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*Family
Bible
Studies*

HB-384

Family Bible Studies

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This outstanding book can help many precious souls come to Christ and learn the important Bible truths for our time in history.

Therefore we are making these books available, in boxful quantities, at below printing house costs. This material (as a book or individual lessons) needs to be widely distributed!

This material can be purchased either in bound book format or with the backs cut off—so you can hand out the lessons, one at a time. For more information, see pp. 5-8.

If you wish to send the books overseas, we will heavily subsidize the book cost.

Family Bible Studies, 5½ x 8½, 384 pages, quality book paper

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How to Use *this* Book

LESSONS WHICH GROUND IN THE TRUTH—About a decade ago, a returned missionary informed the present writer that, at least up to the early 1980s, our workers in India always **thoroughly grounded** people in Bible truths. **The present set of thirty-one Bible lessons is designed to do just that.** Every major doctrine is presented, and in an easy-to-understand but complete way. These are not shallow, surface studies.

- **The lessons agree with our historic Bible beliefs.** They do not teach new or peculiar ideas or theories. **For a simplified study, while conducting a lesson, read only the key Bible verses which are quoted.** However, the other (non-quoted) verses provide a treasure-house for further study. All in all, well over a thousand Bible verses are either quoted or referred to in these easily understood studies.

- **A number of very helpful charts** are included (see pp. 78-79 for an example). Most are noted in the table of contents. Many have been copied from the charts in our editions of *Great Controversy*, and several new ones have been prepared.

- **Most chapters have at least one page of “supplementary material.”** Consisting of outstanding Spirit of Prophecy comments on the particular subject presented in each lesson, this feature helps the reader gradually discover the value of those remarkable writings. This is a very helpful feature; and the quoted material is always extremely pertinent to the lesson topic (see page 16 for an example).

- **A few simple, summary questions have been added at the close of each lesson** (see page 15). Because some students may be apprehensive about their ability to answer questions, these few questions are never complicated.

- A large envelope of several, unfolded 8½ x 11 inch *Certificates of Scholarship*, printed on nice paper, are also available separately (see page 2). **Upon completion of the Bible study program, the date and name of the graduate can filled in, and the Certificate handed or mailed to him.**

WAYS IN WHICH THE BOOK CAN BE USED—These lessons are simply presented, solidly Biblical, and in full accordance with historic beliefs. They are an invaluable help in personal and group study and missionary work, and can be used in several different ways:

- **The earnest Bible student will gain a far deeper understanding of basic Bible truths,** as he carefully reads through these lessons

and compares each point with the open Bible beside him.

- The lessons can be utilized as **the basis of an ongoing series of family worship and missionary Bible studies.**

- They can be used as **part of a home school curriculum.** When this is done, the student's life will be enriched as he acquires a clearer knowledge of basic Bible beliefs.

- The two-page lessons can be used as **the basis for an excellent Bible marking plan.** (More on the two-page lessons, below.)

- This entire book, containing, as it does, such a solid Biblical foundation of truth, **can easily be given to a friend or loved one.** To share these lessons is to share a blessing.

- **Boxfuls of the books can be mailed to missionaries, mission stations, and nationals in distant lands. Books can also be sent to prisoners.** There are many souls crying out for the truths contained in this book. We here regularly send them, along with other books, in response to requests for literature from prisoners, as well as nationals in Africa and elsewhere. *You cannot send too many!* (When sending books to prisoners or overseas locations, it is best to mail only bound books, not loose-leaf format—since those receiving them may not have access to ring binders. An alternative is to send prisoners individual lessons, one at a time.) (More on the two formats, below.)

- **With these lessons, you can establish your own Bible correspondence school and mail out individual lessons.** You may want to include a cover letter, with the first (or each) lesson, which will personalize them.

TWO STUDY FORMATS AVAILABLE—These *Family Bible Studies* are available from us either as a soft-cover book, in its own binding, or in a separate-sheet, loose-leaf format. (See page 2 for prices.)

- **The bound book** is outstanding for personal reading. It is the best format to send to prisoners, overseas mission stations, and national workers.

- **The loose-leaf format** is ideal for an ongoing series of Bible studies. The book has been sliced into separate sheets. The sheets can be punched and placed in a standard three-ring binder. The contents have been arranged so **each lesson begins on the right-hand page of each page opening, thus separating the lessons. Because of this, individual lessons can be handed out,** one by one, during a course of Bible studies. This gradual distribution can be done during an evangelistic effort, a home Bible-study group, or in some kind of correspondence mailing program.

(In order not to interfere with the separate structure of each indi-

vidual lesson, the sequential page numbers of the entire book are listed in small print at the bottom of each page.)

DOUBLE LESSON ARRANGEMENT—Each Bible lesson is actually two studies in one.

- The **complete lesson** comes first. It is arranged so its key Bible verses stand out (see pages 9-15 for an example). It is concluded by a very few, simple questions and Spirit of Prophecy comments.

- After the supplementary material, next comes a **two-page brief lesson** which has only the main headings and the key Bible verses of the lesson (see pages 19-20). (Occasionally some verses had to be omitted to fit the space.) These two-page Bible verses have blanks, for certain words, to be filled in by the student as he locates them in his Bible. We call them “Brief Bible Studies.”

ADVANTAGES OF THE TWO-PAGE LESSONS—The Brief Bible Studies greatly strengthen the impact of the entire study series.

- **After studying the main lesson, each brief lesson can be used as a review to help the student remember what he has just learned.** This review can be done alone, with the instructor, or in a group.

- **Or, instead, the brief lesson can be studied first, before reading the main lesson.** The brief lesson can be given to the student to study with his Bible, and then the instructor can hand him (or go over with him) the complete lesson. Each method has advantages, yet the first method may be the best. (Of course, the two-page lesson can be ignored and not filled in. At least, it is there if the student wants to increase his grasp of Scripture.)

- **Using the two-page lessons, an excellent Bible marking plan can be started: When filling in the blanks in the two-page lessons, it is best if the student looks up each verse in his own Bible** instead of locating it in the main lesson. By doing this, he will, of course, strengthen his use of God’s Word. But there is an outstanding advantage in doing this. **As he finds each verse in his Bible, he can underline it. Then, using the marking code given at the top-right of each page of the two-page lessons, the student can gradually complete his own Bible marking program!** For example, in the margin in his Bible by the first verse of Lesson One (Luke 24:44-45), he would write “B-1.” (See page 19 of this book; for a complete list of lesson codes, see p. 359.) This encouraging goal, of completing the marking system, will help maintain a strong interest in continuing the lessons. (So you can best use the Bible marking chains, the two-page lessons are sometimes slightly different than the more complete lessons. This was necessitated by duplicate verses, space limitations, and the logical pattern of the lesson study.)

APPENDIX—At the back of this book, you will find more helpful

information: (1) how to mark your Bible, using this marking system; (2) how to locate Bible study interests; (3) how to prepare a Bible lesson and give studies; and, very important, (4) how to reach the heart and obtain decisions,—which is an invaluable help in carrying on personal evangelism with Bible studies (pages 356-380)!

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION—Here is further information which will help you in your use of these lessons:

- If you purchase them **in boxful quantities, these books are available at our printing house cost. We make nothing on them. Because of this extremely low cost, these lessons can be widely used and shared.** They are in full agreement with our historic beliefs.

- You have our permission to photocopy as many of these lessons, and as often, as you want. If you live outside of the U.S., shipping costs are expensive, so you have our permission to reprint the entire book and put your name on it. Let us get the message out; that is what our Master wants us to do!

IF EXTRA HELP IS NEEDED—If the student is having difficulty with a topic, we urge you to obtain additional study material, so he can understand the topic better, as you share these with him.

Bible Sabbath - Obtain a copy of our book, *Beyond Pitcairn*. It is the most complete book available on this important subject. In boxful quantities, it is very inexpensive.

State of the Dead and/or End of the Wicked - Purchase a copy of our book, *Life Only in Christ*. It has detailed Bible studies as well as detailed answers to objections. A study on spiritualism is also included.

Spirit of Prophecy - Order a copy of our book, *Prophet of the End*. It is the most complete book available on this vital topic. Very low price in boxful amounts.

See pages 2 and 383-384 for more information on these, and other, worthwhile books.

FREE BOOK PLAN—It would be a very good idea to give free books to Bible study interests at certain intervals in the lesson series. This not only provides encouragement to continue, but also provides the student with extremely worthwhile books. (**Do remember that *Prophet of the End* is a very important book** for introducing the Spirit of Prophecy. *Bible Readings* and *Great Controversy* are also very important.) (See pp. 260-362, for a guide to readings in our *Bible Readings* which correlate with these lessons.)

Here is a suggested plan for the possible sharing of free books at the completion of the following lessons:

Lesson 1 - <i>Steps to Christ</i> or <i>Shelter in the Storm</i>	Lesson 17 - <i>Great Controversy</i>
Lesson 5 - <i>Desire of Ages</i>	Lesson 23 - <i>Ministry of Healing</i>
Lesson 9 - <i>Patriarchs and Prophets</i>	Lesson 28 - <i>Prophet of the End</i>
Lesson 13 - <i>Beyond Pitcairn</i>	Lesson 31 - <i>Bible Readings</i>

What the Bible says about – God's Special Book

SCRIPTURE READING:
PSALM 119:6-9; 10:4-12

There is something fascinating about exploring the unknown. Because of this, men seek to uncover the secrets of the ocean floor, to search the deep recesses of caves, and to penetrate the densest jungle. As man searches out these secrets he unconsciously comes into contact with God, the Author of all creation. For this reason it is sometimes said that God has revealed Himself through the book of nature.

There is another book of God that is even more interesting to explore. That book is the Bible. Some of the great principles which it contains are commonly known; since they underlie our whole social structure, generally speaking, ignorance of many of its truths is appalling. In a test of high school students, 8 out of 9 could not name 3 prophets of the Old Testament and 10 out of 18 could not name 3 of Jesus' disciples. In a New York grammar school, 351 out of 1,373 had never heard of the Ten Commandments. In a university test, 7 percent could not name one book of the Old Testament. This lesson leads us into a preliminary exploration of our textbook. Here we learn only a few facts about the most wonderful book in the world, our Bible. As you study these lessons, each will unfold challenging secrets of the Word of God.

1 - WHAT ARE THE SCRIPTURES, AND WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THEM?

1. The Sacred Writings in the time of Christ included the writings of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms.

Luke 24:44-45—"These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures."

Jesus here points out the three divisions of the Old Testament and speaks of them as making up the Scriptures. The word, "Bible," means merely "the book" and is not found in the Bible. The 66 books in the Bible were written over a period of 1,500 years, by 35 to 40 different writers. These books are called the Word of God or the Scriptures. The word, "Scriptures," means "writings." Thus "Sacred Scriptures" means "Sacred Writings."

2. The writings of the apostles also were recognized as part of the Scriptures.

2 Peter 3:15-16—“Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.”

Peter here considers the apostle Paul’s writings as part of the Scriptures, and doubtless he felt the same about the writings of the other apostles. Much of the beauty and depth of divine truth is lost to those who read only the New Testament. Jesus and His disciples preached and quoted from the Old Testament entirely since they were the only Scriptures in their day. The references in the New Testament to the word, “Scriptures,” refer to the Old Testament. There is complete harmony between the Old and New Testaments. They are a unit, standing or falling together. The Old is the foundation for the New. There are more than 250 direct quotations from the Old Testament in the New Testament. Professor Milligan says that the book of Revelation is “absolutely steeped in the memories, incidents, thoughts, and language of the church’s past . . . It is a perfect mosaic of passages from the Old Testament.”

Another has likened the Bible to a Damascus blade made of woven wire which was heated, forged, and tempered in such a manner that the edges were irresistible. So the Old and New Testaments are interwoven, heated, and welded in the fire of divine inspiration until they come to us as “the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (*Ephesians 6:17*).

2 - HOW WERE THE SCRIPTURES GIVEN?

1. Although men did the writing, God was responsible for the inspiration and content of the Sacred Scriptures.

2 Timothy 3:16—“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.”

2. God used the Holy Spirit to convey His messages to His chosen men.

2 Peter 1:21—“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.”

Hastings wrote: “Here are words written by kings, emperors, princes, poets, sages, philosophers, by fishermen and statesmen, by men learned in the wisdom of Egypt, educated in the schools of Babylon, and trained at the feet of the rabbis in Jerusalem. It was written by men in exile, in the desert, in shepherds’ tents, in green pastures, and beside still waters. Among its authors we find the taxgatherer, the herdsman, the gath-

erer of sycamore fruit; we find poor men, rich men, statesmen, preachers, exiles, captains, legislators, judges, men of every grade and class . . . This wonderful volume . . . is in reality a library, filled with history, genealogy, ethnology, law, ethics, prophecy, poetry, eloquence, medicine, sanitary science, political economy, and perfect rules for the conduct of personal and social life. It contains all kinds of writing, but what a jumble it would be if 66 books were written in this way by ordinary men. Suppose, for instance, that we get 66 medical books written by 35 or 40 different doctors, bind them all together, and attempt to doctor a man according to the book. Or suppose you get 35 ministers to write a book on theology and then see if you find leather strong enough to hold the books together.”

Voltaire said the Bible is an exploded book. He has been dead more than 150 years. His theory was what exploded. Ingersoll said the Bible would not be read in ten years' time. He died many years ago. Today the Bible outsells any other one hundred books put together. The Bible is like a cube of granite. You may turn it as you please, and it is always right side up. It is like the Irishman's fence, three feet high and three feet thick.

3 - WHY WERE THE SCRIPTURES GIVEN?

1. A knowledge of the Scriptures is profitable for this life and the next.

2 Timothy 3:15-17—“From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (*Romans 15:4; John 17:17*).

Doctrine—The “doctrine” means “teaching,” “guide,” “rule.” The Scriptures can give us the rules for living the perfect life. Unless in our Christian living we stand for something, it is spineless and ineffective. The guides to right living given as doctrines in the Scriptures are basically spiritual and are as important to the Christian life as the skeleton is to the muscle, flesh, sinew, and organs of our own bodies.

Reproof—The Scriptures reprove us. This we can prove any day by reading them. They will say, “Thou art the man.”

Correction—Thank God, the Scriptures not only reprove, but tell us the correct way and lead us to the power able to help us. “The Word of God is quick, and powerful” (*Hebrews 4:12*). “Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee” (*Psalms 119:11*).

A young man newly come to the city was having a hard time. His companion said, “Let's stage a holdup. The world owes us a living somehow.” They started out. Suddenly the young man stopped. Like letters of

fire there flashed on his conscience the words, "Thou shalt not steal." He refused to go further. The words of God saved him from beginning a life of crime.

Instruction and Learning—One verse of Scripture is worth a whole book of man's words. "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (*Psalms 119:130*). "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord" (*Jeremiah 23:28*). Why take less when we may choose the wheat?

Comfort and Hope—It was in the mountains of the West. A man and his nephew had lost their way. Since they were strangers and had considerable money, they were somewhat fearful with the coming of night. They stopped at a rude cabin. As they prepared for bed they heard low mumbling words in the adjoining room, where they had left the family of husband, wife, and grown son. Presently there was movement of chairs and low mumbling again. Could some plot be on foot to rob and kill the visitors? The nephew crept to the door, and peered through the keyhole. He quickly stepped back and said, "Everything is all right." Why did he say that? He had seen this family kneeling in prayer. They had read from the Bible, pushed back their chairs, and knelt for prayer. The strangers felt perfectly safe and soon were peacefully sleeping.

2. Christ is revealed as the central figure in the Sacred Writings.

John 5:39—"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me."

Jesus was here telling the people of His day that though they were searching the Scriptures diligently in quest of eternal life, they had misunderstood the prophecies they had read about the Messiah and did not recognize the Giver of life, Jesus Christ Himself, who was even then standing among them.

4 - HOW CAN WE UNDERSTAND THE SCRIPTURES?

1. The Bereans of New Testament times were commended because they studied the Scriptures every day.

Acts 17:11—"These [the Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Studying every day and willingly receiving the truths brought to their minds by that study is the example of nobility left us by the Bereans (*Proverbs 2:1-7; Isaiah 28:10; John 7:17*).

2. We must receive the Spirit's guidance to understand the Scriptures rightly.

1 Corinthians 2:10, 12—“God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God . . . Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.”

The Spirit must teach us. “The world by wisdom knew not God” (*1 Corinthians 1:21*). It matters not how much man studies if he has not the Spirit of God to guide, for he will not learn God’s way. He will often reach wrong conclusions (*John 16:13; Proverbs 1:23*).

3. We may be assisted in our study of the Bible by good men whom Christ has called to teach His Word.

Matthew 28:19-20—“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

The gospel commission envisions the teaching of God’s truth by every believer, but we have been warned against false teachers and given a standard by which we may judge the teaching of every man. “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them” (*Isaiah 8:20*). The Bible, then, is the standard, and we may be guided in our study and understanding of it by the Holy Spirit.

5 - HOW MAY WE HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT TO GUIDE US?

1. In order to receive the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we must pray for His presence when we study the Bible.

Luke 11:13—“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?”

Ask for Him. Yes, we must pray for Him. No prayer, no Spirit to guide us.

2. To have the Spirit’s guidance, we must be willing to obey God.

Romans 8:14—“As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

Acts 5:32—“We are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him” (*John 7:17; Psalm 119:100*).

Are we willing to be led and to obey? At this point comes the real battle. Here is the struggle with stubborn wills and rebellious hearts. Many homes are unhappy because of argument over who is going to lead.

Man and wife are one, but sometimes they have a hard time deciding which is to lead. The human heart wants its own way. Nations want their own way. With God there is only one way. That is His way, and it is for our good. He will lead us if we will follow. But He will not drive us. "The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way" (*Psalms 25:9*). "I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts" (*Psalms 119:100*).

Some five hundred of us entered the opening into the world-famous Carlsbad Caverns, first explored by the now-famous cowboy Jim White, of Carlsbad, New Mexico. Down narrow stairs; through great hallways and mammoth rooms; into natural cathedrals with ceilings three hundred feet high, winding in and out among the giant stalagmite and stalactite formations, we made our way. We visited the fantastically beautiful King's Palace and the Queen's Chamber, the Hall of Giants, the Papoose's Chamber, and finally reached the lunchroom, seven hundred feet below the surface.

Then we visited the famous Rock of Ages. While we were seated before this giant formation, all lights were extinguished. There was not a sound. The darkness was black as Egypt's night. Though in the company of more than five hundred other human beings, one felt absolutely alone. It seemed as though in semiconsciousness one was entombed in the grave itself, with no possible means of extrication.

Suddenly from afar came the sound of music. It was the voice of a male quartet singing, "*Rock of Ages, cleft for me! let me hide myself in Thee . . . While I draw this fleeting breath, when mine eyes shall close in death . . . Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee.*"

The music ended. It was still as death and as dark as a thousand dungeons. Then yonder, in the distance, there was a faint glow of light. The radiance grew. Faces and forms became vaguely visible, and presently it was light again.

How glad we were that we had guides who knew the way, and who had lights for us. Following them and the lights, which were switched on as we proceeded, we made our way back, up and up; until, after six hours in the cave and seven miles of walking, we were above ground again.

Jesus Christ, the Bible, and the Spirit of God are the guides and lights for the Christian. How thrilling is the thought that the Bible is a letter from God that He has placed in our hands to lead us into a richer, happier life. If an earthly monarch wrote to you, his letter would be highly prized and would receive your most careful attention. Nothing can be more important than learning to know and follow the guiding light of the Word of God. In it may be found the answer to all baffling problems of life.

But you will discover that the Bible is even more than a textbook and guide. It is a living power that imparts new life to you. Here is a book that has wrought effectually in the lives of thousands, delivering from

evil habits, fortifying against temptations, inspiring to noble deeds and right living. Its vitalizing power is available to you.

In this lesson, you have merely studied a few facts about the Bible. As the course of this study continues, you will explore broad fields of Bible knowledge and make new discoveries of Bible truth. Your interest and enjoyment will progressively increase with each lesson.

Your next lesson is about Jesus: It is called "Ten Facts about Jesus," and is an important study. Have you ever wondered why He came to the earth and how He could live a sinless life? The Bible will answer these questions for you as you study the next lesson.

Brief Review Questions —

What are the "Scriptures"?

Are both the Old and New Testaments included in them?

How were the Scriptures given?

Why were the Scriptures given to us?

What is the best way to study the Scriptures?

What must we do in order to have the Holy Spirit to guide us in our study of the Scriptures?

**GOD'S SPECIAL BOOK: THE BIBLE
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

“The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. From the first intimation of hope in the sentence pronounced in Eden to that last glorious promise of the Revelation, ‘They shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads’ (Revelation 22:4), the burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme—man's uplifting—the power of God, ‘which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ’ (1 Corinthians 15:57). He who grasps this thought has before him an infinite field for study. He has the key that will unlock to him the whole treasure house of God's Word.

“The science of redemption is the science of all sciences; the science that is the study of the angels and of all the intelligences of the unfallen worlds; the science that engages the attention of our Lord and Saviour; the science that enters into the purpose brooded in the mind of the Infinite—‘kept secret since the world began’ (Romans 16:25); the science that will be the study of God's redeemed throughout endless ages. This is the highest study in which it is possible for man to engage. As no other study can, it will quicken the mind and uplift the soul . . .

“The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the Word of God. This Word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God.

“The life thus imparted is in like manner sustained. ‘By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God’ (Matthew 4:4) shall man live.

“The mind, the soul, is built up by that upon which it feeds; and it rests with us to determine upon what it shall be fed. It is within the power of everyone to choose the topics that shall occupy the thoughts and shape the character. Of every human being privileged with access to the Scriptures, God says, ‘I have written to him the great things of My law.’ ‘Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not’ (Hosea 8:12; Jeremiah 33:3).

“With the Word of God in his hands, every human being, wherever his lot in life may be cast, may have such companionship as he shall choose. In its pages he may hold converse with the noblest and best of the human race, and may listen to the voice of the Eternal as He speaks with men. As he studies and meditates upon the themes into which ‘the angels desire to look’ (1 Peter 1:12), he may have their companionship. He may follow the steps of the heavenly Teacher, and listen to His words as when He taught on mountain and plain and sea. He may dwell in this world in the atmosphere of heaven.”

—*Education, 125-127*

THE IMPORTANCE OF BIBLE STUDY

There was an old Scotchman who said of the Bible, "It is a good thing in a good place for a good purpose." It is a good thing to remember that the Bible in the head won't do. The Bible in the hand won't do. The Bible in the pocket won't do. The Bible on the shelf won't do. But the Bible, the Word of God, in the heart, accepted, through faith and full surrender, will bring a new life. He that hath the Word hath life, and "He that hath the Son hath life" (1 John 5:12).

John Wesley said: "I want to know one thing: the way to heaven, how to land on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end He came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book! O give me that book! At any price give me that book of God! Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be a man of the book."

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the Word of our God shall stand for ever." Isaiah 40:8. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Matthew 24:35. In those two verses, the voice of Jesus joins with Isaiah of old in asserting that the Word of God is forever. "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." 1 John 2:17.

A skeptic in London, in speaking of the Bible, said that it was quite impossible in these days to believe in any book whose authority was unknown. A Christian asked if the compiler of the multiplication table was known. "No!" he answered. "Then, of course, you do not believe in it." "Oh yes," was the skeptic's reply, "I believe in it because it works well." "So does the Bible," was the Christian's reply. The skeptic had no answer to that.

Martin Luther said, "I study my Bible as I gather apples. First, I shake the whole tree that the ripest might fall. Then I shake each limb; and when I have shaken each limb, I shake each branch and every twig. Then I look under every leaf."

It takes 70 hours and 40 minutes to read the Bible at pulpit rate. It takes 52 hours and 20 minutes to read the Old Testament. It takes 18 hours and 20 minutes to read the New Testament. In the Old Testament, the Psalms take the longest to read: 4 hours and 28 minutes. In the New Testament, the Gospel of Luke: 2 hours and 43 minutes.

The seven wonders of the Word: The wonder of its formation—the way in which it grew is one of the mysteries of time. The wonder of its unification—a library of 66 books, yet one book in total unity of truth. The wonder of its age—the most ancient of all books. The wonder of its sale—the best seller of all time and of all books. The wonder of its interest—the only book in the world read by all classes of people. The wonder of its language—written largely by uneducated men, yet the best book from a literary and scientific standpoint. The wonder of its preservation—the most hated of all books, yet it continues to exist.

Old Testament books: 39. New Testament books: 27. Total number of books: 66. Old Testament chapters: 929. New Testament chapters: 260. Total number of chapters: 1,189. Old Testament verses: 33,214. New Testament verses: 7,959. Total number of verses: 41,173. Old Testament words: 593,393. New Testament words: 181,253. Total number of words: 774,646. Old Testament letters: 2,738,100. New Testament letters: 838,380. Total number of letters: 3,576,480.

The shortest chapter is Psalm 117. Ezra 7:21 contains all the letters of the alphabet except "f" and "j." Esther 8:9 is the longest verse. John 11:35 is the shortest verse. No word has more than six syllables.

Over 150 years ago, Sir William Ramsey went to the Near East, to prove that the history given in the Bible was inaccurate. His professors had told him the Book could not be right. Ramsey began to dig in the ancient ruins. To his amazement, he found that the Old and New Testament Scriptures were accurate to the tiniest detail. So convincing was the evidence that Ramsey became a Christian.

Dr. J. O. Kinnaman said: "Of the hundreds of thousands of artifacts found by the archaeologists, not one has ever been discovered that contradicts or denies one word, phrase, clause, or sentence of the Bible; but that always confirms and verifies the facts of the Biblical record."

