angels to heaven

The Experience of the righteous:

- They died in Christ
- They resurrected
- God sent a cloud of angels from heaven to bring Jesus with the resurrected saints
- The cloud of angels catches the saints up in the cloud
- God brings the saints with Jesus to heaven

A Repetition of the First Coming

Forty days after the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Father sent a cloud of angels to bring Him to heaven. When the angels arrived at the earth, the cloud of angels caught Jesus up and the journey to the Father's house began. With Jesus and the angels were the first-fruits of those who died trusting in Jesus. This group was a small sampling of the abundant harvest that will resurrect at the second coming of Jesus. Waiting for the arrival of Jesus in heaven were the Father, the cherubim and seraphim, the representatives of the worlds that never sinned and the Holy Spirit (Revelation 4). When Jesus arrived with the clouds of angels and the first fruits, all heaven exploded in an anthem of praise to Jesus, the victorious war hero. (Revelation 5; see DA, pp. 831-834)

The second coming of Jesus will follow the same pattern. Once again, God will send Jesus with the clouds of angels to the earth to bring the resurrected saints to heaven. When Jesus arrives at the earth with the clouds, He will resurrect the dead, the clouds will catch them up and God will bring them with Jesus to heaven. As Jesus ascends with the angels and His beloved children, all heaven will be waiting in expectancy. Present there will be the Father, the cherubim and seraphim, the representatives of the worlds that never sinned and the Holy Spirit. Upon arrival,

the Father will be *waiting at the gates* of the city to give a *warm welcome* to His redeemed children and there will be the *same anthem* of praise that the angels sung at the ascension.

SOME ELLEN G. WHITE ABBRIEVATED BOOK REFERENCES

See egwwritings.org or whiteestate.org for a complete listing

ABBR	List by Book Title - Alphabetically	ABBR	Listed Alphabetically by Abbreviation
1BC	Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary Vol. 1 etc.	GW	Gospel Workers
1MCP	Mind, Character & Personality Vol. 1	GW92	Gospel Workers 1892
1MR	Manuscript Releases, Vol. 1	HDL	Help in Daily Living
1NL	Notebook Leaflets, Vol. 1	HFM	The Health Food Ministry
1SAT	Sermons and Talks, Vol. 1	HL	Healthful Living
1SG	Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 1	HP	In Heavenly Places
1SM	Selected Messages, Book One	HS	Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the SDA
1SP	The Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 1 etc.	Hvn	Heaven
1T	Testimonies for the Church	LDE	Last Day Events
3SM	Selected Messages Book 1	LHU	Life Him Up
7BC	Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, Vol 7	LP	Sketches From the Life of Paul
AA	The Acts of the Apostles	LS	Life Sketches of Ellen G. White
AG	God's Amazing Grace	Lt	Letter, E. G. White
AH	The Adventist Home	LYL	Letters to Young Lovers
ApM	An Appeal to Mothers	Mar	Maranatha, the Lord is Coming
AY	An Appeal to the Youth	MB	Thoughts From the Mount of Blessings
CC	Conflict and Courage	MH	The Ministry of Healing
CCh	Counsels for the Church	ML	My Life Today
CD	Counsels on Diet and Foods	MM	Medical Missionary
CE	Christian Education	Ms	Manuscript, E. G. White
CET	Christian Experience and Teachings	MYP	Messages to Young People
CEv	Colporteur Evangelist	OFC	Our Father Cares
CG	Child Guidance	OHC	Our High Calling
CH	Counsels on Health	PaM	Pastoral Ministry
ChL	Christian Leadership	PK	Prophets and Kings

SOME ELLEN G. WHITE ABBRIEVATED BOOK REFERENCES - Continued

See egwwritings.org or whiteestate.org for a complete listing

ABBR	List by Book Title - Alphabetically	ABBR	Listed Alphabetically by Abbreviation
ChS	Christian Service	PM	The Publishing Ministry
CL	Country Living	PP	Patriarchs and Prophets
CM	Colporteur Ministry	Pr	Prayer
CME	A Call To Medical Evangelism & Health Education	RC	Reflecting Christ
COL	Christ's Object Lessons	RH	The Review and Herald
Con	Confrontation	RR	Radiant Religion
COS	Christ Our Saviour	RY	The Retirement Years
CS	Counsels on Stewardship	SC	Steps To Christ
CSA	A Call To Stand Apart	SD	Sons and Daughters of God
CSW	Counsels on Sabbath School Work	SL	The Sanctified Life
CT	Counsels to Parents, Teachers & Students	SOJ	The Story of Jesus
CTBH	Christian Temperance & Bible Hygiene	SR	The Story of Redemption
CTr	Christ Triumphant	ST	Signs of the Times
CW	Counsels to Writers & Editors	SW	The Southern Work
DA	The Desire of Ages	TA	The Truth About Angels
DD	Darkness Before Dawn	TDG	This Day With God
DG	Daughters of God	Te	Temperance
Ed	Education	TM	Testimonies to Ministers
Ev	Evangelism	TMK	That I May Know Him
EW	Early Writings	UL	The Upward Look
FE	Fundamentals of Christian Education	WLF	Word to the "Little Flock," A
FLB	The Faith I Live By	WM	Welfare Ministry
FW	Faith and Works	YI	The Youth's Instructor
GC	The Great Controversy	YRP	Ye Shall Receive Power



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