George Washington said: "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible." John Quincy Adams said: "So great is my veneration of the Bible, that the earlier my children begin to read it the more confident will be my hope that they will prove useful citizens of their country and respectable members of society." Andrew Jackson said: "That Book, sir, is the rock on which our republic rests." Abraham Lincoln said: "I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from the Saviour of the world is communicated to us through this Book." Woodrow Wilson said: "I ask every man and woman in this audience that from this day on they will realize that part of the destiny of America lies in their daily reading of this great Book."

Martin Luther warned: "I am afraid the universities will prove to be the great gates to hell, unless they diligently labor to explain the holy Scriptures and engrave them upon the hearts of youths. I advise no one to place his child where the Scriptures do not reign paramount. Every institution where men are not unceasingly occupied with the Word of God must become corrupt." "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word." Psalm 119:9.

"For ever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven." Psalm 119:89. Long ago God gave ten rules: the Ten Commandments. They are spiritually and morally changeless and their keeping is obligatory for the children of God from generation to generation. Isaac Watts said: "I believe God's promises so surely that I stake my eternal destiny on them!" The Bible says: "He is faithful that promised." Hebrews 10:23.

BIBLE BASICS—These two-page reviews, at the end of each lesson, will help you grasp the basics of these studies. Looking up each of these verses in your own Bible will strengthen your use of God’s Word. As you do so, underline each verse in your Bible, using the marking code given at the top-right of each Review page. For example, in the margin by the first verse (Luke 24:44-45), you will write “B-1.”

God’s Special Book

1 - WHAT ARE THE SCRIPTURES, AND WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THEM?

1. The Sacred Writings in the time of Christ included the writings of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms.

Luke 24:44-45—“These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be _____, which were _____ in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.”

2. The writings of the apostles also were recognized as part of the Scriptures.

2 Peter 3:15-16—“Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, _____ in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.”

2 - HOW WERE THE SCRIPTURES GIVEN?

1. God used the Holy Spirit to convey His messages to His chosen men.

2 Peter 1:21—“The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but _____ men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

2. Although men did the writing, God was responsible for the inspiration and content of the Sacred Scriptures.

2 Timothy 3:16—“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.”

3 - WHY WERE THE SCRIPTURES GIVEN?

1. A knowledge of the Scriptures is profitable for this life and the next.

2 Timothy 3:15-17—“From a child thou hast known the Holy

Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto _____ through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (*Romans 15:4; John 17:17*).

2. Christ is revealed as the central figure in the Sacred Writings.

John 5:39—"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have _____ life: and they are they which testify of Me."

4 - HOW CAN WE UNDERSTAND THE SCRIPTURES?

1. The Bereans of New Testament times were commended because they studied the Scriptures every day.

Acts 17:11—"These [the Bereans] were more _____ than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

2. We must receive the Spirit's guidance to understand the Scriptures rightly.

1 Corinthians 2:10, 12—"God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God . . . Now we have received, not the spirit of the _____, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are _____ given to us of God" (*also Matthew 28:19-20*).

5 - HOW MAY WE HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT TO GUIDE US?

1. In order to receive the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we must pray for His presence when we study the Bible.

Luke 11:13—"If ye then, being evil, know how to give _____ gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

2. To have the Spirit's guidance, we must be willing to obey God.

Romans 8:14—"As _____ as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Acts 5:32—"We are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath _____ to them that obey Him."

What the Bible says about – Ten Facts about Jesus

SCRIPTURE READING:

JOHN 1:1-14

COLOSSIANS 1:12-22

HEBREWS 1:1-14

1 - WAS JESUS THE SON OF GOD?

Matthew 16:13-14—“Jesus . . . asked His disciples, “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.”

You see, the people were willing to believe that Jesus was some prophet raised from the dead or Elijah returned from heaven or just anyone except the Son of God, the Saviour of men. But notice what Jesus said concerning His relationship to God:

John 3:16—“God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

It is related that a lawyer once told a judge he had a number of reasons why his client was not present in court. The first was that he was dead. The judge told him he need not state the others, because his first reason was sufficient. The evidence of the sonship of Christ could be set forth under seven headings, and proof for any one of these would be sufficient to settle the question:

1. The testimony of the prophets
2. Jesus' power to heal the sick and raise the dead
3. His peerless teaching
4. His own resurrection
5. The testimony of His friends
6. The admission of His enemies
7. The lives transformed by His power

We cannot here give further consideration to these evidences, except to say that God testified, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (*Matthew 3:17*).

Thus it is clear that the Scriptures teach that Jesus is the Son of God.

2 - WHAT WAS THE RELATIONSHIP OF JESUS TO GOD?

John 10:30—"I and My Father are one," said Christ.

John 1:1, 14—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," the Apostle John declares (*Hebrews 1:8; Isaiah 9:6*).

People frequently ask, How can God and Christ be one? A simple answer is that they are one in purpose and in planning, one in love and action, in mind and character; yet each is a distinct personality.

We need have no anxiety over the Godship of Jesus Christ. God shares His throne with the Son. God has given to all morally responsible beings some authority and dominion. He gave dominion to Adam and He gives great responsibility to the angels, but none occupies the place of the Son. "Let all the angels of God worship Him" (*Hebrews 1:6*).

God, the Father, always holds His proper place.

1 Corinthians 15:28—"When all things shall be subdued unto Him [Christ], then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him [the Father] that put all things under Him [Christ], that God may be all in all."

The Scriptures make plain that Christ is one with God and is called God.

3 - DID CHRIST LIVE BEFORE COMING TO THIS WORLD?

John 17:5—"Now, O Father, glorify thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."

Micah 5:2—"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler of in Israel; Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

The pre-existence of Christ is a doctrine that was most definitely taught by Jesus and mentioned by Him in His last prayer before Gethsemane. "I came down from heaven," He said in *John 6:38*.

"From the days of eternity," said one writer, "the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was 'the image of His greatness and majesty, 'the outshining of His glory.' It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world."

According to the Scriptures, Christ existed with God before the creation of the world.

4 - WHAT PART DID CHRIST HAVE IN THE WORK OF CREATION?

Hebrews 1:1-2—“God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds” (*Ephesians 3:9*).

John said:

John 1:1-3—“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.”

This “Word” who created all things, was Christ, as verse 10 clearly shows. This mighty Creator is our Saviour. And He has power to create a new life in us. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [or creation]” (*2 Corinthians 5:17*).

The Bible record indicates that Christ cooperated with God, the Father, in the work of creation.

5 - IN WHAT WAY WAS THE BIRTH OF JESUS SUPERNATURAL?

Isaiah 7:14—“Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”

Matthew 1:18, 22-23—“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost . . . Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son.”

This is known as the incarnation. Christ was not a new being, but He appeared in human form. “The Word was made flesh” (*John 1:14*). “Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (*Philippians 2:6-7*). “They shall call His name Emmanuel . . . God with us” (*Matthew 1:23*).

So, you see, the Scriptures teach that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born in the flesh of a virgin.

6 - WHAT EXAMPLE DID JESUS SET FOR US IN HIS STRUGGLE WITH TEMPTATION?

1 Peter 2:21-22—“Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.”

John 15:10—“I have kept My Father’s commandments.”

Hebrews 4:15—“[Jesus] was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without *sin*.”

Because the Son of God lived a sinless life in the flesh, He accomplished five things:

(1) He demonstrated that, by the indwelling power of God, the law of God could be kept by converted man; (2) His righteous life in the flesh is now available to cover man's past sins; (3) He is able to sympathize with man in his struggle against sin; (4) He has successfully revealed God to man; (5) He is in a position to impart overcoming power to all who are tempted.

Here are Paul's words:

Romans 8:3-4—“What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

So the Son of God overcame in the flesh, demonstrating that God's law can be kept, and He is ready to dwell in us by His Spirit and fulfill His will in us. As we yield to the Spirit, we receive power to obey God (*Romans 8:6-9*).

The Scriptures declare that Jesus overcame temptation and lived a sinless life.

7- WHAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY THE DEATH OF JESUS?

Romans 5:8—“God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

A stranger was seen reading names on tombstones in a Civil War cemetery. He stopped before a forsaken grave, removed his hat, and stood a long time gazing silently. Finally he took out his pocketknife, whittled a small board to a sharp point, and cut something on the face of it. Down on his knees, he placed the sharp end of the board at the head of the grave and, bearing down his weight on the other end, he forced it solidly into the ground. Again he quietly gazed downward. Brushing the tears from his eyes and face, he rose, slowly turned, placed his hat upon his head; and, with reverent steps, he moved quietly away.

On the small board he had cut the words, “He died for me.” In war days of years gone by, that stranger—a man with wife and children—had been called to the army. When he was just ready to leave, a young man came to him and pleaded that he might go in his stead, so that the wife and children might be spared their loved ones and their provider. The man finally yielded. The fortunes of war were cruel. The young man was killed. So, years later, the stranger came and stood by the grave; something kept saying, deep down inside, he died for you—he died for you.” And so he

did. And so did Jesus die for us.

Matthew 26:27-28—"He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of It; for this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission [forgiveness] of sins."

One writer has said that "Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves . . . He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. 'With His stripes we are healed.' "

You see, since the holy law of God is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. That someone was Jesus, wonderful Jesus.

The human mind may never fully fathom the science, philosophy, or theology of the atonement, but we can accept it; and all who will accept the sacrifice of Calvary will have the joy of a changed heart.

The Bible very plainly teaches that Jesus died to make possible the forgiveness of our sins.

8 - WHY IS THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS SO IMPORTANT TO US?

Revelation 1:17-18—"I am the first and the last; I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Romans 5:10—"If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (*1 John 5:12*).

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is a doctrine that distinguishes Christianity from all other world religions. Buddha, Confucius, Moham-med, and the founders of other religious movements are dead. Jesus alone points to an empty tomb as evidence of divine power and of conquest over death. No fact connected with the life of Christ is so firmly supported as the fact of the resurrection.

A group of infidels in England, during the eighteenth century, became convinced that all efforts to overthrow the Christian religion would fail as long as people generally believed in the resurrection of Christ and in the conversion of the Apostle Paul. One of their number, Dr. Gilbert West, a brilliant lawyer, was asked to publish a tract upon the alleged resurrection of Christ while another, Lord Lyttelton, was to write a pamphlet exposing the conversion of Paul as a myth. Sometime later these two men met. West inquired of Lyttelton whether he had completed his assignment. Lyttelton replied in the affirmative; but he stated that, in examining the evidence, he had himself become convinced of the conversion of Paul and was writing to support it. Then Lyttelton asked if West had finished his work on the resurrection. In reply, West con-

fessed to a similar experience. In weighing all the facts, according to the recognized laws of legal evidence, Dr. West became satisfied that Jesus Christ really rose from the dead. The result was his celebrated book, *Observations on the History and Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*.

Paul goes so far as to say:

1 Corinthians 15:17-18—“If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.”

The resurrected Christ is a living Christ. It is only the power of the living Christ, the power of the resurrection, that can change the life of man and save him. Paul sought to know the power of His resurrection as a daily experience, that he might at last be raised in the resurrection of the dead (*Philippians 3:10-11*). The resurrection of Christ is thus a sample and pledge of ours. “Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming” (*1 Corinthians 15:23*).

The Scriptures teach that Jesus rose a victor over death, to save us by His life and to assure us of our resurrection from the grave.

9 - WHERE IS JESUS NOW AND WHAT IS HE DOING?

Forty days after the resurrection Jesus ascended to heaven and His disciples were left behind. Here is a vivid picture of the scene:

Acts 1:9-11—“While they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.”

Christ ascended to heaven, to become our mediator and high priest. Said Paul:

1 Timothy 2:5—“There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (*Hebrews 8:1; 7:25*).

We need a representative in heaven who understands our problems. Jesus does. “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities” (*Hebrews 4:15*).

Hebrews 2:17—He was “made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful . . . high priest.”

We may come in reverent boldness to the throne of mercy, grace, and power (*Hebrews 4:16*).

According to the Bible, Jesus ascended to heaven and is now mediating in our behalf.

10 - WILL JESUS COME AGAIN?

John 14:2-3—“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (*Revelation 19:11-16*).

Hebrews 9:28—“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

The second coming of Christ is the climax of the gospel. It is the time of reward. Without it the cross loses its meaning. The cross is the seed sowing of God’s love, the second coming is the harvesttime. It is the homecoming of God’s people.

The Scriptures testify that Jesus will come again. Let us be ready to meet Him.

THE CONVERSION OF AN INFIDEL

The following testimony of an unbelieving man who finally yielded to the claims of Christ will stir your heart:

“I was reared an infidel . . . I was nourished on the vaunting skeptics of the ages. But I observed with futile amazement with which every skeptic, from Celsus to Wells, stood around the cradle of the Christ. I wondered why this helpless Babe was thrust into the world at a time when Roman greed, Jewish hate, and Greek subtlety would combine to crush Him. And yet this most powerful devastating combination ever known in history served only to advance the cause of the Infant who was born in a stable.

“I marveled that this poverty-stricken uneducated plebeian who exercised no authority, commanded no army, held no office, received no honors, wrote no books, and who died in early manhood the most contemptible of deaths, a malefactor on a cross between two criminals—I marveled that His name is yet the most esteemed name on earth, even among the skeptics themselves.

“No unbeliever could tell me why His words are as charged with power today as they were nineteen hundred years ago. Nor could scoffers explain how those pierced hands pulled human monsters with gnarled souls out of a hell of iniquity and overnight transformed them into steadfast, glorious heroes who died in tortures.

“No doubter could tell me how this isolated Jew could utter words so simple that a child could understand them and so deep that the greatest thinkers cannot plumb their shining depths. The life, the words, the character of this strange Man are the enigma of history. Any natural explanation makes Him a more puzzling paradox, a fathomless mystery.

“But I learned that the paradox was plain and the mystery solved when I accepted Him for what He claimed to be—the Son of God, come from heaven and Saviour of men, but above all, my own Saviour.”

This testimony, by a man who learned to know Jesus, appears in a remarkable little book written by Earle Albert Rowell, himself a converted infidel. The book gives an account of Mr. Rowell’s experiences in speaking to large gatherings of skeptics, agnostics, and infidels throughout North America.

The next lesson is about an amazing Bible prophecy. It is called “Daniel Two.”

Brief Review Questions —

Was Jesus the Son of God?

Did Christ live before coming to this world?

Did the Father and the Son share in the work of Creation?

What is meant by the word, “Incarnation”?

How was Jesus our example, while on earth?

Why did Christ have to die?

Why is His resurrection so important?

What is Jesus doing now?

Is Jesus coming back for His people?

PROPHECIES ABOUT CHRIST

Read and believe: Predicted centuries before His birth, Jesus came and fulfilled hundreds of predictions. Here are a few of the prophecies. Yes, read and believe: Jesus is your Saviour, your Lord and your God. He is your hope for this life and for the life to come.

THE SEED OF THE WOMAN—Gen 3:15; Gal 4:4; 1 Tim 2:15; Rev 12:5. **BORN OF A VIRGIN**—Psalms 22:10; 86:16; 116:16; Isa 7:14; 49:1; Jer 31:22; Micah 5:3; Matt 1:23; Luke 1:26-35. **OF THE FAMILY OF SHEM**—Gen 9:26. **OF THE RACE OF THE HEBREWS**—John 4:9; 18:35. **OF THE SEED OF ABRAHAM**—Gen 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; Matt 1:1; John 8:58; Acts 3:25; Heb 2:16. **OF THE LINE OF ISAAC**—Gen 17:19; 21:12; 26:4; Rom 9:7; Gal 4:23-28; Heb 11:18. **OF JACOB (ISRAEL)**—Gen 28:4-14; Ex 4:22; Num 24:7-17; Psalm 135:4, etc.; Isa 41:8; 49:6; Jer 14:8; Luke 1:68; 2:32; Acts 28:20. **OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH**—Gen 49:10; 1 Chron 5:2; Micah 5:2; Matt 2:6; Heb 7:14; Rev 5:5. **OF THE HOUSE OF DAVID**—2 Sam 7:12-15; 1 Chron 17:11-14; 2 Chron 6:42; Psalms 89:4, 36; 132:10-17; Isa 9:7; 11:1; 55:3-4; Jer 23:5-6; Amos 9:11; Matt 1:1; Luke 1:69; 2:4; John 7:42; Acts 2:29-30; 13:23; Rom 1:3; 2 Tim 2:8; Rev 22:16. **BORN AT BETHLEHEM, THE CITY OF DAVID**—Micah 5:2; Matt 2:6; Luke 2:4; John 7:42. **HIS SUFFERINGS**—Gen 3:15; Psalms 22:1-18; 31:13; 89:38-45; Isa 53:1-12; Dan 9:26; Zech 13:6-7; Matt 26:31; Luke 24:26; John 1:29; 26:23. **HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS**—Num 21:9; Psalms 16:10; 22:16; 31:22; Isa 53:8-9; Dan 9:26; Matt 20:19; 26:2; John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32-33; 1 Cor 15:3; Col 2:14; Phil 2:8. **HIS ENTOMBMENT AND EMBALMMENT**—Isa 53:9; Matt 26:12; Mark 14:8; John 12:7; 19:40; 1 Cor 15:4. **HIS RESURRECTION ON THE THIRD DAY**—Psalms 16:10; 17:15; 49:15; 73:24; John 1:17; Matt 12:40; 16:4; 27:63; John 2:19; Acts 2:27-31; 13:35; 1 Cor 15:4. **HIS ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN**—Psalms 8:5-6; 47:5; 68:18; 110:1; Acts 1:9; 2:33; John 20:17; Eph 4:8-10; Heb 1:3; 2:9; Rev 12:5. **HIS SECOND ADVENT**—Isa 40:10; 62:11; Jer 23:5-6; Psalm 50:1-6; Job 19:25-29; Matt 24:3-30; 25:31-34; 26:64; John 5:25, 28-30; Acts 17:31; 24:25; Heb 9:28; Rev 14:14; 19:11-17.

PROPHECIES ABOUT CHRIST

THE SON OF GOD—2 Sam 7:14; 1 Chron 17:13; Psalms 2:7; 72:1; Prov 30:4; Dan 3:25; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:35; Matt 3:17; 17:5; John 1:34-50; 3:16-18; 20:31; Heb 1:1-5; Rom 1:4; 1 John 4:14-15; Rev 1:5-6. **THE SON OF MAN**—Psalm 8:4-5; Dan 7:13; John 1:51; 3:13; 5:17; Matt 16:13-16; 26:63; Heb 2:7; Rev 1:13; 14:14. **THE HOLY ONE**—Deut 33:8; Psalms 16:10; 89:19; Isa 10:17; 29:23; 49:7; Hos 11:9; Hab 1:12; 3:3; Mark 1:24; Luke 1:35; 4:34; 1 John 2:20. **THE RIGHTEOUS ONE**—Isaiah 41:2; Jer 23:5; Zech 9:9; Psalm 34:19, 21; Luke 1:17; Matt 27:19-24; Luke 23:47; Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14; 1 John 2:1, 29; James 5:6. **THE WISDOM OF GOD**—Prov 8:22-30; Matt 11:19; Luke 11:49; 1 Cor 1:24. **THE WORD OF GOD**—Gen 15:1-4; 1 Sam 3:1-21; 2 Sam 7:4, 1 Kings 17:8-24; Psalm 33:6; Isa 40:8; Jer 25:3; Micah 4:2; John 1:1-14; 3:34; Luke 1:2; Heb 4:12; 11:3; 1 Pet 1:23; 2 Pet 3:5; Rev 19:13. **THE REDEEMER OR SAVIOUR**—Gen 48:16; Job 19:25-27; Psalm 19:14; Isa 41:14; 44:6; 47:4; 59:20; 62:11; 63:1; Jer 50:34; Matt 1:21; Luke 2:11; John 1:29; Acts 5:31; Rom 11:26; Rev 5:9. **THE LAMB OF GOD**—Gen 22:8; Isa 53:7; John 1:29; Acts 8:32-35; 1 Pet 1:19; Rev 5:6; 13:8; 15:3; 21:22; 22:1. **THE MEDIATOR, INTERCESSOR AND ADVOCATE**—Job 33:23; Isa 53:12; 59:16; Luke 23:34; 1 Tim 2:5; Heb 9:15; 1 John 2:1; Rev 5:9. **SHILOH, THE APOSTLE**—Gen 49:10; Ex 4:13; Matt 15:24; Luke 4:18; John 9:7; 17:3; 20:21; Heb 3:1. **THE HIGH PRIEST**—Psalm 110:4; Isa 59:16; Heb 3:1; 4:14; 5:10; 9:11. **THE PROPHET LIKE MOSES**—Deut 18:15-19; Mark 6:15; Luke 24:19; John 1:17-21; 6:14; Acts 3:22-23. **THE LEADER OR CHIEF CAPTAIN**—Josh 5:14; 1 Chron 5:2; Isa 55:4; Micah 5:2; Dan 9:25; Matt 2:6; Heb 2:10. **THE MESSIAH, CHRIST, KING OF ISRAEL**—1 Sam 2:10; 2 Sam 7:12; Psalms 2:2, 6; 45:1, 6; 72:1; 89:38; Isa 61:1; Dan 9:26; Matt 2:2-4; 16:16; Luke 23:2; John 1:41-49; 6:69; Acts 4:26-27; 10:38. **THE GOD OF ISRAEL**—Ex 24:10-11; Judges 11:23; 1 Sam 5:11; 1 Chron 17:24; Psalm 41:13; Isa 45:3; Ezek 8:4; Matt 15:31; 22:37; John 20:38. **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS**—Psalms 89:27; 110:1; Dan 7:13-14; Matt 28:18; John 3:35; 13:3; 1 Cor 15:25; Eph 1:20-22; Col 3:1; Rev 19:16.

Ten Facts about Jesus

1 - WAS JESUS THE SON OF GOD?

John 3:16—“God so loved the world, that He _____ His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

2 - WHAT WAS THE RELATIONSHIP OF JESUS TO GOD?

John 10:30—“I and My Father are one.”

John 1:1, 14—“In the beginning was the _____, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (*Hebrews 1:8; Isaiah 9:6*).

1 Corinthians 15:28—“When all things shall be subdued unto Him [Christ], then shall the _____ also Himself be subject unto Him [the Father] that put all things under Him [Christ], that God may be all in all.”

3 - DID CHRIST LIVE BEFORE COMING TO THIS WORLD?

John 17:5—“Now, O Father, glorify thou Me with Thine _____ self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was” (also *Micah 5:2*).

4 - WHAT PART DID CHRIST HAVE IN THE WORK OF CREATION?

Hebrews 1:1-2—“God . . . hath in these last days _____ unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds” (also *John 1:1-3*).

5 - IN WHAT WAY WAS THE BIRTH OF JESUS SUPERNATURAL?

Isaiah 7:14—“Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a _____, and shall call His name Immanuel” (*Matthew 1:18, 22-23*).

6 - WHAT EXAMPLE DID JESUS SET FOR US IN HIS STRUGGLE WITH TEMPTATION?

1 Peter 2:21-22—“Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: who did no _____, neither was guile found in His mouth.”

John 15:10—“I have kept My Father’s commandments.”

Hebrews 4:15—"[Jesus] was in all points _____ like as we are, yet without *sin*" (also *Romans 8:3-4*).

7- WHAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY THE DEATH OF JESUS?

Romans 5:8—"God commendeth His love _____ us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (*Matthew 26:27-28*).

8 - WHY IS THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS SO IMPORTANT TO US?

Romans 5:10—"If, when we were enemies, we _____ reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (*1 John 5:12*).

Revelation 1:17-18—"I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was _____; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

1 Corinthians 15:17-18—"If Christ be not _____, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

9 - WHERE IS JESUS NOW AND WHAT IS HE DOING?

Acts 1:9-11—"While they beheld, He was _____ up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same _____, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

1 Timothy 2:5—"There is one God, and one _____ between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (also *Hebrews 2:17; 8:1; 7:25*).

10 - WILL JESUS COME AGAIN?

John 14:2-3—"In my Father's house are many _____: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (also *Hebrews 9:28; Revelation 19:11-16*).

Hebrews 9:28—"So Christ was once offered to _____ the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

What the Bible says about –

Daniel Two

SCRIPTURE READING: DANIEL 2

Nebuchadnezzar, ruler of the Babylonian Empire, was one of the greatest of ancient kings. During his reign, he extended the boundaries of Babylon to include much of the territory we know today as the Middle East and Egypt. In the course of his conquests, many smaller countries fell. Members of the royal families of these subdued nations were made captives at the Babylonian court. Thus we find Daniel and his friends, princes from Palestine, land of the Hebrews, captive in Babylon at the time when God gave King Nebuchadnezzar the remarkable dream recorded here. Because of Daniel's faithfulness, God used him to interpret the dream. Let us turn now to the details of the prophecy.

1 - WHO ALONE KNOWS THE SECRETS OF THE FUTURE?

Isaiah 46:9-10—“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.”

When the Babylonian king was perplexed about the future of his kingdom and the meaning of his dream, Daniel encouraged him with these words:

Daniel 2:28—“There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.”

During the first world war, the Prince of Wales visited a hospital filled with hundreds of war-mangled men. As the prince walked slowly from bed to bed a stabbing cry quieted the faint rumble of conversation. “O God! Is there a God?” The probing question came from a youth lying upon a bed. He had eyes, but they did not see. He was blind. His chest was deep, his shoulders broad, but his sleeves dangled limp and empty on the pillows. He had no arms. He had a powerful form; but, from his trunk to the foot of the bed, the covers lay perfectly flat upon the mattress. He had no legs, no sight, no arms! This youth was destined to a life of unutterable anguish unless he had faith in God; and, from his aching heart, burst the bitter words, “Is there a God?” The Prince of

Wales, his heart filled with pity, stooping over, kissed the youth upon his forehead.

Is there a God? A young Hebrew prince spoke for God before the mighty Nebuchadnezzar some 2,500 years ago. Down the long corridor of time his words of faith come echoing back to us: "There is a God in heaven." However gloomy the day, dark the night, or rough the way, remember, "There is a God in heaven." And He knows the future and reveals it to men.

**2 - WHY WAS THE DREAM
GIVEN TO NEBUCHADNEZZAR?**

Daniel 2:28—"There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."

Daniel 2:29—"He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass" (*verse 45*).

**3 - WHAT PART DOES GOD PLAY
IN THE AFFAIRS OF NATIONS?**

Daniel 2:20-21—"Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are His: and He changeth the times and the seasons: He removeth kings, and setteth up kings: He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding."

The God of the universe presented to Nebuchadnezzar a picture of events to come in order to show him that a power greater than himself was at work in the world. This fact is still true today. Indeed, all rulers are subject to God's decrees.

One writer has said: "The power exercised by every ruler on earth is Heaven imparted; and, upon his use of the power thus bestowed, his success depends. To each the word of the divine Watcher is, 'I girded thee, though thou hast not known Me . . . Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.'" The divine Watcher said to Nebuchadnezzar, "That the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will" (*Daniel 4:17*).

The great image which King Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, which Daniel then interpreted, is pictured on the preceding page. The stone, cut out without hands, will strike the image on its feet.

BABYLON — 605 B.C. - 538 B.C.

PERSIA — 538 B.C. - 331 B.C.

GREECE — 331 B.C. -168 B.C.

ROME — 168 B.C. - A.D. 476

DIVIDED — A.D. 476 - NOW

4 - HOW DID DANIEL DESCRIBE NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM?

Daniel 2:31—“Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible” (*verses 31-35*).

This great image of a man, made of metal and clay with the great stone striking the feet, represented the rise and fall of empires from Nebuchadnezzar's day down through the centuries of the past to our own day and on into the future. Let us trace the scenes in this vivid prophetic picture.

5 - WHAT KINGDOM WAS REPRESENTED BY THE HEAD OF GOLD?

Daniel 2:37-38—“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom . . . Thou art this head of gold.”

The head of gold was a symbol of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, Babylon. He was the "head of gold."

God had spoken of Babylon as a golden city a hundred years before (*Isaiah 14:4*).

Through Jeremiah, a prophet contemporary with Daniel, God spoke of the nation as a golden cup (*Jeremiah 51:7*). Historians refer to Babylon as the "Golden City of a Golden Age." Nebuchadnezzar could not but be impressed (and not a little pleased) with the fitness of the symbol, "head of gold."

6 - HOW WERE THE WORLD EMPIRES FOLLOWING BABYLON REPRESENTED?

Daniel 2:39-41—"After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron . . . And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided."

Each of the four empires of this prophecy was to fall and be succeeded by another ruling power. The head of gold represented Babylon; the breast and arms of silver, Persia; the thighs of brass, Greece; and the legs of iron, Rome. Let us take a quick glance at each of the passing empires.

1. The gold kingdom of Babylon.

Babylon was the first of what history knows as the Four Great Monarchies: Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome.

By contact with the Hebrew nation, Babylon had opportunity to become familiar with the Word of God and His will as revealed in it. Then as now, God was "not willing that any should perish," but that all should have eternal life. Jeremiah says, "We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed" (*Jeremiah 51:9*). As a nation, Babylon turned away from God. Because of this, all through succeeding Scriptures the term, "Babylon," is used in a symbolic way to refer to those who willfully turn away from God.

In Chapter five of the book of Daniel, the account of the fall of Babylon is given. A century before this, the man, Cyrus, leader of the Medes and Persians, was pointed out as the one who would overthrow Babylon. This he did in 538 B.C. After establishing his government, he put in action the legal processes that freed the Jews and led to the rebuilding of Jerusalem (*Isaiah 45*).

2. The silver kingdom of Persia.

Silver was a fitting symbol of Persia; for it was used by the Persians as a medium of exchange and in decorations, even more than the gold of the Babylonians. See Cambridge Ancient History on "Persia."

Persia, like Babylon, turned aside from the worship of the true God. The wickedness of their later leaders undermined their strength and led to their decisive defeat by Alexander the Great at Arbela in 331 B.C. The reins of power thus passed into the hands of the rising empire of the Greeks.

3. The brass kingdom of Greece.

The brazen armor and brass breastplates worn by the Grecian soldiers are reflected in the brass thighs of the image.

Again another great nation had opportunity to know its Creator as a Saviour; but, like the nations before it, Grecia turned away to the false philosophies of its own devising. After the death of Alexander the Great, the nation began to lose its power and unity. The growing strength of the Romans finally became too great for the Greeks who, formerly, had so nobly defended themselves at Thermopylae and Salamis. The defeat in Macedonia, at Pydna in 168 B.C. was the first of many, until the entire territory in the Middle East, formerly held by the Greeks, was under the iron monarchy of Rome.

4. The iron monarchy of Rome.

The iron monarchy of Rome broke in pieces, bruised, and subdued kingdoms for nearly six hundred years. Jesus was born in this era and was crucified under Rome's authority.

Hippolytus, a great theologian who died about A.D. 236, wrote, referring to Rome: "Rejoice, blessed Daniel! thou hast not been in error . . . Already the iron rules." Gibbon wrote: "The arms of the republic, always victorious in war, advanced and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome" (*The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. 3, p. 365).

7 - WHAT PICTURE IS GIVEN OF THE DIVISION OF ROME?

Daniel 2:43—"Whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

Barbarian invasions divided the territory of Western Rome. These divisions—ten in number, represented by the feet and toes of iron and clay—formed the foundations of the many nations that are now located in Europe. For instance, some of the territory once conquered by the Franks is now France, territory taken by the Alamanni is now Germany, etc. The efforts of rulers such as Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm, and Hitler who attempted to unite these European nations under one head have all failed. The prophecy indicates that these countries will never be permanently united—"They shall not cleave one to another."

8 - HOW DOES GOD PICTURE THE FINAL CRISIS OF THE NATIONS?

Daniel 2:34-35—“Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them.”

9 - WHAT GREAT KINGDOM IS REPRESENTED BY THE STONE THAT STRUCK THE IMAGE?

Daniel 2:44—“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.”

Daniel 2:35—“The stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”

10 - WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

The kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome have passed from the scene of action. We are now living in the last division, represented by the feet and toes of the image. The course of history is almost run. The next act, according to the prophecy, will be the coming of Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords.

“Down in the feet of iron and of clay, weak and divided, soon to pass away. What will the next great, glorious drama be? Christ and His coming, and eternity!”

Consideration of this prophecy brings us face to face with the most vital issue of our lives. Are we ready to enter Christ’s everlasting kingdom and prepared to meet Jesus Christ, the coming King? There is nothing more important to us than to make sure of that eternal home in Christ’s kingdom. Every person may have the assurance that he will be part of that kingdom if he cares to be. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” Surrender your heart and life to the Saviour and let Him live in you a life of obedience.

You will recall the account of the thief on the cross who, when he was face to face with death, turned to Jesus and said, “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.”

That very moment Jesus assured the penitent thief of a place in His coming kingdom. God can do that for you and me today!

The next lesson is very important; it is called: “The Plan of Salvation.”

Brief Review Questions —

Who is the only one who can know the future?

Who is more powerful than all the nations of earth?

In the vision of the great image, what was the first, or gold, kingdom?

What was the second, or silver, kingdom?

What was the third, or brass, kingdom?

What was the fourth, or iron, kingdom?

What is the meaning of the feet and toes?

What is the meaning of the great Stone?

Where are we today?

What is just ahead of us?

DANIEL TWO**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

"In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as if dependent on the will and prowess of man; the shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the Word of God the curtain is drawn aside and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counterplay of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will . . .

"God has made plain that whosoever will, may come 'into the bond of the covenant' (Ezekiel 20:37). In the creation it was His purpose that the earth should be inhabited by beings whose existence would be a blessing to themselves and to one another, and an honor to their Creator. All who will may identify themselves with this purpose. Of them it is spoken, 'This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise' (Isaiah 43:21).

"In His law God has made known the principles that underlie all true prosperity, both of nations and of individuals. To the Israelites Moses declared of this law: "This is your wisdom and your understanding." "It is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life." Deuteronomy 4:6; 32:47. The blessings thus assured to Israel are, on the same conditions and in the same degree, assured to every nation and to every individual under the broad heavens.

"Hundreds of years before certain nations came upon the stage of action, the Omniscient One looked down the ages and predicted the rise and fall of the universal kingdoms. God declared to Nebuchadnezzar that the kingdom of Babylon should fall, and a second kingdom would arise, which also would have its period of trial. Failing to exalt the true God, its glory would fade, and a third kingdom would occupy its place. This also would pass away; and a fourth, strong as iron, would subdue the nations of the world . . .

"In the history of nations the student of God's Word may behold the literal fulfillment of divine prophecy. Babylon, shattered and broken at last, passed away because in prosperity its rulers had regarded themselves as independent of God, and had ascribed the glory of their kingdom to human achievement. The Medo-Persian realm was visited by the wrath of Heaven because in it God's law had been trampled underfoot. The fear of the Lord had found no place in the hearts of the vast majority of the people. Wickedness, blasphemy, and corruption prevailed. The kingdoms that followed were even more base and corrupt; and these sank lower and still lower in the scale of moral worth.

"The power exercised by every ruler on the earth is Heaven-imparted; and upon his use of the power thus bestowed, his success depends."

—*Prophets and Kings, 499-502*

Daniel Two

1 - WHO ALONE KNOWS THE SECRETS OF THE FUTURE?

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3 - WHAT PART DOES GOD PLAY IN THE AFFAIRS OF NATIONS?

Daniel 2:20-21—“_____ be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are His: and He changeth the times and the seasons: He removeth kings, and setteth up kings: He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.”

4 - HOW DID DANIEL DESCRIBE NEBUCHADNEZZAR’S DREAM?

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2. The silver kingdom of Persia — 538 B.C. - 331 B.C.
3. The brass kingdom of Greece — 331 B.C. -168 B.C.
4. The iron monarchy of Rome — 168 B.C. - A.D. 476

Divided — A.D. 476 - NOW

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Daniel 2:44 “And in the days of these _____ shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.”

Daniel 2:35—“The stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and _____ the whole earth.”

What the Bible says about – The Plan of Salvation

SCRIPTURE READING:
JOHN 3:1-21
EPHESIANS 2:1-10; 5:10-18

WHAT IS SIN?

The answer to this question is found in the words of John:

1 John 3:4—“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law.”

This is the most comprehensive definition of sin in the Scriptures. God has a fundamental, unchangeable, everlasting law (*Psalm 111:7-8*), and the violation of that law is sin. The unchanging God will never set aside that holy law in any plan for saving man. This would destroy the very foundation of His government. And, remember, God’s fundamental law is the Ten Commandments.

“Whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (*Romans 14:23*). If a man violates his conscience, to him it is sin. To be sure, his conscience must be open to enlightenment and education, but he should sacredly guard it. If he does not, it will become seared as with a hot iron (*1 Timothy 4:2*). “To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (*James 4:17*).

The only man who will not be held accountable for his wrongdoing is the man who does not know that he is sinning (*Romans 2:12*). Said Jesus, “If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth” (*John 9:41*).

If we close our eyes that we may not see, our ears that we may not hear, then we shall be responsible for what we have known (*Matthew 13:15*).

“All unrighteousness is sin.” This is the way John sums it all up. The line of demarcation between sin and righteousness should be sharply drawn in our minds.

Is there a more important question man can ask than What must I do to be saved from sin? A skeptical mathematics student found a note on his table, reading: “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” He could not figure out any profit, so he gave his heart to God. After a man has found out what to do to be saved, then he ought to act on this vital information and seek salvation for himself and his dear ones.

1 - FROM WHAT THREE THINGS DOES MAN NEED TO BE SAVED?

1. The penalty of sin.

Since "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," all men are sinners. And "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). This death penalty is not the first death. "In Adam all die," saints and sinners alike (*1 Corinthians 15:22*). The wages of sin is the second death. This is the death that is eternal, the penalty we should all seek to escape. God has given the promise: "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (*Isaiah 55:7*).

2. The power of sin.

Romans 8:7—"The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

If God pardoned a man for the sins of the past and did not save him from the power of sin, and then allowed the man to live forever, He would have an everlasting sinner, wouldn't He? This is just what God will not permit. Sinful man was driven from the tree of life lest he should eat and live forever (*Genesis 3:22-23*). It is not enough merely to have a boat to keep from sinking. We must have strength to row upstream lest we drift until we plunge over sin's great Niagara to eternal destruction. The whole current of our thinking and the swift-moving stream of our restless souls need to be changed to flow Godward. Do you not, even now, sense a great need of more power in your life? God will supply you with this much-needed power.

3. The presence of sin.

Romans 16:20—"The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

This test means that sin and its originator, Satan, shall be put down forever. And death shall be "destroyed" (*1 Corinthians 15:26*). There shall be no more sin or suffering. God saves us from the presence of sin and creates a new world of righteousness for us (*2 Peter 3:13*). This is God's final act of salvation.

2 - CAN MAN SAVE HIMSELF FROM SIN?

Man is unable to atone for the sins of the past.

Romans 3:20—"By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Man is like a criminal who has violated the law and is doomed to die, and there is nothing he can do for himself. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified."

His promises to do good cannot save him. And, even if he could live without sin in the future, he still has upon him the guilt of all the sins

he has committed in the past. He is like a person who owes a huge grocery bill. He promises to pay cash from now on. But this will not pay the back debt, will it? So far as human prospects go, man is hopelessly in debt and hopelessly lost.

Jeremiah 13:23—“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.”

Sinfulness is a part of our very nature, like the Ethiopian’s skin or the spots of a leopard. Paul said:

Romans 7:18-19—“I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.”

An eagle swooped down in a field and flew away with something wriggling in its claws. It rose higher and higher. A farmer was watching. After a while the eagle seemed to grow weary. Its great wings moved slower and slower as it came nearer and nearer to the earth. Finally, its wings collapsed and it plummeted to the ground. The farmer went to investigate. There he saw a serpent slithering its way through the grass. It had bitten the great bird and poisoned its blood stream. Even so the serpent of sin brings us down from every attempt to be good; and, as the delinquent little boys said, “We just can’t help it.” But God has a way to help us, as we shall see.

3 - WHAT IS GOD’S PART IN SAVING MAN FROM SIN?

1. God provides the pardon for sins that are past.

John 3:16—“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Christ came to earth to pay the price of our transgressions. “When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly” (*Romans 5:6*). “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (*Romans 5:8*). Isaiah declares: “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him” (*Isaiah 53:5*).

No man who accepts Christ as his Saviour and follows Him need suffer the wages of sin—the second, eternal death—for Christ, God’s sacrificial Lamb, died in his place. “Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His” (*Desire of Ages, p. 25*). But eternal separation from God is to be the sad end of all who reject the gospel of

salvation (*Matthew 25:41*).

This can be illustrated by comparing the sinner to a condemned man standing before a firing squad. Only the slightest touch of a trigger is needed to send him into eternity. But a messenger suddenly appears and command is given to lower the guns. Some higher authority has intervened. The condemned man is led away and set free. God has provided for us a way of escape from certain and everlasting death. That way is through Christ (*John 3:16*).

2. God gives man the victory over sin in his life.

Through the new-birth experience God gives the power of a new life. Says John, we “were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (*John 1:13; John 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23*). To be born again means that God fulfills His law in us. As Paul tells us, “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (*Romans 8:3-4; Hebrews 8-10*).

The process of sin was reversed when God created a “new creature” in Christ Jesus (*2 Corinthians 5:17*). Not only does He recreate the sinner, but He has made other wonderful provisions for all who believe.

a. He gives repentance for our sins (*Acts 5:31*).

b. He sends His Spirit to dwell in our hearts (*1 John 3:24*).

c. He provides the Bible to comfort, strengthen, and keep us (*Romans 15:4; Psalm 119:105; Ephesians 6:17*).

d. He opens heaven to our prayers (*Hebrews 4:16*).

Romans 8:32—“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

And if there is anything else that God can do to save us He will do it!

4 - WHAT IS MAN'S PART IN SALVATION?

**TO OBTAIN PARDON FOR SIN, THE FOLLOWING SIMPLE STEPS
MUST BE TAKEN:**

1. Look to God.

Isaiah 45:22—“Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else” (*John 5:40; Matthew 11:28-30*).

2. Believe on Jesus Christ.

Acts 16:31—“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”

3. Repent of every sin.

Luke 13:3—"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Acts 3:19—"Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

4. Confess every sin known to you.

1 John 1:9—"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

5. Make things right with your brother.

Ezekiel 33:15-16—"If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live."

One never tires of the story of Reuben Johnson, of Andersonville prison. He had served many years of his long sentence. At assembly one morning, announcement of a pardon was to be made. There was an uneasy expectancy. With the pardon in his hand, the prison official rose and read the name of Reuben Johnson, and asked him to come forward. There was no response. Reuben supposed it must be some other Reuben Johnson. The officer read again, "Reuben Johnson!" Reuben looked all around, turned and looked behind him, expecting to see Reuben Johnson get up somewhere. This movement caught the official's eye; and, pointing to Reuben, he shouted, "Reuben Johnson, I mean you!" It finally dawned on poor old Reuben that he was to be set free. He had been a prisoner so long that it was difficult for him to believe it. Down the aisle he made his way, reached out a big, rough, trembling hand, and took the paper that meant freedom from the gray prison walls. The tears of mingled gratitude and repentance made their way down the lines that time had chiseled in his great face. Reuben was free.

Thank God, He has a pardon for every man who will reach out and accept it. He will "bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house" (*Isaiah 42:7*). But we must come to God, believe on Jesus Christ, confess our sins, and take the pardon. We must "Lay hold on eternal life" (*1 Timothy 6:12; Isaiah 1:18-20*).

TO OBTAIN VICTORY OVER THE POWER OF SIN, MAN HAS AN IMPORTANT PART HE MUST PLAY.

Notice the following steps carefully and pray that God will give you grace to move forward. Here are the steps:

1. Be willing to forsake every sin.

Proverbs 28:13—"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper:

but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”

2. Let the Holy Spirit lead you.

Romans 8:14—“As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

3. Be willing to obey God's law.

Proverbs 28:9—“He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.” “Let not sin (law breaking, *1 John 3:4*) therefore reign in your mortal body that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof” (*Romans 6:12*).

4. Be willing to witness for God.

Acts 1:8—“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

5. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus.

Hebrews 12:1-2—“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.”

Yes, man needs not only pardon from sin but power over sin. If Reuben Johnson had left the prison and said, “Now I am a free man, free to break the law,” how long do you think he would have been free? Not long. No. Reuben must not be a repeater. He was freed that he might obey the laws, not break them.

Reuben must be willing to have a change of heart, and obey. He needs to watch his step and pray. He needs to bear witness to the goodness of his government and show he now loves the laws he once violated. He needs to keep company with those who are law abiding. He needs to study the laws of his government, know its plans, and live for its honor. Reuben was freed in order that he might become a law-abiding citizen.

If Reuben was freed for that purpose, what of the man whom God has pardoned through the grace of the crucified Christ, who died that the man might be free? Yes, a thousand times more should he seek power to obey God's commandments and do right!

5 - WILL CHRIST TURN AWAY FROM ANY SINCERE SEEKER?

No indeed! Christ will not turn away from any true worshiper. He came to seek the lost, to help the weak, to reach the lowest man. “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (*John 6:37*). Remember the man with the palsy. His friends let him down through a roof and placed

him right in front of Jesus who said, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee" (*Matthew 9:2*). And He healed him of the physical and spiritual disease that afflicted him (*Matthew 9:6-8*).

6 - HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION?

There is no escape. Let these solemn words burn their way into every heart:

Hebrews 2:1-3—"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

If angels of God who rebelled against His laws are to be punished, and everlasting destruction awaits them (*Matthew 25:41*), how shall we escape if we ignore the call of mercy and refuse to enter the open door to pardon and obedience through the power and grace of God? Let us pray that every student taking these lessons will make the right decision. The next lesson will be on the greatest event just ahead of us: "Christ's Second Coming."

Brief Review Questions —

Sin is the transgression of what?

What three things does man need to be saved from?

Can we save ourselves from sin?

How does God provide us pardon from our past sins?

What is our part in cooperating with Him in the plan of salvation?

Will Christ refuse us if we plead with Him for help?

THE PLAN OF SALVATION
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—

“ ‘God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself’ (2 Corinthians 5:19). God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption . . .

None but the Son of God could accomplish our redemption; for only He who was in the bosom of the Father could declare Him. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it manifest. Nothing less than the infinite sacrifice made by Christ in behalf of fallen man could express the Father’s love to lost humanity.

“ ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son.’ He gave Him not only to live among men, to bear their sins, and die their sacrifice. He gave Him to the fallen race. Christ was to identify Himself with the interests and needs of humanity. He who was one with God has linked Himself with the children of men by ties that are never to be broken. Jesus is ‘not ashamed to call them brethren’ (Hebrews 2:11); He is our Sacrifice, our Advocate, our Brother, bearing our human form before the Father’s throne, and through eternal ages one with the race He has redeemed—the Son of man. And all this that man might be uplifted from the ruin and degradation of sin that he might reflect the love of God and share the joy of holiness.

“The price paid for our redemption, the infinite sacrifice of our heavenly Father in giving His Son to die for us, should give us exalted conceptions of what we may become through Christ. As the inspired apostle John beheld the height, the depth, the breadth of the Father’s love toward the perishing race, he was filled with adoration and reverence; and, failing to find suitable language in which to express the greatness and tenderness of this love, he called upon the world to behold it. ‘Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God’ (1 John 3:1). What a value this places upon man! Through transgression the sons of man become subjects of Satan. Through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ the sons of Adam may become the sons of God. By assuming human nature, Christ elevates humanity. Fallen men are placed where, through connection with Christ, they may indeed become worthy of the name ‘sons of God.’

“Such love is without a parallel. Children of the heavenly King! Precious promise! Theme for the most profound meditation! The matchless love of God for a world that did not love Him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul and brings the mind into captivity to the will of God. The more we study the divine character in the light of the cross, the more we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice, and the more clearly we discern innumerable evidences of a love that is infinite and a tender pity surpassing a mother’s yearning sympathy for her wayward child.” —*Steps to Christ, 13-15*

The Plan of Salvation

1 John 3:4—“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law.”

1 - CAN MAN SAVE HIMSELF FROM SIN?

1. Man is unable to atone for the sins of the past.

Romans 3:20—“By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the _____ of sin” (also *Jeremiah 13:23; Romans 7:18-19*).

2 - WHAT IS GOD'S PART IN SAVING MAN FROM SIN?

1. God provides the pardon for sins that are past.

John 3:16—“For God so loved the world, that He _____ His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

2. God gives man the victory over sin in his life. He gives repentance for our sins (Acts 5:31). He sends His Spirit to dwell in our hearts (1 John 3:24). He provides the Bible to comfort, strengthen, and keep us (Romans 15:4; Psalm 119:105; Ephesians 6:17). He opens heaven to our prayers (Hebrews 4:16).

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1. Look to God.

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2. Believe on Jesus Christ.

Acts 16:31—“_____ on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”

3. Repent of every sin.

Luke 13:3—"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise _____."

Acts 3:19—"Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be _____ out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

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4. Be willing to witness for God.

Acts 1:8—"Ye shall _____ power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

5. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus.

Hebrews 12:1-2—"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a _____ of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."

What the Bible says about – Christ's Second Coming

SCRIPTURE READING:
1 THESSALONIANS 4:13; 5:11

The return of Jesus is mentioned more than three hundred times in the 260 chapters of the New Testament, an average of one verse in every twenty-five, according to Dr. M. E. Dodd, in his book, *Jesus Is Coming to Earth Again*. In the Bible, there are eight times as many references to the second coming of Jesus as to the first. Patriarchs, in the Old Testament, looked forward to it (*Jude 14; Job 19:25-27*); and it has also been the blessed hope of the church in the New Testament (*Titus 2:13; Acts 3:19-21*).

This great truth has been embraced by prominent Christian leaders throughout recent centuries, and many have given voice to their belief in the second advent.

Martin Luther wrote, "I ardently hope that, amidst these internal dissensions on the earth, Jesus Christ will hasten the day of His coming."

John Calvin said, "We must hunger after Christ till the dawning of that great day."

John Knox wrote, "We know that He shall return, and that with expedition."

John Wesley, commenting on the closing verses of Revelation, said, "The spirit of adoption in the bride, in the heart of every true believer, says . . . 'Come and accomplish all the words of this prophecy.'"

John Milton sublimely wrote, "Come forth out of thy royal chambers, O Prince of all the kings of the earth . . . take up that unlimited scepter . . . For now the voice of Thy bride calls thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed."

Moody said, "The church has had very little to say about it [the second advent]. Now, I can see a reason for this; the devil does not want us to see this truth, for nothing would wake up the church so much."

A deep and abiding faith in the second coming of Christ has a tremendous purifying and uplifting power.

1 - WILL CHRIST COME AGAIN?

John 14:2-3—"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again,

and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

We can rely upon the word of Christ. Our eternal future is secure when it rests upon the promises of His Word. Jesus said, “I will come again,” and He surely will. Nothing in heaven or earth can be more certain than His Word and, therefore, His coming.

For centuries the people of God awaited the fulfillment of the promises concerning Christ’s first coming as the Messiah. Then came the wonderful day when heavenly messengers made the announcement: “Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” (*Luke 2:11*).

Just as surely as the promises of God were fulfilled in the first advent of Jesus to this world, just so surely will be those that pertain to His second advent. The day of His return will be the most wonderful day in all history.

When Jesus was put under oath by the high priest at His trial, as He stood a prisoner flanked by guards at the foot of Caiaphas’ throne, He said, “Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven” (*Matthew 26:64*). This promise, made under the oath, and can be depended upon—He will come again.

2 - HOW WILL HE COME?

1. So we can see Him.

Revelation 1:7—“Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him.”

Matthew 24:30—“Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (*Acts 1:9-11; Matthew 24:23-27*).

2. So we can hear Him.

Matthew 24:31—“He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

1 Thessalonians 4:16—“The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.”

3. He will come in glory.

Matthew 25:31—“When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.”

The effect of this glory upon the inhabitants of earth we can only faintly imagine. If, at the time of Christ’s resurrection, the appearance of one

angel prostrated the Roman guards as dead men (*Matthew 28:2-4*), it is no wonder that many will try to hide from the glory of Christ, praying for the rocks and mountains to fall on them (*Revelation 6:14-17*) when He appears in the glory of all the holy angels.

4. He will come unexpectedly.

Matthew 24:44—"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Matthew 24:36—"Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only."

In the clearest language, Jesus Christ taught that His coming would be open, announced, personal, literal, visible, and that good and bad alike would see Him come. He was to come as a "thief in the night" only in the sense that none would know the "day and hour," and multitudes would be unprepared.

Sometimes we find, in certain commentaries or in Bible footnotes, references to a secret coming of our Lord. These are only expressions of man; and, although well-meaning, they are not the inspired Word of God. If we are led into delusions about secret comings of Christ, we shall be open to other deceptions. Eve was "deceived," but God held her responsible. Before she could believe the deceiver she had to disbelieve God. Jesus warned, "Take heed that no man deceive you" (*Matthew 24:4*).

A woman came up to a preacher and asked, "Are you the man who talks over the radio?"

"Yes," he said, "I am one such man."

"Do you believe Christ is coming literally?" she queried.

"Yes," answered the man.

Said she, "I wish you would come over to my town. My minister has a private seance. I will get you in for nothing. A mighty power comes. A glorious being appears. This is Jesus Christ."

"Well," said the preacher, "I will not be there."

Said he, "I have an old Book that explains all that."

He took out his Bible and read *Matthew 24:26-27*: "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Then he said, "Madam, I don't deny that somebody comes there to that private seance, but it is not my Saviour, and it is not my Lord, and I will not be there to meet the one who comes there."

Friend, if some glorious being, or any other kind of being, should appear to you and even perform some miracles of healing or work a thousand wonders, it is not Jesus Christ. He is not coming that way. Fantastic delusive teachings are sweeping millions into a river of deception.

When Christ comes back, He will be “this same Jesus” who went away (*Acts 1:9-11*). “This same Jesus” who rose from the dead had flesh and bones (*Luke 24:39-43*). He ascended to heaven as the Son of man to be our Mediator (*1 Timothy 2:5*). He is coming back literally and physically as the Son of man (*Matthew 26:64*). There will be nothing secretive or ghostly about it.

3 - WHY WILL HE COME?

1. To raise the righteous dead.

1 Thessalonians 4:16—“The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.”

2. To catch up the righteous living with the resurrected dead.

1 Thessalonians 4:17—“Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

3. To change their vile bodies.

Philippians 3:20-21—“Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.”

4. To take the righteous to heaven.

John 14:2-3—“I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

He comes for His people. With intense longing has He desired that “they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am (*John 17:24*).”

The One who was rejected, crucified, exalted, and glorified is “coming again in like manner as He ascended; to raise the dead, to judge the world, to save His people, to be glorified in His saints, to crush the usurper, to destroy His foes, and to reign forever as the Lord of all” (*H. Hastings*).

5. To destroy the living wicked.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9—“The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (*2 Thessalonians 2:8, about those whom He will “destroy with the brightness of His coming”*).

4 - HOW MAY WE BE READY?

1. We can come to Him.

John 6:37—“All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

If we are to be accepted by Christ when He comes, He must be accepted by us now. One great reason He has not already come is that there are still honest souls to be saved.

2. We can live for Him as did Paul.

2 Timothy 4:7-8—“I have fought a good fight, I finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.”

Mere profession of Christianity or church membership will not avail. “For me to live is Christ,” said Paul (*Philippians 1:21*).

3. We can seek to be like Him.

1 John 3:2-3—“We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.”

A man visited an art gallery to see a famous painting. Rules limited all visits to five minutes. The man came day after day and gazed upon the picture, then hastened away to sketch what he could remember. After a long time he invited friends to see his completed work. They marveled at his exquisite workmanship. “We did not know you were such an artist!” Then he told them the secret, that this was only a copy of a great masterpiece. Then they all exclaimed, “If that is only a copy, we must see the original.”

Shall we not gaze upon Christ until we ourselves are so like Him that others will want to see Him and prepare to meet Him?

4. We can look for Him.

Hebrews 9:28—“Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

If we look for Him, it will affect our preparation for His coming. In the parable given by Christ, one servant said, “ ‘My lord delayeth His coming,’ ” and he began “to smite his fellow servants and to eat and drink with the drunken. The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for Him, and in an hour that he is not aware of. And shall cut him asunder and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites” (*Matthew 24:48-51*).

5. We can love His appearing.

2 Timothy 4:8—“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that

love His appearing.”

Yes, those who love His appearing will be ready.

A minister preached on the second coming. After the service a woman came up to him and said, “Young man, I am just as good a Christian as you are.” He said, “I don’t doubt that at all.” She said, “I love the Lord as much as you do, and I’m old enough to be your mother.”

“I can’t deny it,” said he.

“I know the Bible as well as you do,” she continued.

“I do not doubt that either,” he replied.

“Well,” she said, “I love the Lord, but I don’t want Him to come in my day.”

“Now, Mother,” said the preacher, “suppose a young man and a young woman should fall in love and marry, and he should say, ‘Dear, I must go off to Europe. I am to have a great job over there. When I have started to work and built a home, I am going to come back for you.’ He promises to write her letters, and the letters begin to come. She reads them, and takes them to her friends, and reads them over and over. She says, ‘Oh, isn’t it wonderful? Isn’t he a wonderful husband? Isn’t it wonderful? I love him; he is the grandest man in all the world, but I hope he doesn’t come back in my day.’ Don’t you think there would be something wrong with a person like that?”

The woman saw the point. She said, “I’m wrong.”

“If Jesus should come at this moment

“To catch up with Him in the air

“All those who love His appearing,

“Forever to be with Him there,

“How would He find you? I wonder—

“Watching, waiting, faithful, true?

“Dearly beloved, consider—

“How is it be with you?”

To be among those for whom Jesus comes—this is the supreme hope of the human heart. God grant that when Jesus comes He will come for you.

This time He is not coming to lie on a cross, but to end sin and death. He is mindful of your sufferings; and, in the great day of His appearing, He will take them all away. He knows what to do for every trouble and how to make all things right. He will establish His kingdom of righteousness and banish all cares which weigh down the heart with sorrow. War, tyranny over the weak, oppression of the poor, and weapons of destruction with their constant threat of death will all be removed.

How much it means to be ready when Jesus comes! What a thrill to see Him face to face and to feel His arm around you thrown! How will it be to meet Him in peace and hear Jesus speak your name? What joy awaits you, living with Him through the endless ages of eternity! When

Jesus comes for you—That is the most satisfying experience that can ever come to any human being. May that experience be yours.

The next lesson reveals what the Bible says the world will be like when Jesus is about to return. Entitled, “Signs of the End,” it is a study you will want to carefully consider.

Brief Review Questions —

How can we be sure that Christ is going to return for His people?

In what four ways will He return?

What five things will He do when He returns?

What five things should we do, in order to be ready for His coming?

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

“One of the most solemn and yet most glorious truths revealed in the Bible is that of Christ's second coming to complete the great work of redemption. To God's pilgrim people, so long left to sojourn in ‘the region and shadow of death,’ a precious, joy-inspiring hope is given in the promise of His appearing, who is ‘the resurrection and the life,’ to ‘bring home again His banished.’

“The doctrine of the second advent is the very keynote of the Sacred Scriptures. From the day when the first pair turned their sorrowing steps from Eden, the children of faith have waited the coming of the Promised One to break the destroyer's power and bring them again to the lost Paradise. Holy men of old looked forward to the advent of the Messiah in glory, as the consummation of their hope. Enoch, only the seventh in descent from them that dwelt in Eden, he who for three centuries on earth walked with his God, was permitted to behold from afar the coming of the Deliverer. ‘Behold,’ he declared, ‘the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all’ (Jude 14, 15).

“The coming of Christ to usher in the reign of righteousness has inspired the most sublime and impassioned utterances of the sacred writers. The poets and prophets of the Bible have dwelt upon it in words glowing with celestial fire. The psalmist sang of the power and majesty of Israel's King: ‘Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence. . . . He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people.’ (Psalm 50:2-4). ‘Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad . . . before the Lord: for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth.’ (Psalm 96:11-13) . . .

“When the Saviour was about to be separated from His disciples, He comforted them in their sorrow with the assurance that He would come again: ‘Let not your heart be troubled . . . In My Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself’ (John 14:1-3). ‘The Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him.’ ‘Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations’ (Matthew 25:31, 32).

“The angels who lingered upon Olivet after Christ's ascension repeated to the disciples the promise of His return: ‘This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven’ (Acts 1:11). And the apostle Paul, speaking by the Spirit of Inspiration, testified: ‘The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God’ (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Says the prophet of Patmos: ‘Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him’ (Revelation 1:7).”

—*Great Controversy, 299-301*

Christ's Second Coming

1 - WILL CHRIST COME AGAIN?

John 14:2-3—"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to _____ a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

2 - HOW WILL HE COME?

1. So we can see Him.

Revelation 1:7—"Behold, He _____ with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him" (also *Matthew 24:30; Acts 1:9-11; Matthew 24:23-27*).

2. So we can hear Him.

Matthew 24:31—"He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall _____ together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (also *1 Thessalonians 4:16*).

3. He will come in glory.

Matthew 25:31—"When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy _____ with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory."

4. He will come unexpectedly.

Matthew 24:44—"Therefore be ye also _____: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (also *Matthew 24:36*).

3 - WHY WILL HE COME?

1. To raise the righteous dead.

1 Thessalonians 4:16—"The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the _____ of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

2. To catch up the righteous living with the resurrected dead.

1 Thessalonians 4:17—"Then we which are _____ and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

3. To change their vile bodies.

Philippians 3:20-21—"Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the _____, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."

4. To take the righteous to heaven.

John 14:2-3—"I go to _____ a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

5. To destroy the living wicked.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9—"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in _____ fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (*2 Thessalonians 2:8*).

4 - HOW MAY WE BE READY?**1. We can come to Him.**

John 6:37—"All that the Father _____ Me shall come to Me; and Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

2. We can live for Him as did Paul.

2 Timothy 4:7-8—"I have _____ a good fight, I finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

3. We can seek to be like Him.

1 John 3:2-3—"We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him _____ himself, even as He is pure."

4. We can look for Him.

Hebrews 9:28—"Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He _____ the second time without sin unto salvation."

5. We can love His appearing.

2 Timothy 4:8—"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His _____."

What the Bible says about – Signs of the End

SCRIPTURE READING:
MATTHEW 24

Every Hebrew felt an understandable pride in the Temple at Jerusalem. This feeling was shared by Christ's disciples who, one day, pointed out its beauties to the Master. Instead of expressing wonder at the magnificence of the Temple, however, Jesus took the opportunity to say, "See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. And as He sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world?"

From this question it seems apparent that the disciples thought the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world would take place at the same time. Hence, in His answer, Christ outlined the parallel conditions that would prevail before both of these events. In this lesson, we will study only those things that are a primary application to the second coming of Christ.

1 - WHAT THREE GREAT SIGNS DID CHRIST SAY WOULD APPEAR IN THE POLITICAL WORLD?

1. Fear and perplexity.

Luke 21:25-27—"There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

Winston Churchill expressed the concern felt by millions when he stated: "We seem to be moving, drifting steadily against our will, against the will of every race, and every people, and every class, toward some hideous catastrophe. Everybody wishes to stop it, but they do not know how."

When others are looking to the future with despair, the Christian whose faith rests on the "sure word of prophecy" (2 Peter 1:19) will be filled with hope as he recognizes the promised signs of Christ's soon return.

2. Spirit of war.

Matthew 24:6-7—"Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars:

see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (*Revelation 11:18; Joel 3:9-14*).

The cost of World War I has been estimated at 400 billion dollars. The cost of World War II is beyond accurate computation. During the decade that followed that holocaust, the U.S. alone spent \$327 billion for defense.

It is not too much to say that war—preparation for war, payment for past wars, and trying to prevent future wars—has become the chief concern of mankind.

3. Great efforts for peace.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-3—"The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them."

Jeremiah 6:14—"They have healed also My people slightly saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace."

The accuracy of Bible prophecy is here demonstrated by predicting that, in the very midst of unprecedented preparation for war, there would be widespread talk of peace. The historian, Hazen, has confirmed this by saying, "The contemporary world, to a degree altogether unprecedented in history, has been dominated by the thought of war, by extraordinary preparations for war, and by zealous and concerted efforts for peace."

We have already seen illustrations of this on a small scale. In 1914, at the very time that ambassadors and statesmen were gathered to dedicate the Peace Palace of the Hague, Archduke Ferdinand and his wife were murdered in the streets of Sarajevo, and the fuse to World War I was lighted.

More recently, we recall that bombs were rained on Pearl Harbor at the very time when representatives from both nations concerned were meeting to discuss steps toward peaceful relations. Today's earnest conferences among the world's leading powers aim to secure lasting world peace; but, even if apparently successful, they are only signs of Christ's coming and the overwhelming destruction that will accompany that great event. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (*1 Thessalonians 5:3*).

2 - WHAT CONDITIONS WILL PREVAIL IN THE SOCIAL WORLD IN THE LAST DAYS?

2 Timothy 3:1-5—"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of there own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers

of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”

The horrible crimes recorded each day in the newspaper testify that society has reached the low ebb of morality pictured in these verses.

3 - IN THE ECONOMIC WORLD, WHAT CONDITIONS POINT TO CHRIST'S RETURN?

James 5:1-8—“Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers, who have reaped down your field, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”

As “the coming of the Lord draweth nigh,” the agelong conflict between employer and employee is destined to assume larger proportions. Now it is no longer one individual bargaining with another. Instead great corporations negotiate with the organized forces of labor, representing millions of workers. Since the dispute between management and labor will not end until Jesus comes, the Christian is urged to be patient until that time” (*James 5:8*).

4 - WHAT TWO GREAT CHANGES WERE TO APPEAR IN “THE TIME OF THE END”?

Daniel 12:4—“But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”

The past 150 years stand apart from all previous history by reason of the sudden increase of knowledge in science, general learning, and invention. The patriarch, Abraham, who lived four thousand years ago, would hardly be more startled by the tremendous changes than would George Washington, who died just before the nineteenth century began.

The great increase of knowledge concerning God's Word has been as extraordinary as advances in the world of science. Whereas the Bible was

available only to a comparatively few two centuries ago, today it is being circulated on a worldwide scale, by hundreds of millions of copies. This has largely been accomplished since the great Bible societies were organized after 1798. Truly we are living in "the time of the end."

Daniel's prediction that "many shall run to and fro" has likewise received most striking fulfillment. Many commentators believe that this expression refers primarily to the increased activity in searching the Bible and its prophecies that has been evident during the past century. Although we recognize this as its first application, beyond a doubt it also forecasts the tremendous increase of travel on a global scale that has characterized the past fifty years. The restless populations of the world are on the move by foot, automobile, rail, ship, and airplane. No longer do the great oceans isolate continents and nations; for air travel has shrunk distances until statesmen transact business today in foreign capitals across the seas, and tomorrow they can be back in their own offices.

5 - WHAT SIX OUTSTANDING SIGNS ARE IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD?

1. Scoffers.

2 Peter 3:3-4—"Know this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

The theory of uniformity ("all things continue as they were"), with its inevitable repudiation of the Biblical account of the Flood, has encouraged many, even Christians, to scoff at the doctrines of Christ's second coming.

2. Form of godliness - mere profession.

2 Timothy 3:1, 2, 5—"In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

Today it is difficult to tell the difference between most professed Christians and the ungodly. They look alike, eat and drink alike, go to the same places, and do the same things.

3. Lovers of pleasures.

2 Timothy 3:4—"Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

The prayer room has become the supper room. Dancing is more popular than praying. Television, horse racing, and theatergoing are preferred by millions, above a knowledge of God.

4. Lack of faith.

Luke 18:8—"When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"

The parable of Luke 18:1-8 indicates that the prayer of faith will be almost nonexistent "when the Son of man cometh." This is understandable, for modernistic teaching has undermined belief in God as a real being.

5. Lack of love.

Matthew 24:12—"Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

Many, seeing hypocrisy even in some church members and almost universal corruption elsewhere in the world, lose courage and love grows cold.

6. The gospel shall be preached in all the world.

Matthew 24:14—"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

The message of Christ's sacrifice on the cross and His soon second coming is being sounded in about eight hundred language and dialect areas of the world.

6 - WHAT THREE UNUSUAL SIGHTS IN THE HEAVENS WERE FORETOLD AS SIGNS OF THE END?

Matthew 24:29-30—"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (*Joel 3:15; Revelation 6:12-13*).

The great period of tribulation mentioned in connection with these unusual sights in the heavens is known in history as the Dark Ages. As you will learn, God had revealed, through Daniel, the prophet (*Daniel 7:25*), that this time of papal supremacy would commence in A.D. 538 and last until A.D. 1798. Public persecution ceased, however, about 25 years before the full 1,260 years had elapsed, due to the combined influence of the Protestant Reformation and the opportunities for religious freedom in America.

Now note the accuracy of Christ's prediction in Mark 13:24, where He says, "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." The first of these signs appeared after persecution ended, "in those days," or shortly before 1798. God's Word never fails; hence on May 19, 1780, the sun was darkened. Early in the day the birds disappeared, domestic fowl went to roost, and grazing cattle in the pasture wended their way toward the barnyard. That

same night the moon was darkened and gave the appearance of blood (*Revelation 6:12*).

“The stars shall fall from heaven.” These, of necessity, would be shooting stars. As predicted, the greatest meteoric shower ever recorded seemed to set the very heavens ablaze on the night of November 13, 1833. The minds of men were made sober at the time, and contemporary writings indicate that many feared the final day of judgment had come.

7 - IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD, WHAT CONDITIONS POINT TO OUR LORD'S RETURN?

Matthew 24:7—“And there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.”

Famine and pestilences often accompany or follow great wars. After world War I, famine in China numbered fifteen million starving and three million dead. Russia's famine, according to the explorer, Nansen, was the “most appalling in the recorded history of man.” The world's influenza epidemic took 18,000,000 lives. World War II had its own grim story of hunger and disease.

Earthquakes are another sign of Christ's return. Scientists estimate that as many as one million quakes a year may be taking place in the world, only about 8,000 of which are severe enough to be recorded. Of the more disastrous ones of comparatively recent times, we might list the following: 1920—China, 180,000 killed; 1923—Japan, 143,000 lives lost; 1939—Central Turkey, 23,000 dead; 1950—Tibet, India, and Burma, 5,000 casualties.

8 - HOW NEAR IS CHRIST'S COMING WHEN WE SEE ALL THESE SIGNS?

Matthew 24:32-34—“Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.”

Naturally the last generation to live on this earth will be, as Jesus said, the one that sees “all these things.” Surely we see them today, and may know that the coming of the Lord is “even at the doors.”

9 - WHAT ATTITUDE OF LIFE SHOULD WE MAINTAIN IN THESE DAYS OF EXPECTATION?

Matthew 24:36-42—“Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but My Father only. As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as

in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so also the coming of the Son of man be . . . Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.”

The people of Noah’s day had received adequate warning of the coming Flood, but they were afflicted with the same sins that beset modern man—unbelief, preoccupation with pleasure seeking, and procrastination.

Some years ago, during the great Mississippi flood, many personal tragedies testified to the dangerous results of doing this.

Acting on the bulletins of warning, one man packed up his goods to move, but his neighbor said there was no danger. He unpacked, and then saw the water mock him.

A woman said, “I don’t see any water.” Soon she did see it, and was frantic with fear. Unbelief had caused her plight.

A young man went out to bring in a family, but the farmer was not concerned and said, “Come back this afternoon.” Later in the day, when the man returned, the farmer said, “Come back in the morning.” The next morning the family still had not packed, so suggested that he come again the next day. He did; but, from a distance, he could see that the house was already flooded and no one was in sight.

To the people of His day Jesus said, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken” (*Luke 24:25*).

They were content to let others search the Scriptures for them, and were satisfied with their creeds and traditions; and, as a result, they turned aside from the Saviour of the world. But is not human nature much the same today? Is not unbelief just as tragic now as in Noah’s day or in the time of Christ?

In His great love, God has given us many signs that show Christ’s coming to be near. These signs have been given that we and our dear ones may be ready when He comes. Are you not grateful for the evidences all about us that indicate that soon we shall see Jesus face to face? The world around us may be in perplexity and strife, but we can rejoice that soon all this will pass away and an eternity with Christ will stretch out before us. There is no doubt about it. If we follow the advice of Jesus to “watch therefore,” we will be ready.

Brief Review Questions —

Over twenty signs, which tell us Christ’s coming is near, are discussed or quoted in this lesson. On the

next page, list at least ten of them.

SIGNS OF THE END

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—

“Looking down through the ages to the close of time, Peter was inspired to outline conditions that would exist in the world just prior to the second coming of Christ. ‘There shall come in the last days scoffers,’ he wrote, ‘walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.’ But ‘when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them’ (1 Thesalonians 5:3). Not all, however, would be ensnared by the enemy’s devices. As the end of all things earthly should approach, there would be faithful ones able to discern the signs of the times. While a large number of professing believers would deny their faith by their works, there would be a remnant who would endure to the end.

“Peter kept alive in his heart the hope of Christ’s return, and he assured the church of the certain fulfillment of the Saviour’s promise, ‘If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself’ (John 14:3). To the tried and faithful ones the coming might seem long delayed, but the apostle assured them: ‘The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night’ (2 Peter 3:9-10).”

—Acts of the Apostles, 535-536

ON THE EDGE OF THE END

Only the most shallow-minded dare ignore the times in which we live. We are on the edge of the end. The destructive weapons of modern technology are such that our only safety is in God. Only in Him and in His Holy Bible can we find a safe refuge, the security we need.

Over 50 years ago, our planet was on the verge of destruction when that infernal device, the nuclear bomb, was invented. We are even closer to it today,—for now there are ways to deliver that bomb and more advanced weapons halfway across the world within half an hour.

Let us briefly turn our eyes back to a time when men still had enough sense to be worried. Think not that the crisis they faced was any less than the one in which we now find ourselves. At the present time, there are over 70,000 nuclear bombs stored in the world; and, starting a few years ago, many bombs are being regularly sold to rogue nations with crazed military leaders. When the following words were written, there were less than 10 nuclear bombs in existence!

“If men and nations would but live by the precepts of the ancient prophets and the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, problems which now seem so difficult would soon disappear . . . Unless this is done, we are headed for the disaster we deserve.”—*President Harry S. Truman, Biennial Report for 1946, p. 109.*

“I am a frightened man, myself. All the scientists I know are frightened—frightened for their lives—and frightened for your life.”—*Harold C. Urey, atomic scientist, “I’m a Frightened Man,” Saturday Review of Literature, August 7, 1948.*

“Today the world is sick with . . . a many-dimensional fear . . . Against the atomic bomb there is no defense. Just below the surface lurks the diplomat’s fear: If we give away the atomic power secret, we will lose our bargaining power. *But there is no atomic power secret.* It can easily be recreated by scientists elsewhere . . . This new power is a discovery at least as great as man’s discovery of fire. Who can predict what will come of it?”—*H. M. Davis, editorial in Chemistry magazine, November, 1945.*

“A new era is upon us . . . We have had our last chance. If we do not now devise some greater and more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door.”—*General Douglas MacArthur, spoken on the day Japan surrendered, New York Times, September 2, 1945.*

“When the scientist has emerged from his laboratory to prophesy our extinction, unless we mend our incorrigible ways, and science editors have turned into Jeremiahs, how can any man . . . contemplate his children’s or others’ future with any satisfaction?”—*Harrison Smith, editorial, Saturday Review of Literature, August 21, 1948.*

“If the world is long to survive, the gigantic power which man has acquired through atomic energy must be matched by spiritual strength

of greater magnitude. All mankind now stands in the doorway to destruction.”—*President Harry S. Truman, March 6, 1946, Biennial Report, 1946.*

“The devastation that could be wrought by an Atomic Age war is too appalling to be fully realized. The vision stuns our imagination. But if present trends continue it is only a question of time before such a war will come.”—*Charles A. Lindbergh, Reader’s Digest, September, 1948.*

“The inexorable ‘either-or’ of the atomic bomb, upon which hangs the fate of life on this planet, leaves the pride of man no means by which to save itself. The only alternative to Armageddon is repentance and regeneration . . . The conversion of man has suddenly become a life-and-death issue, not merely for individuals, but for the race.”—*Richard M. Fagley, secretary of the Peace Commission, November, 1945.*

“Scientists themselves now proclaim that their science has reached the point in its development where it becomes imperative to do something about man. They prophesy doomsday unless their warning is heeded . . . With one voice they declare that the future is precarious, and with one voice they declare that it is precarious because of man . . . [The problem is] man’s nature which science now gravely fears may cause his destruction and the destruction of the earth with him. Science and Christianity are now looking at the same thing in man. Science has no word for it, but Christianity has. That word is sin.”—*Charles Clayton Morrison, Christian Century, March 13, 1946.*

“We are on our way towards removing the last barrier that prevents man from converting the earth into a planetary crematorium.”—*Norman Cousins, editorial, Saturday Review of Literature, August 7, 1948.*

“The end of human existence on earth was regarded by the early Christians as near at hand; by modern Christians as far in the future . . . What is new in the present situation is not the possibility of a last generation, but the possibility . . . that ours may be the last generation!”—*Ernest Fremont Tittle, Christian Century, May 1, 1946.*

“The plain fact is that we’re worse off as a world than we were three years ago. Worse off because we’ve stopped thinking about the whole problem . . . Some people are beginning to say this man-made earthquake isn’t so bad after all. *Believe me, it is.*”—*David Lilienthal, Chairman U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, quoted in Life, September 27, 1948.*

“Since all these things are thus on the verge of dissolution, what sort of men ought you to be in all holy living and godly conduct, expecting and helping to hasten the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens, all ablaze, will be dissolved, and the elements will burn and melt?”—*2 Peter 3:11-12, Weymouth (cf. verse 13-14).*

Signs of the End

1 - WHAT THREE GREAT SIGNS DID CHRIST SAY WOULD APPEAR IN THE POLITICAL WORLD?

1. Fear and perplexity.

Luke 21:25-27—“There shall be _____ in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the _____: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”

2. Spirit of war.

Matthew 24:6-7—“Ye shall hear of _____ and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom” (*Revelation 11:18; Joel 3:9-14*).

3. Great efforts for peace.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-3—“The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, _____ and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them.”

Jeremiah 6:14—“They have healed also My people slightly saying, Peace, _____; when there is no peace.”

2 - WHAT TWO GREAT CHANGES WERE TO APPEAR IN “THE TIME OF THE END”?

Daniel 12:4—“But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the _____. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”

3 - WHAT SIX OUTSTANDING SIGNS ARE IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD?

1. Scoffers.

2 Peter 3:3-4—“Know this first, that there shall come in the last days _____, walking after their own lusts, saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”

2. Social problems.

2 Timothy 3:1-5—“This know also, that in the _____ days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”

3. Form of godliness - mere profession.

2 Timothy 3:1, 2, 5—“In the last days _____ times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.”

4. Lovers of pleasures.

2 Timothy 3:4—“Lovers of _____ more than lovers of God.”

5. Lack of faith.

Luke 18:8—“When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?”

6. Lack of love.

Matthew 24:12—“Because _____ shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.”

7. The gospel shall be preached in all the world.

Matthew 24:14—“This gospel of the kingdom shall be _____ in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.”

**4 - IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD,
WHAT CONDITIONS POINT
TO OUR LORD'S RETURN?**

Matthew 24:7—“And there shall be famines, and pestilences, and _____, in divers places.”

**5 - HOW NEAR IS CHRIST'S COMING
WHEN WE SEE ALL THESE SIGNS?**

Matthew 24:32-34—“Now learn a _____ of the fig tree. When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (also Matthew 24:36-42).

What the Bible says about — The Millennium

SCRIPTURE READING: REVELATION 16:12-16; 20:1-9

Armageddon is a war involving the belligerent forces of all nations. The world has known many conflicts, but Armageddon baffles the imagination. There are many causes of war, such as racial pride, colonial ambitions, desire for raw materials and markets, etc.; but the great underlying cause is the Spirit of evil and selfishness in the hearts of men. In this final conflict, the leaders and their armies are spurred on to the battle by the very spirit of devils.

Since Armageddon is to be fought during “the day of the Lord” and just prior to the return of Jesus (*Joel 3:9-13*), let us study the subject in its proper setting. What events precede it, prepare the way for it, and follow after it? The answer: a whole cluster of breathtaking, world-shaking, and awe-inspiring happenings—all associated with the thousand-year period of Revelation 20:1-9, called the millennium.

The word, “millennium,” does not occur in the Bible. It comes from two Latin Words—*mille*, meaning “a thousand,” and *annus*, meaning “a year”; thus we have millennium, or one thousand years.

Some people think of the millennium as a thousand years of peace and prosperity here upon earth. This is quite different from the true Biblical idea.

Never forget that Satan’s business is deception. He tries to get a man to believe that what is wrong is right. He does not tell a man to believe falsehood. He poses as an “angel of light,” and he has some ministers who help him (*2 Corinthians 11:14-15*).

There are five current teachings about the millennium. In substance, these teachings declare:

1. That Christ will not come the second time until the end of the millennium. This is post-millennialism. Those who believe this put Christ’s coming at least one thousand years in the future. Satan is pleased thus to remove the thought and event far, far away.
2. That the millennium will be preceded by a secret coming of Christ. This is one of the most clever deceptions Satan has ever spread among honest people. The enemy has certainly stolen a march upon men. Think of it! Although Jesus did everything, that words could do, to tell us that His coming would be open and public before saints and sinners, we find a widespread interdenominational teaching directly to the contrary.

This is the “resurrection of life” to which Jesus referred (*John 5:29*). Only the “blessed and holy” come forth to life eternal in this—the first resurrection.

3. Wicked living slain.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8—“The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (*2 Thessalonians 2:8; Jeremiah 25:31-33*).

The angry nations at war with one another receive of the wrath of God as Christ, the “King of kings and Lord of lords,” comes to “destroy them which destroy the earth” (*Revelation 11:18*). As Sovereign Lord of the world, Christ uses His arsenal of weapons, which are much more potent than any thermonuclear devices and atomic bombs that are likely to be used in the war of Armageddon.

2 Peter 3:10—“The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.”

The spirits of devils inspire the Armageddon conflict. Satan rejoices in war and in the death of God’s creatures. All nations from east, west, south, and north plunge into the terrible slaughter. Then God arises to punish the transgressors of His law of love.

Jeremiah 25:30-32—“The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter His voice from his Holy habitation . . . For the Lord hath a controversy with the nations . . . Evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.”

“The kings of the earth and of the Whole world” (*Revelation 16:14*) are destroyed as Christ, the great warrior of heaven, rides forth to put down the forces of rebellion (*Revelation 19:11-16*). All the wicked die and the earth is depopulated.

4. All the righteous taken to heaven.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17—“The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (*John 14:1-3*).

The resurrected saints and the living righteous are taken out of this world to heaven. Please remember that the hour is coming when mercy’s voice will be hushed (*Revelation 22:11*). Then the seven last plagues will be poured out upon an unrepentant world. Armageddon, coming during the sixth plague, follows after man’s probation has closed. Those who wait for the time of that battle to get ready for heaven will be disappointed; it will be too late then.

Many who have long put off the day of salvation, secretly plan to make a

3. That the millennium is to be preceded by a seven-year reign of Antichrist. This also is a deception. A great host of people today, with all the glorious light of prophecy shining upon world history, do not see the real Antichrist and are looking for one to appear after Christ has come. The truth of the matter is that this false idea came as a part of the Counter-Reformation, and was introduced to offset the mighty work of such men as Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, and all the other great Reformers.

4. That the gospel will still be preached during the millennium, after the second coming of Christ. This lesson will clear up such a misconception.

5. That Christ has already come; and the dead will be raised from time to time during the millennium and given a second chance to accept the gospel while the devil is chained up.

If men can be led to believe any of the above five deceptions, Satan has a better chance to lead them to procrastinate. He says that Christ will not be here for at least one thousand years; so you can get ready after the secret coming of Christ. You can take a firm and glorious stand against Antichrist when he comes or, if you die unprepared, you will have a second chance. And the pity of it all is none of these statements is true.

Dear friend, let the love of God and His holy truth be in your soul as you study this lesson. You will see the simple, clear, and beautiful Bible truth on the coming millennium.

1 - WHAT FIVE EVENTS MARK THE BEGINNING OF THE MILLENNIUM?

1. Second coming of Christ.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-16—"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

Jesus' advent is preceded by the seven last plagues—most fearful scourges to strike mankind in the long history of our race. The war of Armageddon is the sixth of these plagues.

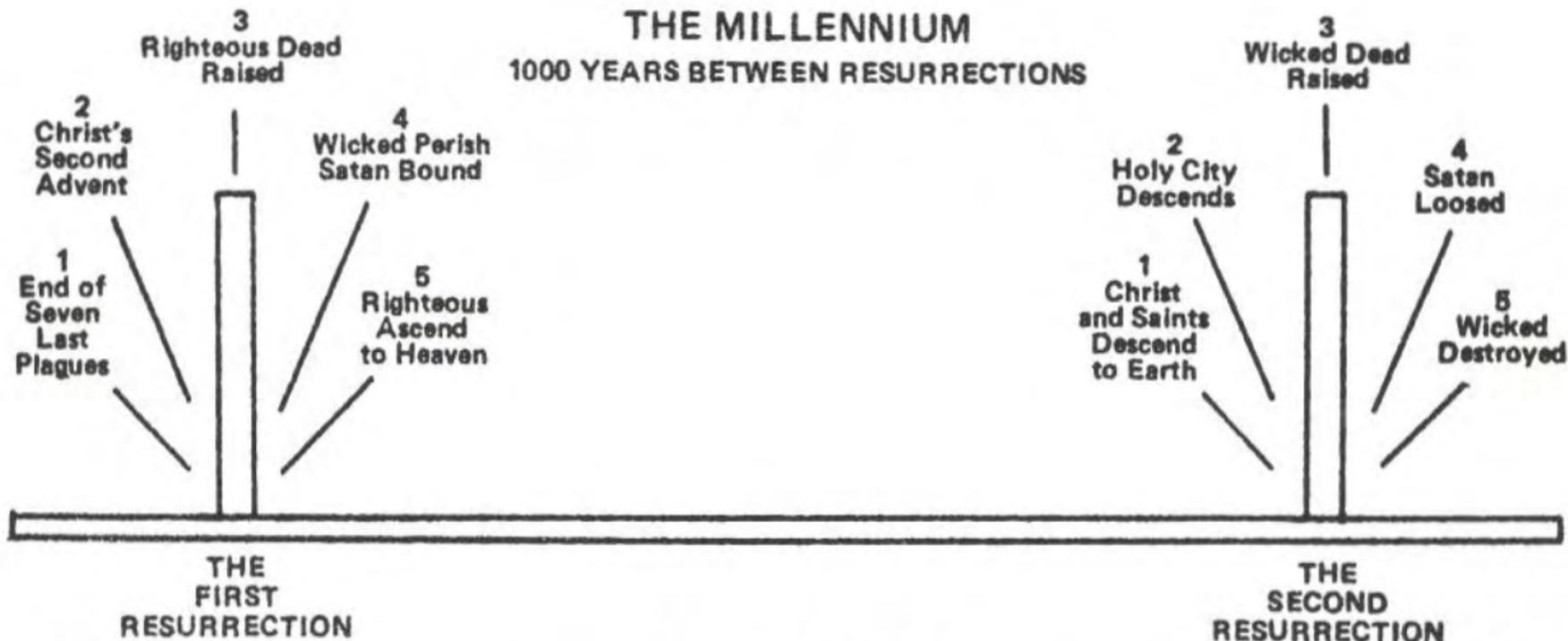
2. Righteous dead resurrected (the first resurrection).

Revelation 20:6—"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

1 Thessalonians 4:16—"The dead in Christ shall rise first."

THE MILLENNIUM

1000 YEARS BETWEEN RESURRECTIONS



END OF THE WORLD

THE MILLENNIUM

NEW EARTH AND ETERNITY

ON EARTH -

Satan has time to think about what he has done.
Their probation past, the wicked are dead.

IN HEAVEN -

The redeemed assist in the judgment of the wicked.

THE BIBLICAL MILLENNIUM

We live in the last days of history. The end of life as men now know it is nearly ended. Soon Jesus will return. We only have one period of probation—and that is during our present life. The millennium will not be a thousand years of glory and peace here on earth. And it will not be an age of technological progress or a “second chance” for the wicked. All mankind will not be converted before it, during it, or after it. And neither Christ nor His redeemed ones will be on the earth during the thousand years.

Here is the truth about the millennium and the events that mark its beginning and end:

1 - Jesus is going to return for His people: He promised us that He would (John 14:1-3), and so we can know that He will.

2 - There are four identifying marks of His second advent that cannot be counterfeited by false christs: (1) He will come so that all alive on the earth at that time can see Him return (Rev 1:7; Acts 1:9-11; Matt 24:30, 23-27). (2) He will come so all can hear Him as He returns (Matt 24:31; 1 Thess 4:16). (3) He will come in immense glory—that of His own and the millions of angels that will come with Him (Lk 9:26; Matt 28:2-4; Matt 25:31; Rev 6:14-17). (4) He will come unexpectedly (Matt 24:44, 36).

3 - His second coming will mark the beginning of the millennium. Six events will take place: (1) He will raise the righteous dead (1 Thess 4:16). (2) He will catch up the righteous living together with the righteous dead—to meet Him in the clouds (1 Thess 4:17). (3) He will change their vile bodies to be like unto His glorious body (Phil 3:20-21) and translate them (1 Cor 15:51-55; Isa 25:9). (4) Having gathered all the righteous (1 Thess 4:17-18; Matt 25:34-40; 24:30-31), He will take His redeemed ones to heaven (Jn 14:1-3; 17:24; 1 Thess 4:16-18). (5) He will destroy the living wicked with the brightness of His coming (Lk 17:26-30; 2 Thess 2:8). (6) He will bind Satan to this earth (Rev 20:2-3).

4 - During the millennium, the earth will be desolate (Rev 20:3; Jer 4:23-26; Isa 24:1, 3). The wicked are dead (2 Thess 2:8), and there is no man left (Isa 24:20-22; Jer 4:25-26; 25:31-33). Satan is bound on a desolate earth (Rev 20:1-3), and the righteous are in heaven (Rev 20:4, 6; Dan 7:22), engaged in a work of judgment (Rev 20:4; 1 Cor 6:1-3; Acts 24:25; Jude 6).

5 - At the close of the millennium, the Holy City descends from heaven (Rev 20:9; 21:1-5; Zech 14: 4, 9), the wicked are raised—the “second resurrection” (Rev 20:5, first part), and Satan is thus loosed to deceive them again (Rev 20:7-8). Satan and the wicked surround the City to take it (Rev 20:8-9). All of the wicked are destroyed (Rev 20:9), and this earth is made new (Rev 21:1-5; 2 Pet 3:10-14). How we long for the second coming of Christ!

grand rush for heaven when the opening gun of Armageddon is fired. This attitude is itself unworthy, and the plan is doomed to disappointment. Today is the day of salvation.

5. Satan is bound.

Revelation 20:2-3—“And He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.”

Since the blessed and holy come up in the first resurrection, at the beginning of the millennium, at Christ's second coming, we see that Christ's second coming is at the beginning of the millennium. This is what is known as the pre-millennial teaching of Christ's second coming, as opposed to the post-millennial, or after-millennial teaching.

Jesus said that He would return and take His people to the mansions He went to prepare. That settles it for you, doesn't it? He will take all the righteous to heaven. The wicked living will perish. The wicked dead who are already in their graves will remain there. Satan will be left alone in the ruined earth, his work of deception ended for 1,000 years. Satan is sentenced to a one-thousand-year term of imprisonment in this world—the very pit of destruction. He is truly bound, “that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled.” When the wicked are raised at the end of the 1,000 years, he will have a chance to deceive again. He will be loosed. Remember, the righteous dead will be raised at the beginning of the 1,000 years, the wicked at the close.

2 - WHAT FOUR FACTS MARK THE 1,000 YEAR PERIOD?

1. The earth is desolate—a bottomless pit.

Jeremiah 4:23—“I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void.”

The desolation of the earth is brought on by a series of tragic events: (1) the awful plagues, including the general carnage and devastation of Armageddon; (2) the awesome advent of Christ in glory, at which time the wicked are destroyed by fire and the earth is broken up by a great earthquake (*Revelation 16:17-21*).

Jeremiah 4:23-27—“I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the

presence of the Lord, and by His fierce anger. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end."

The expression, "bottomless pit," means a place of chaos, darkness, or desolation, and is translated from the Greek word from which we get "abyss." The same Greek word is used in the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament in Jeremiah 4:23-25, where the earth is pictured as "without form and void." The cities are broken down by an earthquake; everything is in a state of chaos. The birds have fled, and darkness covers the ugly scene of ruin.

2. The wicked are all dead (see question 1, point 3).

Said Jeremiah, "I beheld, and, lo, there was no man." The people are in heaven; the bad people are in the graves. The whole earth is as desolate as a ghost city.

3. Satan is thus "bound" on a desolate earth.

On this earth, Satan is "bound," for there is no living person on earth to deceive. He will have a thousand years' vacation from deception, a millennium to meditate on his long career of rebellion and the pitiful condition to which it has brought him. He will have plenty of time to lay plans to make a final assault against God at the end of the long, long darkness when the wicked dead shall come forth to their final brief season of life.

4. The righteous are engaged in a work of judgment in heaven.

Revelation 20:4—"I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgement was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands: and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (*1 Corinthians 6:1-3*).

The Bible teaches that the saved will have a part in the judgment. But why have a judgment after all cases have been decided?

When Christ comes, He brings His reward with Him and takes His people to heaven. But the wicked are to raised from the dead at the end of the 1,000 years, to receive the punishment of the second death. Just how will God deal with these cases? Who will be beaten with many stripes and who with few?

Suppose you had a very dear friend on earth, but in heaven he was not to be found. Well, during the millennium you will find out just how God has dealt with his case and the cases of all others. God takes a thousand years for this work. He will run no risk of having one single doubt in any mind about His work for fallen man. When the wicked finally have sentence pronounced upon them, it will be clear to all that they

deserve the punishment.

During this period God allows the saved to sit, as it were, beside Him and learn how hard He tried to save every person. I think we shall understand Him better and love Him more after we have learned from the Saviour, Himself, His story of salvation. Don't you? When it is all over we shall say, "True and righteous are Thy judgments." There will be no soil in our hearts for the growth of seeds of doubt. "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

**3 - WHAT SIX EVENTS
MARK THE CLOSE
OF THE MILLENNIUM?**

1. The wicked are raised.

Revelation 20:5—"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."

Since the righteous dead were raised one thousand years earlier, the expression, "the rest of the dead," must refer to the wicked.

2. Satan is thus loosed to deceive.

Revelation 20:7—"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison."

Now that the wicked have come forth to life again, the devil is free to pursue his evil work of deception.

3. The Holy City descends from heaven.

Revelation 21:2—"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

4. Satan gathers the wicked about the city.

Revelation 20:8-9—"And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city."

5. The wicked are destroyed.

Revelation 20:9—"And fire came down from God out of Heaven, and devoured them."

This fire purifies the earth and burns up sinners and the last traces of sin.

6. A new earth is created.

2 Peter 3:13-14—"We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Where-

fore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (*Revelation 21:1-5*).

Here is the sequence of events: The wicked dead are raised; the Holy City descends to earth with the saints; Satan mobilizes the vast multitude of the wicked against the Holy City and the saints; God destroys sin, sinners, death, and hell in that last, final destruction. This is the second death. Then He creates a new earth with all the marks and tracings of sin erased, and He will dwell with His people forever. O what a wonderful future will be ours.

4 - WHO WILL INHERIT A PLACE IN THE NEW EARTH?

Galatians 3:29—"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

If we are Christ's, we are heirs and shall inherit a place in the new earth. This means complete surrender to Him. It means not merely to profess Christ, but to possess Christ—to believe in Him, to build on His words, and to walk in His steps. Then, at last, we shall inherit and come into possession of the realities of eternity. We shall actually be there in person.

Revelation 21:7—"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son."

Whether we are to be among God's people in the Holy City depends upon whether we are overcomers now. Whether we have our names on the roll of that city depends upon whether we get them in the book of life now, and keep them there. Whether we serve God over there depends upon whether we obey Him now.

The next lesson is entitled "Bible Views of Heaven." It is a sweet study that will show you some of the beauties of our eternal home. How very important it is that we meet there! Be faithful, my friend, be faithful! Trust in Jesus and obey His inspired Word.

Brief Review Questions —

What five events occur at the beginning of the Millennium?

What four events occur during the Millennium?

What six events occur at the close of the Millennium?

THE MILLENNIUM

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—

“For six thousand years, Satan’s work of rebellion has ‘made the earth to tremble.’ He had ‘made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof.’ And he ‘opened not the house of his prisoners.’ For six thousand years his prison house has received God’s people, and he would have held them captive forever; but Christ had broken his bonds and set the prisoners free.

“Even the wicked are now placed beyond the power of Satan, and alone with his evil angels he remains to realize the effect of the curse which sin has brought. ‘The kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, everyone in his own house [the grave]. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch . . . Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people’ ” (Isaiah 14:18-20).

“For a thousand years, Satan will wander to and fro in the desolate earth to behold the results of his rebellion against the law of God. During this time his sufferings are intense. Since his fall his life of unceasing activity has banished reflection; but he is now deprived of his power and left to contemplate the part which he has acted since first he rebelled against the government of heaven, and to look forward with trembling and terror to the dreadful future when he must suffer for all the evil that he has done and be punished for the sins that he has caused to be committed . . .

“During the thousand years between the first and the second resurrection the judgment of the wicked takes place. The apostle Paul points to this judgment as an event that follows the second advent. ‘Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts’ (1 Corinthians 4:5) . . . At the close of the thousand years the second resurrection will take place. Then the wicked will be raised from the dead and appear before God for the execution of “the judgment written.” Thus the revelator, after describing the resurrection of the righteous, says: ‘The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished (Revelation 20:5).’

—*Great Controversy, 659-661*

The Millennium

1 - WHAT FIVE EVENTS MARK THE BEGINNING OF THE MILLENNIUM?

1. Second coming of Christ.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-16—"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the _____ of the Lord shall not prevent [go ahead of, marg.] them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

2. Righteous dead resurrected (the first resurrection).

Revelation 20:6—"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the _____ death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

1 Thessalonians 4:16—"The dead in Christ shall rise first."

3. Wicked living slain.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8—"The _____ Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (*2 Thessalonians 2:8; Jeremiah 25:31-33; 2 Peter 3:10*).

4. All the righteous taken to heaven.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17—"The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the _____, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (*John 14:1-3*).

5. Satan is bound.

Revelation 20:2-3—"And He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the _____ and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

2 - WHAT FOUR FACTS MARK THE 1,000 YEAR PERIOD?

1. The earth is desolate—a bottomless pit.

Jeremiah 4:23—“I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void” (also *Jeremiah 4:24-27*).

2. The wicked are all dead (see question 1, point 3).

3. Satan is thus “bound” on a desolate earth.

4. The righteous are engaged in a work of judgment in heaven.

Revelation 20:4—“I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and _____ was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his _____ upon their foreheads, or in their hands: and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years” (*1 Corinthians 6:1-3*).

3 - WHAT SIX EVENTS MARK THE CLOSE OF THE MILLENNIUM?

1. The wicked are raised.

Revelation 20:5—“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.”

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Revelation 20:7—“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be _____ out of his prison.”

3. The Holy City descends from heaven.

Revelation 21:2—“And I John saw the holy _____, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

4. Satan gathers the wicked about the city.

Revelation 20:8-9—“And shall go out to _____ the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the _____ about, and the beloved city.”

5. The wicked are destroyed.

Revelation 20:9—“And _____ came down from God out of Heaven, and devoured them.”

6. A new earth is created.

2 Peter 3:13-14—“We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new _____, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (*Revelation 21:1-5; Galatians 3:29; Revelation 21:7*).

What the Bible says about – Bible Views of Heaven

SCRIPTURE READING:
REVELATION 21 AND 22

God has a plan to restore “all things” to their Edenic perfection. This hope has been held out to the human race—lost in sin and insecurity—by “all His holy prophets since the world began” (*Acts 3:21*). Yes, from Moses right down through John, the promise of a better world has brought cheer to man—like a bright morning star burning on the gray horizon. At the center of that plan of restoration is a divine person, Jesus. He is called, by Peter, “the day star” of hope (*2 Peter 1:19*). When He came to earth He said that the “Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (*Luke 19:10*). Let us see:

1 - WHAT FOUR TREASURES DID GOD GIVE TO MAN AT CREATION?

1. Life.

Genesis 2:7—“The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and man became a living soul.”

In the beginning man was given life. He was created from the dust of the ground. God breathed into his nostril the breath of life. He became “a living soul” (*Genesis 2:7*). Man had not existed before. He did not create himself. For his very existence he was indebted to God—only to God.

2. A righteous nature.

Genesis 1:26—“God said, Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.”

Ecclesiastes 7:29—“God hath made man upright.”

God gave Adam, the first man, a righteous nature. Surely a good, wise, and all-powerful God would do no less than that. A good God would desire to make a good man. And this is exactly what He did. Adam and Eve, our first ancestors (*Luke 3:38*), were innocent and pure when they came forth from the hand of their Creator.

3. A home in a beautiful world.

Genesis 2:8-9—“The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is

pleasant to the sight and good for food.”

Genesis 1:31—“God saw every thing He had made, and, behold, it was very good.”

Yes, God gave man a home, in a garden, in a lovely primeval world. This is no more and no less than we would expect God to do. He is the author of the home and marriage, of beauty and happiness. Security was to be bound up with the home and family life.

4. Dominion of the earth.

Genesis 1:28—“God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

God gave man dominion. Although man was made “a little lower than the angels,” yet he was equipped with intelligence and management, that he might be in charge of God’s creation here (*Psalm 8:5-6*).

What an outlook! Life with abundant health; a righteous character; a home in a beautiful, sinless world; and dominion over the created works of God! What more could man desire? Just one thing—that this happy state might last forever!

And that depended upon man. For God placed him under obedience to law as an indispensable condition of his very existence.

Furthermore, God gave to man the power and freedom of choice. Only in this way could man be a morally responsible being. Only thus could he develop character. “Obedience, perfect and perpetual, was the condition of eternal happiness.” In God’s order, obedience springs from love and is rendered by choice. But it is, nevertheless, imperative.

A special test was arranged. A certain tree was to be left strictly alone (*Genesis 2:8-9, 15-17*). What an easy test! No great deed, work, or sacrifice was required. There could be no possible reason for transgression. The very lightness of the prohibition would make the sin great. If man sinned, it would be deliberate. God could not be blamed, for He had told them to leave the tree alone. They must have understood this to be a simple test of their faith—nothing more. But we all know what happened (*Genesis 3*).

2 - HOW DID MAN LOSE THESE FOUR TREASURES?

By sin. And what reason can be given for man’s sin? None. To give a reason would be to justify the deed. Only excuses and explanations can be offered. A little neighbor boy sat on the front steps finishing up a cry with slowly subsiding snuffles. “What’s the matter, sonny?” I asked. “Daddy whipped me,” he meekly replied. “And why did he do that?” I inquired. “’Cause I was naughty,” he answered. “But why were you naughty?” His reply was typically human, “My brother, Kenneth, made me naughty.”

Yes, that is the way it is. Adam blamed God for giving him Eve. Eve blamed the serpent for everything. She had listened to his story about getting on a higher plane, about being like gods. Many today are being lured by the ancient sophistries of the devil, streamlined for moderns.

1 Timothy 2:14—“Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”

There was no need for Eve to be deceived. She had to reject God’s truth first, before she could accept the devil’s deception. Had God not given her truth the situation would have been different. Adam was not deceived. He walked into sin with his eyes open, taking the risk and hoping God would be merciful. He made an excuse of Eve. He loved her more than he did God. And what tragedy resulted! It is always disastrous to disobey God. Adam gambled and lost. And what did he lose? all that God gave him.

1. Man lost life.

Genesis 3:19—“In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return” (*Romans 6:23*).

As the result of his sin he was removed from access to the tree of life, lest he should “eat, and live for ever” (*Genesis 3:22*). Man was not immortal by nature or creation. Sin, God warned, would bring death, not life. “All the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died” (*Genesis 5:5*). Sin is real; and death is real. God says so. The devil disputed God’s Word. Man found God’s Word is right.

2. Man lost his righteous nature.

Romans 5:12—“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

1 John 5:17—“All unrighteousness is sin.”

The unnumbered volumes of history record the deeds of man’s sinful career for long millenniums. No words need be added here. Adam lost his righteous nature.

3. Man lost his Eden home.

Genesis 3:23-24—“Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

4. Man lost his dominion.

2 Peter 2:19—“Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.”

2 Corinthians 4:4—“The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of

Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

Having cast off the dominion God had over him, man lost the dominion God had placed under him. He was now in a world fallen to the dominion of Satan.

A curse was also pronounced upon the earth for man's sake. “Cursed is the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life” (*Genesis 3:17*). Sinful man in a sinful world needed the discipline of toil and care. No civilization has yet been able to endure ease and luxury. Our civilization today is no exception. And yet the tired and weary heart of man longs for the time of restoration to come when the dominion lost through sin will be his once more.

3 - HOW WILL CHRIST RESTORE THE FOUR TREASURES?

The Saviour came to earth “to seek and to save that which was lost” (*Luke 19:10*). He purchased our salvation by shedding His “precious blood” (*1 Peter 1:19*). Then He returned to heaven, “having obtained eternal redemption for us” (*Hebrews 9:12*).

Though every man is born in sin, no man has a right to place a low estimate upon himself. God so valued man that He gave heaven's greatest gift for his redemption. He could not have given more. Think now of the treasures that will be restored to us through the gospel.

1. Life restored.

No matter how a man dies, God can raise him up. His ashes may be strewn on the moving bosom of a river and carried to the bounds of seven seas, but God can raise him up to everlasting life. Here are the promises of life restored by the Lifegiver, Jesus Christ:

John 3:16—“God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Romans 6:23—“The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

2. Righteousness restored.

A sinner comes to God. His sins are confessed, forsaken, and forgiven. Love is awakened in his soul, and the process of restoration begins. Sanctification is another name for it. The work is done by the Spirit of God, and the Word of God has a part. “Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth” (*John 17:17*). Cooperation with God is paramount in this process. Here are the promises:

2 Corinthians 5:17—“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

2 Corinthians 3:18—“We all, with open face beholding as in a

glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as the Spirit of the Lord.”

3. Man's beautiful home restored.

Many an infidel, millions of skeptics, and some Christians have asked, “Why doesn't a good and mighty God put an end to this cruel, suffering world?” The answer is, “He is planning to do that very soon.” The first step will be Christ's second coming. The next and the last step will be taken at the end of the 1,000 years, as you have studied. New heavens and a new earth will be created, and God will dwell here with His people forever. Here are the promises:

Acts 3:20-21—“He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets since the world began.”

Isaiah 65:17—“Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.”

4. Dominion restored.

We do not propose to speculate on the details of the future life. Its loveliness will surpass our fondest dreams, its beauty will exceed the greatest flight of our imagination, and its joys soar beyond our highest hopes. There, man's lost mastery of himself and his dominion of the earth shall be restored as God has promised.

Revelation 3:21—“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.”

Matthew 25:21—“I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”

4 - A PICTURE OF THE BETTER WORLD

It is a glorious prospect, dear friend, almost too good to be true. But it is real! Thank God, it is real; and it is coming soon, God's better world. Here are six facts about the earth made new, where there will be freedom from fear, want, worry, pain, and every evil. And there will be security over there—eternal security.

1. The New Jerusalem, the capital city, comes down to earth.

Revelation 21:2—“I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

2. God dwells with men in this city.

Revelation 21:3—“I heard a great voice out of heaven saying,

Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

3. There will be country life and useful labor.

Isaiah 65:21—"They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat of the fruit of them."

4. There will be no pain, sorrow, crying, or death.

Revelation 21:4—"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (*Isaiah 33:24*).

5. There will be life and beauty and song everywhere.

Isaiah 35:1, 6, 9-10—"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose . . . Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert . . . No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (*Isaiah 11:6-9*).

6. The restoration will be perfect and complete.

1 Corinthians 2:9—"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

Nahum 1:9—"Affliction shall not rise up the second time."

With such promises soon to be realized, how earnestly should we seek to do the will of God!

**5 - HOW SHALL WE MAKE SURE
OF A PLACE OVER THERE?**

There are three important guideposts to help direct your feet as you journey heavenward. Here they are:

1. Confess Christ before men.

Matthew 10:32—"Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven" (*Luke 9:26*).

2. Obey God's commands and instructions.

John 14:15—"If ye love Me, keep My commandments."

3. Keep an eye of faith on the better world.

Hebrews 11:13-14—"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country."

Wendell Phillips delivered a lecture in Boston one cold November night. Afterward he found that he had missed the train to his home, some twelve miles away. He hired a carriage. His friends urged him to remain until the next day. He said simply, "Ann Phillips is at the other end. I'll go home tonight, thank you!" He would not disappoint his wife. We must not disappoint God nor our loved ones and friends. They will be looking for us when that happy hour comes.

The Bible tells us about three heavens. The first is the atmospheric heavens (*Genesis 1:6-8*). The second is the starry heavens (*Psalms 19:1-6*). The third heaven is paradise to this earth. If God dwells in us now by faith, we may dwell with Him forever then. It is a glorious future that God has planned for you and me. Shall we meet over there and enjoy eternal security? It will be the answer to a million dreams and hopes that life in this present evil world can never afford!

The next study, "Two Important Bible Prophecies," is about two important prophecies of Daniel. This is a fascinating study, which you will not want to miss.

Brief Review Questions —

What are the four things which mankind lost because of sin, which, by accepting the sacrifice of Christ, mankind can regain?

Name five of the promised blessings, you will receive in heaven, which you especially desire?

BIBLE VIEWS OF HEAVEN
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—

“There the redeemed shall know, even as also they are known. The loves and sympathies which God Himself has planted in the soul shall there find truest and sweetest exercise . . . There, immortal minds will contemplate with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. There will be no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God. Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body.

“All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God’s redeemed. Unfettered by mortality, they wing their tireless flight to worlds afar—worlds that thrilled with sorrow at the spectacle of human woe and rang with songs of gladness at the tidings of a ransomed soul. With unutterable delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings. They share the treasures of knowledge and understanding gained through ages upon ages in contemplation of God’s handiwork. With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation—suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity. Upon all things, from the least to the greatest, the Creator’s name is written, and in all are the riches of His power displayed.

“And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise.

“‘And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever’ (Revelation 5:13).

“The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.”

Bible Views of Heaven

1 - WHAT FOUR TREASURES DID GOD GIVE TO MAN AT CREATION?

1. Life. *Genesis 2:7.* **2. A righteous nature.** *Genesis 1:26.* **3. A home in a beautiful world.** *Genesis 2:8-9.* **4. Dominion of the earth.** *Genesis 1:28.*

2 - HOW DID MAN LOSE THESE FOUR TREASURES?

1. Man lost life. *Genesis 3:19; Romans 6:23.* **2. Man lost his righteous nature.** *Romans 5:12; 1 John 5:17—“All unrighteousness is sin.”* **3. Man lost his Eden home.** *Genesis 3:23-24.* **4. Man lost his dominion.** *2 Peter 2:19; 2 Corinthians 4:4.*

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John 3:16—“God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever _____ in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

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2 Corinthians 3:18—“We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the _____ of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as the Spirit of the Lord.”

3. Man's beautiful home restored. *Acts 3:20-21; Isaiah 65:17.* **4. Dominion restored.** *Revelation 3:21; Matthew 25:21.*

4 - A PICTURE OF THE BETTER WORLD

1. The New Jerusalem, the capital city, comes down to earth.

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2. Obey God's commands and instructions.

John 14:15—"If ye love Me, keep My commandments."

3. Keep an eye of faith on the better world. Hebrews 11:13-14.

What the Bible says about – Daniel Eight and Nine

SCRIPTURE READING: DANIEL 8 AND 9

The Bible speaks of a judgment in which men shall be called to give an account to God for their deeds. Christ warned His hearers that for “every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment” (*Matthew 12:36*). Paul preached the judgment before Felix (*Acts 24:25*), and Daniel in vision saw the judgment in session (*Daniel 7:9-10*). A subject of so great importance, which involves every living being, deserves the closest study. The prophecy of Daniel that is presented in this lesson points to the exact time for the beginning of the judgment. Let us now open our Bibles to Daniel, chapter eight, and observe that the prophet is given a clear-cut view of the period in history when the judgment convenes in heaven.

THE VISION OF DANIEL 8

We are now back with Daniel in the palace of an ancient empire where he received a dramatic vision from God. A few questions will help us get our bearings. Remember, please, these questions will not help you much unless you have read Daniel eight and nine!

1. Who is represented by the ram and its two horns?

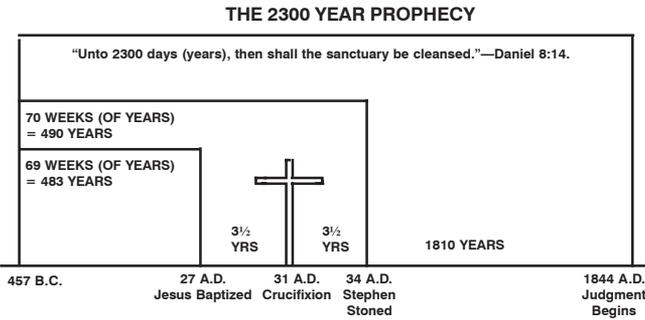
Daniel 8:20—“The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.”

Little explanation is needed. The Bible is perfectly plain. One of the ram’s horns was higher than the other, indicating that one of the powers of this dual monarchy, Medo-Persia, was to be stronger than the other. Daniel 8 adds the point that the higher came up last. “The Medes were at first the leading people” (*Phillip V. Meyers, General History, p. 59 [Daniel 5:30-31; Jeremiah 51:11]*). Later the Persians were in the ascendancy. Alexander the Great, of Grecia, about 200 years after Babylon’s fall, overcame the Persians under Darius III, at the battle of Arbela in 331 B.C.

2. Who is represented by the goat?

Daniel 8:21—“The rough goat is the king of Grecia.”

The goat represents Grecia, or Greece. This is clearly stated. The leopard, with four wings, in Daniel 7, indicated swiftness. The goat “touched not the ground,” so rapid was his movement. Both these symbols for Grecia are fitting. Medo-Persia was to become “great.” Grecia was to be



DANIEL'S AMAZING PROPHECIES

The master prophecy of the Bible is given in Daniel 8. This chapter closely connects with Daniel 7 and 9, and should be studied with them.

DANIEL 7 (written in 553-552 B.C.) reveals world history from Daniel's time down to the second advent of Christ. In vision, Daniel sees four world empires symbolized as beasts, followed by a little horn power (Dan 7:1-8, 15-21, 23-25). The Investigative Judgment then convenes in heaven (Dan 7:9-10, 13, 22, 26). And, after that, history ends with the second advent of Christ (Dan 7:14, 27-28).

The animals in Daniel 7 parallel the parts of the metal image of Daniel 2. The lion in chapter 7 is Babylon (605-539 B.C.). The bear is Medo-Persia (538-331 B.C.). The leopard beast is Grecia (331-168 B.C.), at which time it becomes divided into four kingdoms which continue on until around 168 B.C.). The terrible beast is Pagan Rome (168 B.C. to the 5th Century A.D., when it becomes broken into ten kingdoms). The little horn is Papal Rome, which gained full power by A.D. 538, after uprooting three kingdoms (the Heruli, Vandals, and Ostrogoths).

DANIEL 8 is composed of two major parts. The first is an EVENT prophecy that closely parallels the prophecy of Daniel 7. This prophecy is about two beasts and a little horn that follows them (Dan 8:1-12, 20-25). The first beast, a ram, is Medo-Persia (538-331 B.C.), and the he-goat which struck it down was Grecia (334-168 B.C.). The "notable horn" was Alexander the Great who, before his death in 323, carved out the largest empire in history up to that time—in only ten years. When he was broken off in the prime of life, the empire divided into four sections. The little horn is Pagan Rome which, historians tell us, was taken over by Papal Rome. Much of Daniel 7 and 8 (7:8, 19-26, and 8:9-12, 23-25) is given to a concern over this power.

It would speak blasphemies (7:8, 20; 8:11), seek to kill God's people (7:21, 25; 8:10, 24-25), cast down the truth (8:12, 25), tear God's Sanctuary down from heaven (8:11), and even try to change the law of God (7:25). Revelation 13 (read verses 6-7, for example) deals with the same little horn power—the papacy.

But there is a second part to Daniel 8: This is a TIME prophecy (Dan 8:13-14, 26). The prophecy itself is given in Daniel 8:14. *“Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”* Careful reading of this chapter reveals that, while the angel Gabriel was told to explain the vision of Daniel 8 to the prophet (8:16), only the event prophecy was explained (8:17-25) while the time prophecy was only referred to (8:26). Daniel nearly fainted under the burden (8:27), and the prayer of Daniel 9 is the result.

DANIEL 9 begins with the prophet's prayer for guidance and help for his people (Dan 9:1-19). Gabriel, the one whom he had seen in his earlier vision (9:21), is then sent in answer to his prayer (9:20), in order to complete the explanation (9:22-23).

THE LONGEST PROPHECY BEGINS. The 70 week prophecy (Dan 9:24-27) is the first part of the 2300 day prophecy. Seventy weeks are “determined” (*“cut off”* in Hebrew—cut off from the larger 2300 day [year] prophecy) for the Jews. Therefore, the first part of the 2300 day prophecy of Daniel 8:14 is time allocated to the Jews, to conclude their probation as God's specially favored nation.

In Bible prophecy, a day equals a year (Num 14:34; Ezek 4:6). The decree of Artaxerxes, given in his seventh year as king, in 457 B.C. (Dan 9:25; Ezra 6:14; 7:6-8), restoring the Jewish government, begins this vast time prophecy of 2300 years. The first 70 weeks (Dan 9:24-27) of this prophecy, cut off or allotted to the Jews, equals 490 years. The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt in 7 weeks, or 49 years (408 B.C.). Another 62 weeks brings us to the anointing of Christ for His mission in A.D. 27. Now 423 years are past; only 1 week remains of the 70. In the midst of this week (Dan 9:26-27), A.D. 31, the Messiah is cut off, crucified. A second half-week of 3½ years brings us to A.D. 34, when at the stoning of Stephen the gospel is taken to the Gentiles.

THE LONGEST PROPHECY ENDS. In A.D. 34 the 70 weeks, or 490 years, is completed. There remains 410 years of this longest Bible prophecy, of Daniel 8:14, to be fulfilled. At its termination, in A.D. 1844, began the “cleansing of the sanctuary” predicted in this important passage of Daniel 8:14.

Jesus is our High Priest in the heavenly Sanctuary (the pattern of the earthly). In 1844, He began His final work in it, prior to His second advent to the earth for His people.

“very great.”

3. Who is symbolized by the great horn between his eyes?

Daniel 8:21—“The great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.”

Alexander the Great, the first king, was to be broken when Grecia was strong. Alexander led Grecia to world leadership, then died of a fever following a drunken spree, at the age of thirty-two, in 323 B.C. Grecia was strong when Alexander was at the height of its glorious conquests.

4. What do the four horns of the goat represent?

Daniel 8:22—“Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.”

The four horns represent the four divisions of Alexander’s realm. The historian, Rawlinson, says, “A quadripartite [fourfold] division of Alexander’s dominion was recognized.” This took place twenty-two years after Alexander’s death; when, after the Battle of Ipsus, his warring generals divided the kingdom into four parts—east, west, north, south—“toward the four winds of heaven.” The four horns correspond to the four heads of the leopard of Daniel 7.

The accompanying chart and explanation will clarify the events which are set forth in the prophecies of the 70 weeks and the 2300 days. The Bible clearly shows that, often in prophecy, God uses a day to represent a year (*Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6*). This prophecy, in Daniel 9, demonstrates the principle and sets the seal to the whole prophecy of the 2300 years. The decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem was completed when Artaxerxes restored civil government to the Jewish nation in 457 B.C. In A.D. 27, 483 years later, Christ was baptized in the Jordan River and was anointed by the Holy Spirit descending upon Him in the form of a dove. In A.D. 31, three and a half years later, “in the midst of the week,” He was crucified. The stoning of Stephen marked the final rejection of Christ’s mission by the Jewish nation. Henceforth the message of salvation was to be preached to the Gentiles. These historical events definitely establish the 2300-day prophecy and fix the termination of this long period in the year 1844.

5. What empire is represented by the little horn that grew out of one of the four horns?

Daniel 8:23—“In the latter time of their kingdom, when transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.”

Bible prophecy did not name specifically the successor of the Grecian kingdom. Daniel’s previous prophecies (*Daniel 2 and 6*) follow the pattern of the four world empires seen in history—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. The prophecy of Daniel 8 begins with the second,

Medo-Persia, and presents three empires. This last kingdom was the one that was to “stand up against the Prince of princes” (*Daniel 8:25*). Jesus Christ was that prince, and the Roman power put Him to death. So the little horn was Rome. The little horn came forth from one of the four horns. The Romans defeated the Macedonians in 168 B.C. This was the western division of Greece. From this beginning, Rome went on to conquer all. Pagan Rome became “exceeding great. And since pagan Rome was followed by papal Rome, it can be said that papal Rome also became “exceeding great” (see the lesson on a prophetic study of Daniel 7 and the papacy). Finally all earthly powers will be “broken without hand,” at the second coming of Christ, which is represented in Daniel 2 as the “stone . . . cut out of the mountain without hands” (*Daniel 2:45*) and destroys the kingdoms of earth.

6. What long time period is introduced into the prophecy at this point?

Daniel 8:14—“And He said unto me, unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed.”

7. To what period of earth’s history does the vision point?

Daniel 8:17—“So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.”

A part of this prophecy is to reach to the “time of the end.” Since we are living in that time, we should prayerfully study to know the meaning of that portion of the prophecy which applies in our day.

8. What happened to Daniel when the angel had proceeded thus far in his explanation of the vision?

Daniel 8:26-27—“The vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days. And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days.”

Daniel fainted and was sick as he saw the host of God and the Sanctuary trodden underfoot (*Daniel 8:13, 27*). He did not fully understand how this would take place, nor the meaning of the long period of 2300 days. The words rang in his ears, “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed.” What could they mean? Daniel was deeply concerned about the 2300 days, but no explanation had been given to him.

2 - THE VISION OF DANIEL 9

As chapter nine opens, we find Daniel still in distress over the unexplained portion of the vision, the 2300 days. Let us notice what happened. First of all: Daniel prayed for light on the Sanctuary.

Daniel 9:1-4—“In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; in the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: and I prayed unto the Lord my God.”

Daniel 9:17—“Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and His supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy Sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord’s sake.”

He began to study the prophecies diligently (*Daniel 9:1-2*). He prayed earnestly and confessed his sins and the sins of his people (*Daniel 9:4-5, 20*). This is a good way to get light from God.

Then, Gabriel came from God to give him understanding on the 2300 days.

Daniel 9:21-22—“Whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.”

Gabriel introduced his explanation as follows:

Daniel 9:23—“I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.”

The angel Gabriel (*Daniel 9:21*) came in order that Daniel might “understand the matter, and consider the vision” (*Daniel 9:21-23*). The only vision under consideration was the vision of Daniel 8. And the unexplained portion of that vision was the 2300 days and the Sanctuary. This was the part of the prophecy that Gabriel came to unfold to the prophet. He called Daniel’s attention to the time element which had been left unexplained. “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people,” he said (*Daniel 9:24*).

Please turn now to your Bible and read again Daniel 9:24-27. Remember that the 70 weeks and the 2,300 days, or years, are associated. Remember, too, that, in prophecy, a day stands for a year (*Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6*).

Note the following seven points based on Daniel 9:24-27. Read these verses carefully.

1. Seventy weeks of seven days each would be 490 days, or literal years.
2. The 490 years are “determined,” or cut off, especially for the Jews

(*Daniel 9:24*). They are cut off from the 2,300 years, leaving 1,810 years.

3. The period was to begin with the date the Persians gave command to restore Jerusalem. This was 457 B.C. (*Daniel 9:25; Ezra 7:11-26*). The Babylonians had conquered the Jews. The Persians were to restore Jerusalem. God raised up Cyrus to perform His work (*Isaiah 44:28*).

4. The first 7 weeks ($7 \times 7 = 49$ years) were for the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

5. The next 62 weeks ($7 \times 62 = 434$ years) were to reach to the Messiah, or the Anointed One. Jesus was anointed at His baptism, A.D. 27 (*Matthew 3:13-17; Acts 10:38*). When the clock of eternity struck the hour, Jesus was there on the bank of the Jordan River, to be baptized by John. "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son" (*Galatians 4:4*).

6. The 70th week of 7 years would reach from A.D. 27 to A.D. 34. In the midst of this week, A.D. 31, the Messiah was to be "cut off, but not for Himself" (*Daniel 9:26*). This was fulfilled when Christ was crucified. The Messiah was also to "cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" (*Daniel 9:27*). When Christ died on the cross, the veil of the Temple of Jerusalem was torn from top to bottom by an unseen hand (*Matthew 27:51*). A human hand would have torn it from the bottom to the top. God thus signified that the sacrificial service of animals was over. The "Lamb of God" had been slain. The remaining years of the 70th week, or the 490 years, reached to A.D. 34. Stephen was stoned to death by the Jews, and the great persecution of the church at Jerusalem followed (*Acts 7:59; 8:1*). The Jewish people as a nation had rejected the Messiah, and now He left their house desolated. The 490 years allotted to the Jewish nation were finished.

7. The 70 weeks, or 490 years, were part of the 2,300 years. Since the 490 years reach to A.D. 34, the remaining 1,810 years of the 2,300 years would reach to 1844. If you have difficulty in figuring the date, 1844, and get 1843 instead (2300 minus 457 is 1843), just remember that it takes 457 full years before Christ and 1,843 full years after Christ to make 2,300. Since the decree went forth after a part of the year 457 B.C. had passed, the end of the 2,300 full years would fall after the close of A.D. 1843, well-over into the year of 1844.

At this time, the Sanctuary was to be cleansed. Many interpreters of prophecy living at that time thought the cleansing of the Sanctuary meant the end of the world. But the expression, "cleansing of the Sanctuary," had a different meaning. We shall seek to find the full truth of this important matter in the next lesson. But we can say this much now: The cleansing of the Sanctuary and the judgment of the world are closely related. When this subject is understood clearly, you will thrill with a new sense of love and respect for the great God who has revealed such mysteries to men.

The history of the Jews and their rejection of Christ is on record for our admonition. They did not understand the true nature, character, and purpose of Jesus' mission to the world nor the time of the visitation of their judgment. Yet the prophecies were clear on these points. Israel need not have rejected Christ and brought such calamities upon their nation. Let us with earnest purpose and prayer determine to know God's plan for us today, that we may cooperate with Him and accept fully the saving light of prophetic truth.

The next lesson is closely linked to this present lesson. You will want to begin that fascinating study as soon as you can, while the vision of Daniel 8 and 9 are still fresh in your mind.

Brief Review Questions —

What is represented by the ram and its two horns?

What does the great horn between the ram's two eyes symbolize?

What is the meaning of the four horns of the goat?

What empire is indicated by the little horn, which grew out of one of the four horns?

What dates mark the beginning and ending of the 70 weeks?

What happened during the last of the 70 weeks?

When did the 2300 years end?

Daniel Eight and Nine

1 - THE VISION OF DANIEL 8

1. Who is represented by the ram and its two horns?

Daniel 8:20—"The ram which thou _____ having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia."

2. Who is represented by the goat?

Daniel 8:21—"The rough goat is the king of Grecia."

3. Who is symbolized by the great horn between his eyes?

Daniel 8:21—"The great _____ that is between his eyes is the first king."

4. What do the four horns of the goat represent?

Daniel 8:22—"Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, _____ kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power."

5. What empire is represented by the little horn that grew out of one of the four horns?

Daniel 8:23—"In the latter time of their kingdom, when transgressors are come to the full, a king of _____ countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up."

6. What long time period is introduced into the prophecy at this point?

Daniel 8:14—"And He said unto me, unto two thousand and three _____ days; then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed."

7. To what period of earth's history does the vision point?

Daniel 8:17—"So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the _____ of the end shall be the vision."

8. What happened to Daniel when the angel had proceeded thus far in his explanation of the vision?

Daniel 8:26-27—"The vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days. And I Daniel _____, and was sick certain days."

2 - THE VISION OF DANIEL 9

Daniel 9:1-4—"In the first year of _____ the son of

Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; in the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to _____ the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: and I prayed unto the Lord my God.”

Daniel 9:17—“Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and His supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy _____ that is desolate, for the Lord’s sake.”

Daniel 9:21-22—“Whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the _____ at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.”

Daniel 9:23—“I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore _____ the matter, and consider the vision.”

THE LONGEST PROPHECY BEGINS. The 70 week prophecy (Dan 9:24-27) is the first part of the 2300 day prophecy. Seventy weeks are “determined” (“cut off” in Hebrew—cut off from the larger 2300 day [year] prophecy) for the Jews. Therefore, the first part of the 2300 day prophecy of Daniel 8:14 is time allocated to the Jews, to conclude their probation as God’s specially favored nation.

In Bible prophecy, a day equals a year (Num 14:34; Ezek 4:6). The decree of Artaxerxes, given in his seventh year as king, in 457 B.C. (Dan 9:25; Ezra 6:14; 7:6-8), restoring the Jewish government, begins this vast time prophecy of 2300 years. The first 70 weeks (Dan 9:24-27) of this prophecy, cut off or allotted to the Jews, equals 490 years. The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt in 7 weeks, or 49 years (408 B.C.). Another 62 weeks brings us to the anointing of Christ for His mission in A.D. 27. Now 423 years are past; only 1 week remains of the 70. In the midst of this week (Dan 9:26-27), A.D. 31, the Messiah is cut off, crucified. A second half-week of 3½ years brings us to A.D. 34, when at the stoning of Stephen the gospel is taken to the Gentiles.

THE LONGEST PROPHECY ENDS. In A.D. 34 the 70 weeks, or 490 years, is completed. There remains 410 years of this longest Bible prophecy, of Daniel 8:14, to be fulfilled. At its termination, in A.D. 1844, began the “cleansing of the sanctuary” predicted in this important passage of Daniel 8:14. Jesus is our High Priest in the heavenly Sanctuary (the pattern of the earthly). In 1844, He began His final work in it, prior to His second advent to the earth for His people.

What the Bible says about – The Sanctuary in Heaven

SCRIPTURE READING:
HEBREWS 9; LEVITICUS 16

1 - HOW IS SALVATION MADE POSSIBLE TO US?

Without the shedding of blood there is no remission, or forgiveness, of sin.

Hebrews 9:22—“Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission” (*Leviticus 17:11*).

Years ago a young Brahman called to see a missionary in Calcutta. They talked together about Christianity and the Hindu religions. During the visit the youthful Brahman said, “Many things which Christianity contains I find in Hinduism. But there is one thing Christianity has and Hinduism has not.” “What is that?” asked the missionary. “A Saviour” was his reply.

Christ is the world’s Saviour because He paid the penalty for our sins by shedding His blood in sacrifice. He was the divine-human substitute who laid down His life, to save the human race from the penalty of God’s broken law. All through human history, the coming of Jesus, as the Lamb of God who would give His life blood as the offering for sin, was the great hope of the world. The animal sacrifices offered by Abel, Noah, Abraham, and other Old Testament characters represented Christ who would come into the world and shed His blood in sacrifice for our sins. And the blood of these slain animals typified the blood of Christ. Notice two texts carefully:

Hebrews 9:12—“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He . . . obtained eternal redemption for us” (*Matthew 26:28; Isaiah 53:5-7*).

John 1:29—“John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God.”

Christ is the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (*Revelation 13:8*). He stood in readiness to make the sacrifice before the world (*1 Peter 1:18-20*). He came from heaven to this earth to accomplish this. None but Christ, one equal to God, whose law had been broken, could redeem man from its curse. The blood of bulls and goats could not do this (*Hebrews 10:4*). This blood could serve only as a type of Christ’s blood.

2 - HOW DID THE OLD TESTAMENT SACRIFICES REVEAL THE SAVIOUR?

Abel, Noah, and Abraham offered blood sacrifices because they had faith in the salvation promised through the coming Saviour. These Old Testament sacrifices were symbolic of Jesus and intended to keep fresh in mind the true Lamb of God who would come to earth and shed His blood for our redemption..(*Hebrews* 9:3-5, 8, 13, 20, 22).

From the time of Adam's sin to Moses, some 2,500 years, the offering of sacrifices was made by the head of the family.

From Moses' time till the advent of Christ, animal sacrifices were offered in a special building, or sanctuary, constructed for this purpose. In this beautiful building, God promised to meet with Israel. Here is the record:

Exodus 25:8—"Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."

These sacrifices were a temporary arrangement, "a figure for the time then present" until the true Lamb of God would come.

Hebrews 9:9—"Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices."

The entire sacrificial work was organized in, and about, the sanctuary that Moses was instructed to build. Later, Solomon's Temple housed this service. It was built upon the very spot where Abraham brought his son, Isaac, to be sacrificed on Mount Moriah.

3 - HOW MANY ROOMS WERE IN THE SANCTUARY?

Exodus 26:33—"Thou shalt hang the veil . . . and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy."

The sanctuary proper had two rooms and was situated inside an open-air court some 75 by 150 feet. The walls of the court were made of linen screens suspended from upright brass pillars. The entrance was at the eastern end. In the court were the altar of burnt offering and the brass laver, where the priests washed their hands and feet before entering the sanctuary.

1. The first, or holy, apartment was for daily use.

Hebrews 9:6—"Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God."

The first, or holy, apartment had three articles of furniture: the golden candlestick with seven lamps (*Exodus* 25:37), the table of shewbread, and the altar of incense. The service here was daily. On the altar of incense, the priest burned incense morning and evening. A magnificent veil separated this apartment from the second.

For a description of the furniture of the first apartment, turn to Exodus 25:23-40; 30:1-6; 40:22-27.

2. The second, or most holy, apartment was entered only once a year.

Hebrews 9:7—“Into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people.”

In the second, or most holy, apartment was the ark, the central figure of the entire sanctuary. In the ark were the Ten Commandments engraved on tablets of stone. All services centered in the fact that men had transgressed this holy, unchangeable law. All men needed mercy. So, above the law, as a covering of the ark, was the mercy seat, made of pure gold. On either end of the mercy seat were cherubim made of beaten gold. Their faces looked downward in reference to the holy law.

Above the mercy seat was the Shekinah, or the manifestation of the divine presence. The law decreed death upon the transgressor, but above the law was the mercy seat, overshadowed by the presence of God. Mercy and pardon were granted by virtue of the atoning blood.

For a description of the second apartment and its furniture, turn to Exodus 40:20-21; 25:10-22; Hebrews 9:3-4; Deuteronomy 10:4-5.

4 - WHAT WAS REPRESENTED BY THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY?

Hebrews 8:5—“Who served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount” (*Hebrews 9:24*).

Keep in mind that in Old Testament times, Christ, the Saviour, had not yet come to earth; and God was seeking, by the sanctuary service, to fix the faith of the people upon Jesus by illustrating His work (through the different services of the earthly sanctuary) of the original, which is in heaven. It represented the work of Christ as man’s Saviour.

Since the time of His ascension, Christ has been our high priest in the heavenly Sanctuary.

Hebrews 8:1-2—“We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens: a minister of the Sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (*Hebrews 9:24*).

In vision, John, the Revelator, saw the articles of the heavenly Sanctuary. He saw the golden candlesticks (*Revelation 1:12-13; 4:5*). He saw the golden altar of incense (*Revelation 8:3-4*). And, as he viewed the future, he saw the “ark of His testament” in the temple of heaven (*Revelation*

tion 11:18-19).

5 - HOW OFTEN WAS THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY CLEANSED?

Let us now come back to the earthly sanctuary. This building was cleansed once a year by a blood sacrifice. ○

Leviticus 16:19—“He shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hollow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.”

This yearly service was a service of atonement and judgment.

Leviticus 16:30—“On that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord.” (Read all of Leviticus 16 for the complete service of this Day of Atonement, as it is called.)

As the people confessed their sins day by day and sacrifices were offered, blood was placed on the horns of the altar and the sins, in symbol, were transferred to the sanctuary. Then, once a year, on the tenth day of the seventh month, final opportunity was given for full disposition of sin. It was a solemn day indeed! It was now or never. It was the annual day of judgment.

The noted Dean Farrar wrote: “So awful was the Day of Atonement that we are told in a Jewish book of ritual that the very angels run to and fro in fear and trembling, saying, ‘Lo, the day of judgment has come!’ ” (*The Early Days of Christianity*, p. 238). ○

So the yearly cleansing of the earthly sanctuary on the Day of Atonement was a day of judgment for the people.

6 - WAS THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY ALSO TO BE CLEANSED?

The answer to this question brings us to the key point in this lesson. Remember that the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 pointed forward to the cleansing of the heavenly Sanctuary. Here are the words of the prophecy:

Daniel 8:14—“Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed.”

When Jesus died on the cross, the old, or earthly, sacrificial system which pointed to His life and death was no longer necessary. As far as God was concerned, the earthly sanctuary service ended. Then, after His death, Christ rose from the dead and ascended to heaven to begin His work as our high priest in the heavenly Sanctuary. ○

At the close of the 2300 days (1844), the Sanctuary was to be cleansed. This was not the earthly Sanctuary, because its work ended at the cross. Therefore it must have been the heavenly Sanctuary. In 1844, the hour struck for the beginning of that cleansing. At the time appointed, the

great antitypical cleansing, or judgment, in the most holy place of the Sanctuary in heaven began.

In 1844, Jesus entered the most holy apartment of the heavenly Sanctuary and began that work. There is no sin in heaven, but a work of judgment is being done in connection with the records of sin (*Ecclesiastes 12:14; Revelation 20:12*).

Consider that “when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son” (*Galatians 4:4*). At the end of the 483 years of Daniel 9, Jesus was baptized and anointed by the Holy Ghost, just as predicted. That was in A.D. 27 He was also crucified at the stroke of the prophetic clock. Just as the first part of the 2300-day prophecy was fulfilled at the time appointed, so the judgment hour began in 1844, at the end of the 2300-day prophetic period.

As the cleansing of the sanctuary was a day of judgment, the final day to get right with God, so the cleansing of the heavenly Sanctuary is God’s appointed time for judgment. “Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world” (*Acts 17:31*).

This judgment was future in Paul’s day (*Acts 24:25*). It was “judgment to come.”

This is an investigative judgment, in which all cases must be decided before Christ comes, since He brings His reward with Him. During the millennium a study will be made of the cases of the wicked, with the redeemed saints assisting. The final sentences will be pronounced upon the wicked. Then the execution of the sentences will be carried out at the end of the 1,000 years, after the wicked are resurrected. So we have the three regular phases of judgment—the investigation now, the determining of the sentences during the 1,000 years, and the execution of the sentences at the end of that period.

Christ will come soon after the judgment ends. Here are the words of God, indicating that, when the judgment ends, Jesus’ coming follows quickly:

Revelation 22:11-12—“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as His work shall be” (*Revelation 14:6-7, for the judgment message*).

7 - WHAT JUDGMENT SCENE DID DANIEL SEE IN VISION?

Daniel 7:9-10—“I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued

THE EARTHLY TABERNACLE

The sanctuary in the wilderness was constructed under the direction of Moses, in accordance with the pattern shown him in the mount (Ex 25:7-8, 40; Heb 8:5).

Enclosing this wilderness tabernacle was an **OUTER COURT** which was made of white curtains attached to poles (Ex 27:9-18), and was about 75 feet wide by 150 feet long (based on an 18-inch cubit). Within the Court was the **ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING**, the Laver, and the Tabernacle. This altar was also called the Brazen Altar since there was a second altar (the Golden Altar) inside the Tabernacle. This outside (Ex 27:1-9) altar was hollow inside, overlaid with brass, and was 5 feet high and 7½ feet square. Upon this altar were placed the animals that were offered as burnt sacrifice. Just beyond, stood the brass **LAVER** (Ex 30:18-21), where the priests washed before entering the Tabernacle.

The **TABERNACLE (the sanctuary)** (Ex 26:1-37) was a tent with wooden walls, four layers as a roof covering, with gold and beautiful curtains inside. About 15 by 45 feet in size, this Tabernacle was portable, so it could be taken apart and moved from place to place during the journeys of Israel through the wilderness. Divided by an inner veil into two rooms (apartments), it was the holiest place on earth.

The priest entered the **FIRST APARTMENT** everyday with the blood, and went past the seven-branched Golden Candlestick, with its seven lamps of fire (Ex 25:31-40); past the Table of Shewbread, containing the dedicated bread, that stood before the Presence of the Lord (Ex 25:23-30); and on to the Altar of Incense, or Golden Altar (Ex 30:1-10), from whence the smoke of a specially prepared incense wafted up, over the top of the dividing veil (which did not reach to the ceiling) and into the Holy of Holies beyond. Upon the Golden Altar and dividing veil, the priest sprinkled some of the sacrificial blood (Lev 4-5). A partial description of this may be found in Hebrews 9:1-7. All of the furniture within the First and Second Apartments was of solid gold, or covered with gold.

The **SECOND APARTMENT**, or Most Holy Place (Ex 26:33), contained the Ark of the Covenant (Ex 26:17-22). Between two **CHERUBIM** was the glory of the **SHIKINAH**—the Presence of God (Ex 26:22; 40:34). Beneath it was the **MERCY SEAT**, a solid gold slab that covered the top of the **ARK**, wherein lay the foundation of God's government: the **MORAL LAW OF TEN COMMANDMENTS** (Ex 20:3-17) which was written by the finger of God on stone (Ex 24:12) and then placed in the Ark (Ex 40:20). All of mankind is to be governed by those holy precepts, even down to the end of time (Rev 12:17; 14:12) and beyond (Rev 22:14; Isa 66:22-23). The **DAILY SERVICE** continued all year; but, once a year on the **DAY OF ATONEMENT**, the high priest entered the Second Apartment—to *cleanse the sanctuary* and the people of sin (Lev 16:30, 33-34 and all of the chapter; Dan 8:14).

and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.”

The scene becomes very vivid as Christ comes to the judgment room.

Daniel 7:13—“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.”

Jesus appears before God, the Father, as our advocate.

1 John 2:1—“If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (*Acts 17:31*).

The Ancient of Days is God, the Father (*Daniel 7:9, 13*). He is the great, unchanging, merciful, but holy God. Myriads of angels attend the heavenly court. Jesus is our advocate. God created all things by Jesus Christ (*Ephesians 3:9*). He reconciled the world to Himself by Jesus Christ (*2 Corinthians 5:18*). And He will judge the world by Jesus Christ (*Acts 17:31*). Jesus is our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Friend at the judgment bar of God. He will plead our case and win it if we will let Him.

8 - WHAT SHOULD WE UNDERSTAND ABOUT THE JUDGMENT?

1. Heaven’s court will take into consideration not only what a man did, but why he did it.

There will be complete understanding of all factors and therefore complete justice. There will be no mistakes as in earthly courts, where innocent men have sometimes paid the penalty for other mens’ crimes. Were you ever accused of something you did not do? It will not be so there. Were you ever given credit for a good deed you did not do? It will not be so there.

Jeremiah 2:22—“Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before Me, saith the Lord.”

Ecclesiastes 12:14—“God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing.”

This is possible because there is a record of every man’s life. God knows all. “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good” (*Proverbs 15:3*).

2. We will be judged from the books of record in heaven.

Revelation 20:12—“The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books.”

One of these is the book of life (*Revelation 13:8; Daniel 12:1*;

Philippians 4:3). And there is a book of remembrance (*Malachi 3:16*). And there is one, and only one, remedy. That is the blood of Jesus Christ. This precious lifeblood of Jesus is available to all who will freely confess all sin and walk in the light of truth (*1 John 1:7-9*). The blood reveals God's merciful plan to forgive our sins. His justice and mercy together declare the breadth of His love. Friend, let His love warm and win your heart. He wants only your allegiance of love. Jesus is ready to be your advocate before God and present His blood for you.

9 - WHAT IS THE STANDARD IN THE JUDGMENT?

The holy, eternal, immutable, unchangeable Ten Commandments will be the standard in the judgment. The law that says, "Thou shalt not kill," etc. (*James 2:10-12*), will judge us; so Solomon concluded, "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment" (*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*). And we read again:

James 2:10-12—"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty" (*James 1:22-25; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*).

And now, dear student, we must come to a personal question—How shall we stand in the judgment? We all have a case pending there, for all must appear in the judgment (*2 Corinthians 5:10*). All have sinned (*Romans 3:23*). The wages of sin is death (*Romans 6:23*). But Christ died for us. His blood atones for sin. So now is the time to confess our sins to Him (*1 John 1:9*) and send them beforehand to judgment (*1 Timothy 5:24*).

We must also forsake sin (*Proverbs 28:13*); for sin is the transgression of God's law, which is the standard of the judgment (*1 John 3:4*). Jesus Christ came to save sinners (*1 Timothy 1:15*), and God will judge us by Christ (*Acts 17:31*). His Word will settle our cases. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (*Acts 4:12*). Turn to Jesus with all your heart. He will forgive you—gloriously forgive you and make you acceptable to God. Will you not accept Him now?

The next lesson is entitled "The Christian's Standard." In it you will find an overview of some of the basic Bible principles.

Brief Review Questions —

What was in the first apartment?

What was in the second apartment?

What great building was the earthly tabernacle patterned after?

What is the standard of the judgment?

THE SANCTUARY IN HEAVEN

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—

“We are now living in the great day of atonement. In the typical service, while the high priest was making the atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. The light, frivolous spirit indulged by so many professed Christians must be put away. There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon the earth. Everyone must be tested and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

“Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour’s admonition: ‘Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is’ (Mark 13:33). ‘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).

“When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven . . . 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).”

—*Great Controversy*, 489-491

THE SANCTUARY IN HEAVEN

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION—

“The sanctuary in heaven, in which Jesus ministers in our behalf, is the great original, of which the sanctuary built by Moses was a copy. God placed His Spirit upon the builders of the earthly sanctuary. The artistic skill displayed in its construction was a manifestation of divine wisdom. The walls had the appearance of massive gold, reflecting in every direction the light of the seven lamps of the golden candlestick. The table of shewbread and the altar of incense glittered like burnished gold. The gorgeous curtain which formed the ceiling, inwrought with figures of angels in blue and purple and scarlet, added to the beauty of the scene. And beyond the second veil was the holy Shekinah, the visible manifestation of God’s glory, before which none but the high priest could enter and live.

“The matchless splendor of the earthly tabernacle reflected to human vision the glories of that heavenly temple where Christ our forerunner ministers for us before the throne of God. The abiding place of the King of kings, where thousand thousands minister unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before Him (Daniel 7:10); that temple, filled with the glory of the eternal throne, where seraphim, its shining guardians, veil their faces in adoration, could find, in the most magnificent structure ever reared by human hands, but a faint reflection of its vastness and glory . . .

“The holy places of the sanctuary in heaven are represented by the two apartments in the sanctuary on earth. As in vision the apostle John was granted a view of the temple of God in heaven, he beheld there ‘seven lamps of fire burning before the throne’ (Revelation 4:5). He saw an angel ‘having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne’ (Revelation 8:3). Here the prophet was permitted to behold the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven; and he saw there the ‘seven lamps of fire’ and ‘the golden altar,’ represented by the golden candlestick and the altar of incense in the sanctuary on earth. Again, ‘the temple of God was opened’ (Revelation 11:19), and he looked within the inner veil, upon the holy of holies. Here he beheld ‘the ark of His testament,’ represented by the sacred chest constructed by Moses to contain the law of God . . .

“Moses made the earthly sanctuary after a pattern which was shown him. Paul teaches that that pattern was the true sanctuary which is in heaven. And John testifies that he saw it in heaven.

“In the temple in heaven, the dwelling place of God, His throne is established in righteousness and judgment. In the most holy place is His law, the great rule of right by which all mankind are tested. The ark that enshrines the tables of the law is covered with the mercy seat, before which Christ pleads His blood in the sinner’s behalf. Thus is represented

the union of justice and mercy in the plan of human redemption. This union infinite wisdom alone could devise and infinite power accomplish; it is a union that fills all heaven with wonder and adoration. The cherubim of the earthly sanctuary, looking reverently down upon the mercy seat, represent the interest with which the heavenly host contemplate the work of redemption. This is the mystery of mercy into which angels desire to look—that God can be just while He justifies the repenting sinner and renews His intercourse with the fallen race; that Christ could stoop to raise unnumbered multitudes from the abyss of ruin and clothe them with the spotless garments of His own righteousness to unite with angels who have never fallen and to dwell forever in the presence of God.

“The work of Christ as man’s intercessor is presented in that beautiful prophecy of Zechariah concerning Him ‘whose name is the Branch.’ Says the prophet: ‘He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His [the Father’s] throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between Them both’ (Zechariah 6:12, 13) . . .

“ ‘He shall bear the glory.’ To Christ belongs the glory of redemption for the fallen race. Through the eternal ages, the song of the ransomed ones will be: ‘Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, . . . to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever’ (Revelation 1:5, 6).

“He ‘shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne.’ Not now ‘upon the throne of His glory’; the kingdom of glory has not yet been ushered in. Not until His work as a mediator shall be ended will God ‘give unto Him the throne of His father David,’ a kingdom of which ‘there shall be no end’ (Luke 1:32, 33). As a priest, Christ is now set down with the Father in His throne (Revelation 3:21). Upon the throne with the eternal, self-existent One is He who ‘hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows,’ who ‘was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,’ that He might be ‘able to succor them that are tempted.’ ‘If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father’ (Isaiah 53:4; Hebrews 4:15; 2:18; 1 John 2:1). His intercession is that of a pierced and broken body, of a spotless life. The wounded hands, the pierced side, the marred feet, plead for fallen man, whose redemption was purchased at such infinite cost.

“ ‘And the counsel of peace shall be between Them both.’ The love of the Father, no less than of the Son, is the fountain of salvation for the lost race. Said Jesus to His disciples before He went away: ‘I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you’ John 16:26, 27. God was ‘in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself’ (2 Corinthians 5:19). And in the ministration in the sanctuary above, ‘the counsel of peace shall be between Them both.’ ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life’ (John 3:16).”

The Sanctuary in Heaven

1 - HOW IS SALVATION MADE POSSIBLE TO US?

Without the shedding of blood there is no remission, or forgiveness, of sin.

Hebrews 9:22—“Almost all things are by the law purged with _____; and without shedding of blood is no remission” (*Leviticus 17:11*).

Hebrews 9:12—“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He . . . obtained eternal _____ for us” (*Matthew 26:28; Isaiah 53:5-7*).

John 1:29—“John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God.”

2 - HOW DID THE OLD TESTAMENT SACRIFICES REVEAL THE SAVIOUR?

Exodus 25:8—“Let them make Me a _____; that I may dwell among them” (*also Hebrews 9:9*).

3 - HOW MANY ROOMS WERE IN THE SANCTUARY?

1. The first, or holy, apartment was for daily use. *Hebrews 9:6.*
2. The second, or most holy, apartment was entered only once a year. *Hebrews 9:7.*

4 - WHAT WAS REPRESENTED BY THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY?

Hebrews 8:5—“Who served unto the _____ and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount” (*Hebrews 9:24*).

Hebrews 8:1-2—“We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the _____ of the Majesty in the heavens: a minister of the Sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (*Hebrews 9:24*).

5 - HOW OFTEN WAS THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY CLEANSED?

Leviticus 16:19—“He shall _____ of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.”

Leviticus 16:30—"On that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to _____ you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." (Read all of Leviticus 16 for the complete service of this Day of Atonement, as it is called.)

6 - WAS THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY ALSO TO BE CLEANSED?

Daniel 8:14—"Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed" (also Revelation 22:11-12; Revelation 14:6-7, for the judgment message).

7 - WHAT JUDGMENT SCENE DID DANIEL SEE IN VISION?

Daniel 7:9-10—"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His _____ was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the _____ was set, and the books were opened."

Daniel 7:13—"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him."

1 John 2:1—"If any man sin, we have an _____ with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (Acts 17:31).

8 - WHAT SHOULD WE UNDERSTAND ABOUT THE JUDGMENT?

1. Heaven's court will take into consideration not only what a man did, but why he did it.

Jeremiah 2:22—"Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine _____ is marked before Me, saith the Lord."

Ecclesiastes 12:14—"God shall bring every work into judgment, with every _____ thing."

2. We will be judged from the books of record in heaven.

Revelation 20:12—"The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books."

9 - WHAT IS THE STANDARD IN THE JUDGMENT?

(James 2:10-12; James 1:22-25; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

What the Bible says about – The Eternal Law of God

SCRIPTURE READING:
EXODUS 19:10-24; 20:1-21
ROMANS 13:6-10

I - DOES GOD HAVE A GOVERNMENT?

Psalm 103:19—“The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all.”

Our heavenly Father is the king and ruler of the universe (*Jeremiah 10:6-7*). The Father shares the rulership of the whole creation with Christ, His Son. Christ, the Word, is called “King of kings and Lord of lords” (*Revelation 19:11-16*). Jesus is the active agent in all divine-human relations (*1 Corinthians 8:6*).

2 - CAN THERE BE ANY GOVERNMENT WITHOUT LAW?

Intelligent human beings cannot live together in peace without mutually accepted law. Belief in, and united, practice of good laws are the foundation of human society, the warp and woof of a happy and orderly society. If every man did as he pleased without respect to law, what would happen to peace, to morality, to public safety and decency?

3 - UPON WHAT PRINCIPLE ARE THE LAWS OF GOD'S GOVERNMENT BASED?

Psalm 89:14—“Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before Thy face.”

Since the law is an expression of God's loving character, we would expect the Bible to describe the law in similar language. Here is Paul's New Testament appraisal of the Ten Commandments:

Romans 7:12—“The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.”

Romans 7:14—“For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.”

The book of Revelation gives us a picture of the redeemed saints praising God. Here are their words: “Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints” (*Revelation 15:3*). Those who understand the character of

God can testify that He is just and true in all His ways.

Since God is still “the governor among the nations” as well as of the unfallen universe, His laws are still binding upon all rational creatures. He it is who issues these laws (*Isaiah 33:22*). These laws are laws of love. And they are just. The law of God is for the happiness and well-being of His creatures. Those who really love God desire to keep His laws (*1 John 5:3*).

4 - WHAT CONSTITUTES THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF GOD’S GOVERNMENT?

1. The law of Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3-17) is the unchanging, eternal, and moral law of God.

Dwight L. Moody wrote in his book:

“Now men may cavil as much as they like about other parts of the Bible, but I have never met an honest man that found fault with the Ten Commandments. Infidels may mock the Lawgiver and reject Him who has delivered us from the curse of the law, but they can’t help admitting that the commandments are right . . . The people must be made to understand that the Ten Commandments are still binding, and that there is a penalty attached to their violation” (*Weighed and Wanting*, pp. 11, 16).

2. God’s law is eternal in its nature.

Psalm 111:7-8—“The works of His hands are verity and judgment; all His commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.”

Concerning the fundamental law of the Ten Commandments, church leaders have said:

“The moral law is summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments” (*Presbyterian Confession of Faith*, “*Shorter Catechism*,” question 41).

“The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof” (*In the Westminster Confession*, chapter 19, article 5).

John Calvin: “We must not imagine that the coming of Christ has freed us from the authority of the law; for it is the eternal rule of a devout and holy life, and must, therefore, be as unchangeable as the justice of God” (*Commentaries on the Gospels*, Vol. 1, p. 277).

“We believe that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government” (*Baptist Manual*, article 12).

3. The moral law was written on two tables of stone.

On the first were the first four commandments, showing our duty to God. On the second were the last six commandments, showing our duty to our fellowman. Spurgeon said: “If you love God with all your heart, you must keep the first table; and if you love your neighbor as

yourself, you must keep the second table" (*The Perpetuity of the Law*, p. 5).

5 - ARE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR ALL MEN IN ALL AGES?

1. The law was for man, from Adam to Moses.

The Ten Commandments were in force from Adam's time down through the millenniums of time. This can be proved by the New Testament.

Sin existed from the time of the fall of man, and sin is described by John as "the transgression of the law." Said the apostle:

1 John 3:4—"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

Now there must have been law at the time of the Fall, because there was sin at the Fall. Says Paul, "Where no law is, there is no transgression" (*Romans 4:15*).

Adam could not have sinned if he had no knowledge of the moral law. Yet Adam did sin; for, as Paul said, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (*Romans 5:12*).

Not only did Adam sin by breaking the law, but Cain, his son, sinned too.

Genesis 4:6-7—"And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

Abraham, long before Moses, knew God's law. Moses himself wrote:

Genesis 26:5—"Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."

However, it is true that the law of God did not exist in written form until Moses' time. Indeed, the written law was not necessary before Moses. Never forget that the race of people who lived immediately before and after the Flood were long-lived people. Adam lived 930 years. Methuselah lived 969 years and died just before the Flood. Noah could learn from Methuselah all that Adam had told him because Methuselah was more than 200 years old when Adam died. There was no need for written laws then.

God does not hold men accountable for sin when there is no law. "Sin is not imputed when there is no law" (*Romans 5:13*). It is not charged to man. But sin was charged to man from Adam to Moses even though there was no written law. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses" (*Romans 5:14*). So they knew of the law. The expression in *Romans 5:13*, "Until the law sin was in the world," means until the written law.

2. It was for men, from Moses to Christ.

In Moses' time, the law of God was written by the Lord Himself upon two tables of stone and delivered to Moses, who gave them to Israel.

Deuteronomy 5:22—"These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and He added no more. And He wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me."

The written law was then placed by Moses in the holy ark, which was housed in the most holy place of the sanctuary.

Deuteronomy 10:4-5—"He wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me. And I turned myself and came down from the mount and put the tables in the ark which I had made" (*Hebrews 9:3-4*).

To this day, the Ten Commandment law is held in sacred regard by Jews and Christians alike. The 119th psalm is a great song of praise to God for the law of love. "O how love I Thy law!" said the psalmist: "It is my meditation all the day" (*Psalms 119:97*).

Isaiah regarded the law as basic in testing all religious teaching. "To the law and to the testimony," he said, "if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them" (*Isaiah 8:20*).

Solomon knew that it was not possible to please God while despising the law, so He wrote:

Proverbs 28:9—"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."

3. It was for Jesus, as the Son of man, and for men of His generation.

Isaiah the gospel prophet declared that, when Christ came into the world, He would honor the law of God. Here are his words: "He will magnify the law, and make it honourable" (*Isaiah 42:21*).

The psalmist had predicted that Christ's attitude toward the law would be one of honor, love, and respect.

Psalms 40:7-8—"Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart" (*Hebrews 10:7*).

Openly Christ declared to the people, "I have kept My Father's commandments" (*John 15:10*). And He said, "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love" (*John 15:10*). Knowing that He was under suspicion as a teacher of new doctrines, Christ declared in His Sermon

on the Mount, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law” (*Matthew 5:17-19*). Christ made it plain that He did not come to abolish the Ten Commandments, but to teach men how to keep them.

4. It was for men in the time of the apostles.

We have already referred to Paul’s appraisal of the law. It is holy, just, and good, he said. Moreover, Paul declared that faith established the law. It did not abolish it. The following text deals a deathblow to the doctrine of antinomianism (the doctrine that no moral law is necessary). It also shows that faith establishes the law.

Romans 3:31—“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”

The New Testament writers understood that the law was to be the standard in the judgment. Said James:

James 2:10-12—“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.”

John was even more emphatic than James. He said:

1 John 2:4—“He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

Many sincere Christians are opposed to the law because they say that it frustrates the grace of God. They refer to Paul in order to support their views. But Peter said that Paul wrote “some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction” (*2 Peter 3:16*).

Paul had no more right than any other human being to change or abolish the law of the living God. He testified publicly, in court, that he believed “all things which are written in the law” (*Acts 24:14*). “We establish the law,” said the apostle (*Romans 3:31*). That doesn’t sound like destroying the law, does it? Paul was a great theologian. Only those who misunderstand him misrepresent and misinterpret his words.

5. It is for God’s remnant people of the last days.

Nothing is more clearly revealed in all the pages of Holy Writ than the solemn truth that God will have a people on earth, just before the second coming of Christ, who will uphold and obey His holy law. In spite of persecution and difficulties, they will stand in defense of God’s truth.

Revelation 12:17—“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

These people not only believe in the practice of the law of love, which is the law of Ten Commandments, but they also believe the gospel and have the faith of Jesus.

Revelation 14:12—“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (*verses 13-15*).

The question for each of us to ask is, Am I one of God’s remnant people? If not, why not?

6 - WHY IS THERE GENERAL REBELLION AGAINST GOD’S HOLY LAW?

Romans 8:7—“The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”

Only by the new birth can the carnal mind and heart of man be changed. According to the new covenant promise (*Ezekiel 36:26-27*), God will write His law in our hearts (*Hebrews 8:10*). But we must be willing. Are we?

Society today lives in rebellion against God’s law. Everyone acknowledges that it is a good law, but few people want to obey it. In America, thousands of homes break up every year in the divorce courts. Crime costs billions of dollars annually. Hundreds of murders take place every month. And many of these dastardly crimes are committed by youth. According to a committee of prominent jurists and statesmen, crime will carry the nation on to anarchy unless it is checked soon.

Some ministers and professed Christians oppose the law of God. If they fight the Ten Commandments, what can we expect of the people? Jesus said that if a man broke one of God’s commandments and then taught others to do the same, he would be called least in the kingdom (*Matthew 5:19*). It is serious enough to disobey God, but nothing is more displeasing to the Lawgiver than leading others into rebellion. The false doctrine that men are not obligated to obey the Ten Commandments has weakened the forces of morality in the world and opened the floodgates of vice and crime. When rebellion reaches its limit, God will intervene.

Psalms 119:126—“It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law.”

Those who have despised God’s law have miscalculated His character. They will discover, in the final day of judgment, that He is a God of justice as well as mercy. Here are the words that He speaks to the despisers of His kingdom and His law:

Matthew 7:21-23—“Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in

that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.”

7 - WHAT PROMISE IS HELD OUT TO THOSE WHO ARE OBEDIENT?

Psalm 119:165—“Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them.”

The Christian who has a correct knowledge of God will love Him and His law. He will find peace in loving obedience. Isaiah declares that this peace and righteousness that all obedient followers of Jehovah enjoy is like “the waves of the sea.”

Isaiah 48:18—“O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.”

The test of discipleship is in obedience. The greatest honor and tribute we can pay to Christ is to willingly consent to the writing of His law of love upon the fleshly tablets of our hearts. Will you consent to this work of grace? Remember, Christ saves us from sin, and “sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). Salvation then means deliverance from lawbreaking and the restoration of the human heart to the moral likeness of God. Jesus will do this for you if you consent. Will you not say with Christ, “I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart” (Psalm 40:8)?

The next chapter reveals how grace makes possible obedience to God’s commandments. It is a source of great encouragement. In it we will see the power of the grace of Christ and what it can do for our lives.

Brief Review Questions —

Can there be any government without law?

What is the basic moral law which God gave to mankind?

Why do people dislike God’s law?

**THE ETERNAL LAW OF GOD
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

“Professor Edwards A. Park, in setting forth the current religious perils, ably says: ‘One source of danger is the neglect of the pulpit to enforce the divine law. In former days the pulpit was an echo of the voice of conscience . . . Our most illustrious preachers gave a wonderful majesty to their discourses by following the example of the Master, and giving prominence to the law, its precepts, and its threatenings. They repeated the two great maxims, that the law is a transcript of the divine perfections, and that a man who does not love the law does not love the gospel; for the law, as well as the gospel, is a mirror reflecting the true character of God. This peril leads to another, that of underrating the evil of sin, the extent of it, the demerit of it. In proportion to the rightfulness of the commandment is the wrongfulness of disobeying it . . .

“ ‘Affiliated to the dangers already named is the danger of underestimating the justice of God. The tendency of the modern pulpit is to strain out the divine justice from the divine benevolence, to sink benevolence into a sentiment rather than exalt it into a principle. The new theological prism puts asunder what God has joined together. Is the divine law a good or an evil? It is a good. Then justice is good; for it is a disposition to execute the law. From the habit of underrating the divine law and justice, the extent and demerit of human disobedience, men easily slide into the habit of underestimating the grace which has provided an atonement for sin.’ Thus the gospel loses its value and importance in the minds of men, and soon they are ready practically to cast aside the Bible itself.

“Many religious teachers assert that Christ by His death abolished the law, and men are henceforth free from its requirements. There are some who represent it as a grievous yoke, and in contrast to the bondage of the law they present the liberty to be enjoyed under the gospel.

“But not so did prophets and apostles regard the holy law of God . . .

“The claim that Christ by His death abolished His Father’s law is without foundation. Had it been possible for the law to be changed or set aside, then Christ need not have died to save man from the penalty of sin. The death of Christ, so far from abolishing the law, proves that it is immutable. The Son of God came to ‘magnify the law, and make it honorable’ (Isaiah 42:21). He said: ‘Think not that I am come to destroy the law; ‘till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law’ (Matthew 5:17, 18). And concerning Himself He declares: ‘I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within My heart’ (Psalm 40:8). The law of God, from its very nature, is unchangeable. It is a revelation of the will and the character of its Author.”

THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTENDOM

The foundation of every Christian religion is the Ten Commandments. This is shown in the writings and doctrinal statements of the churches and their founders. No denomination would dare deny the authority of this moral law. Anarchy and crime would reign if they did so. Here are but a few of many statements which could be cited:

Southern Baptist—"We cannot conceive of an age when the moral government of the universe shall be changed, because we cannot conceive of God becoming different morally from what He is now and ever has been . . . This Law of God is holy as He Himself is holy . . . It is a universal law . . . The Law of God is just and cannot be unjust—its justice is universal . . . It is more than just; it is gracious . . . It results in welfare, in happiness, in blessedness . . . The Law of God is full of the love of God."—*O. C. S. Wallace, What Baptists Believe, Southern Baptist Sunday School Workers' Training Course, pp. 80-83, 1934, Southern Baptists Convention.*

Methodist—"The moral law, contained in the Ten Commandments, and enforced by the Prophets, He [Christ] did not take away. It was not the design of His coming to revoke any part of this . . . Every part of this law must remain in force upon all mankind, and in all ages; as not depending either on time or place, or any other circumstances liable to change, but on the nature of God, and the nature of man, and their unchangeable relation to each other."—*John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church, "Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount," Discourse 5, in Works of John Wesley, Vol. 5, pp. 311-312.*

Lutheran—"God threatens to punish all who transgress these commandments. We should, therefore, fear His anger, and do nothing against such commandments. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep them. We should, therefore, love and trust in Him, and gladly obey His commandments."—*Martin Luther, founder of the Lutheran Church, Luther's Small Catechism, in Phillip Schaff, Creeds of Christendom, Vol. 3, p. 77.*

Reformed—"We must not imagine that the coming of Christ has freed us from the authority of the law: for it is the eternal rule of a devout and holy life, and must, therefore, be as unchangeable, as the justice of God, which it embraced, is constant and uniform."—*John Calvin, founder of the Reformed Church, Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, 1949 ed., Vol. 1, p. 277, comment on Matthew 5:17, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

Congregationalist—"Through the atonement of Christ more honor is done to the law, and consequently the law is more established, than if the law had been literally executed, and all mankind had been condemned."—*Jonathan Edwards (Congregationalist), Works [writings] of Jonathan Edwards, 1842 ed., Vol. 3, p. 369.*

Presbyterian—"The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator who gave it. Neither doth Christ in the gospel in any way dissolve, but much strengthen, this obligation."—*Westminster Confession of Faith, chap. 21, "Of the Law of God," secs. 5,6.*

Episcopalian—"We must understand that the Ten Commandments are just as binding upon Christian people as they were upon the Children of Israel. The moral law is a part of the natural law of the universe . . . Just as a natural law broken in the material world brings it inevitable consequences, so the moral law broken brings its inevitable consequences in the spiritual and mental worlds.

"The Lord Jesus knew this. He knew it much better than anyone else who ever lived. Therefore He built His Gospel upon a firm foundation of moral law, knowing that such a foundation can never be upset . . .

"Christ's teaching goes beyond the Ten Commandments, but does not thereby make the commandments of non-effect. Quite the contrary! Christianity strengthens the authority of the commandments."—*The Episcopal Church Sunday School Magazine, June-July, 1943, Vol. 105, No. 6, pp. 183-184.*

Moody Bible Institute—"We have already seen that, unlike the ceremonial and civil codes which were given to Israel as the chosen people and holy nation, the moral law is intended for all mankind, and it has never been abrogated nor repealed."—*William C. Procter, Moody Bible Institute Monthly, December, 1933.*

Interdenominational—"The basic laws of morality, and particularly the Ten Commandments, remain until the end of time as the moral and spiritual foundation upon which the New Testament religion is built."—*The Snowden-Douglass Sunday School Lessons for 1946, p. 279.*

"These laws are what we might call universal . . . These Ten Commandments are the codification of what governs man's moral nature; and they are right, and true, and abiding in every age for every race."—*Peloubet's Select Notes, for the International Sunday School Lesson for January 20, 1946, p. 35.*

"While God remains God, His moral law will be binding upon all who would have any part in His life. God's moral law is eternal; it is an expression of His very being. As such it can no more be abrogated than can God Himself."—*Editorial, "Are Christians to Keep the Law?" The Sunday School Times.*

"The law shows me what God demands of me, but what I cannot do by myself. It shows me what I am and that I am lost. It points me to Christ in order that by grace I can be what I cannot be under law."—*Alan Redpath, "Law and Gospel," The New Century Leader, July 1958.*

The Eternal Law of God

I - DOES GOD HAVE A GOVERNMENT?

Psalm 103:19—"The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His _____ ruleth over all."

2 - CAN THERE BE ANY GOVERNMENT WITHOUT LAW?

3 - UPON WHAT PRINCIPLE ARE THE LAWS OF GOD'S GOVERNMENT BASED?

Psalm 89:14—"_____ and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before Thy face."

Romans 7:12—"The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (*also Romans 7:14*).

4 - WHAT CONSTITUTES THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF GOD'S GOVERNMENT?

1. The law of Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3-17) is the unchanging, eternal, and moral law of God.

2. God's law is eternal in its nature.

Psalm 111:7-8—"The works of His hands are verity and judgment; all His _____ are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness."

5 - ARE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR ALL MEN IN ALL AGES?

1. The law was for man, from Adam to Moses.

1 John 3:4—"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for _____ is the transgression of the law" (*Cain: Genesis 4:6-7*).

Genesis 26:5—"Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."

2. It was for men, from Moses to Christ.

Proverbs 28:9—"He that _____ away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (*also Deuteronomy 5:22; 10:4-5*).

3. It was for Jesus, as the Son of man, and for men of His generation.

Psalm 40:7-8—"Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I _____ to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart" (*Hebrews 10:7*).

4. It was for men in the time of the apostles.

Romans 3:31—"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."

James 2:10-12—"For whosoever shall _____ the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."

1 John 2:4—"He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

5. It is for God's remnant people of the last days.

Revelation 12:17—"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the _____ of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Revelation 14:12—"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that _____ the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (*verses 13-15*).

6 - WHY IS THERE GENERAL REBELLION AGAINST GOD'S HOLY LAW?

Romans 8:7—"The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Psalm 119:126—"It is _____ for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law."

Matthew 7:21-23—"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the _____ of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: _____ from Me, ye that work iniquity."

7 - WHAT PROMISE IS HELD OUT TO THOSE WHO ARE OBEDIENT?

Psalm 119:165—"Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (*also Isaiah 48:18*).

What the Bible says about – Obedience through Christ

SCRIPTURE READING:
ROMANS 5:20; 7:7, 12, 14; 8:34
COLOSSIANS 2:6, 20
EPHESIANS 2:8-10

INTRODUCTION

Law and grace are closely associated in the plan of redemption. To understand the operation of grace, we must know something about the operation of both law and grace.

In the beginning, Jesus Christ created man. Man was upright (*Genesis 1:26; Ecclesiastes 7:29*). He was sinless, amenable to God's holy laws.

But the devil deceived humanity, and succeeded in alienating man from the Creator and His law. The result of such disunion has been, is, and ever will be discord, unhappiness, and eternal ruin.

A human being cannot separate himself from his Creator's laws without separating from his Creator. Also, the one who accepts God as His Creator will want to obey His laws. Through Christ, he is enabled to obey God's holy law.

Before studying this vitally important lesson, let us clearly understand the place of God's eternal law in distinction to temporary laws;—for we do not want to “wrest” or twist the Sacred Writings to our own destruction, as Peter said many did in his day (*2 Peter 3:15, 16*).

There are three types of laws in the Holy Scriptures. Here they are:

1. The civil laws of the Jewish nation.

The civil laws regulated a multitude of matters in connection with the operation of the nation of Israel. God gave these laws to meet the situation in their day. They covered such problems as health, sanitation, disease, crime, court procedure, etc. In their details they are not binding as civil obligations today, though many wise and fundamental principles are revealed therein, which would still be applicable.

2. The ceremonial, or sanctuary, laws were abolished at the cross.

The ceremonial, or sanctuary, laws governed the religious services of Israel and were symbols of the Messiah to come. They were for the Jews and all converts to the faith of Israel. These civil laws were written in a book (*Deuteronomy 31:24-26*) by Moses and placed in the ark of the Testament. It should be remembered that the ceremonial and civil laws were not written on the tables of stone, as were the Ten Commandments.

So the ceremonial laws were temporary in nature and no longer necessary after the life and death of Christ to which they pointed. Here are Paul's words:

Colossians 2:14—"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross."

Colossians 2:17—"Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

3. The moral Ten Commandment law (*Exodus 20:1-17*).

The law of God was proclaimed from Mount Sinai, written on tables of stone, and preserved by Israel as the universal law of mankind.

Deuteronomy 10:4—"He wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly" (*Deuteronomy 5:22*).

The Ten Commandment law was then placed inside the ark.

Deuteronomy 10:5—"And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made."

The moral Ten Commandment law is eternal. It is God's own covenant, and it is as everlasting as God Himself. God made another covenant, or agreement, with Israel concerning all His laws (*Exodus 24:7-8*). Israel promised obedience, and God said He would recognize them as His peculiar people on this condition (*Exodus 19:5-8*). This old covenant, or first covenant, was weak because the people's promises were weak. So God made another covenant—a new and better covenant, established on better promises, even His own. He promised to write His law in their hearts and to forgive their past sins (*Hebrews 8:6-12*). God's holy law of Ten Commandments was the same in the old and the new covenants. The Ten Commandment law is as unchangeable as is the character of God.

Now we shall see how great Bible students have always recognized these different types of laws in the Bible.

The noted Dr. Ezekiel Hopkins penned these words:

"The ceremonial law is . . . properly abrogated, and its obligation and authority utterly taken away and repealed: for so the apostle is to be understood, when, in his epistles, he so often speaks of the abrogation and disannulling of the law: he speaks, I say, of the ceremonial law and Aaronical observances" (*An Exposition of the Ten Commandments, p. 21*).

According to the Methodist Episcopal Church (1896):

“Although the law given from God by Moses as touching ceremonies and rites doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding, *no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral*” (emphasis ours) (*The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1896, article 6, p. 21*).

The ceremonial laws are like the scaffolding of a building—to be removed when they have served their purpose. The moral law is like the immovable foundation of the building.

In the New Testament, baptism and the Lord’s Supper, or Holy Communion, are the ceremonies, or ordinances, of the church that replaced the Old Testament ceremonies after the sanctuary service of Moses was abolished. But the moral law was not replaced because it had not been rescinded.

Neither will it ever be changed or canceled in any way.

I - HOW DOES THE BIBLE DESCRIBE THE TEN COMMANDMENT LAW?

1. It is perfect.

Psalm 19:7—“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.”

2. It is holy, just, good, and spiritual.

Romans 7:12, 14—“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good . . . For we know that the law is spiritual.”

3. It is righteous.

Psalm 119:172—“All Thy commandments are righteousness.”

4. It is truth.

John 17:17—“Thy Word is truth.”

5. It is eternal.

Psalm 119:152—“Concerning Thy testimonies, I have known of old that Thou hast founded them for ever.”

Joseph Cooke, D.D., wrote, “While God remains God, and man remains man, the Decalogue must stand.”

And we might add a sixth characteristic of the law. It is love. Since “God is love” and His law expresses His character, the law is love too. Said John, “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous” (*1 John 5:3*). The law is an expression of God’s loving care for mankind.

2. WHAT DOES THE LAW DO FOR THE SINNER?

God uses the law to do for the sinner just what needs to be done. The

sinner must realize that he is a sinner. The heavy hand of the law must be laid upon him, and he must be arrested in his course. Notice the following carefully:

1. It gives a knowledge of sin.

Romans 3:20—"By the law is the knowledge of sin" (*Romans 7:7*).

2. It brings guilt and condemnation.

Romans 3:19—"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

3. It acts as a spiritual mirror.

James 1:23-25—"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 forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (*James 2:9-12*).

Without the law, the sinner is like a man who is afflicted with a deadly disease, that he doesn't know he has. Paul said, "I had not known sin, but by the law" (*Romans 7:7*).

Evangelist John Brown once said:

"The human heart cannot receive the healing thread of the gospel unless it is first pierced by the needle of the law."

3 - WHAT IS THE LAW UNABLE TO DO FOR THE SINNER?

The law cannot forgive. Law does not possess the power to forgive those who transgress its precepts. Only the Lawgiver can do that. Jesus died to redeem us from the curse of the law (*Galatians 3:13*). The law cannot keep the sinner from sinning because "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (*Romans 8:7*).

The law only shows the sinner where he needs to change; but the law, itself, cannot change him. And so let us get three facts about the law very clear.

1. It cannot forgive or justify.

Romans 3:20—"By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight."

2. It cannot keep from sin or sanctify.

Galatians 3:21—"Is the law then against the promises of God?"

God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.”

3. It cannot cleanse or keep the heart clean (*Romans 9:3, 7-8*).

The law is limited in its ability to do all that needs to be done for the sinner. A wound cannot be sewed up with only a needle. The thread of the gospel must do that.

4 - WHAT DOES THE GRACE OF CHRIST DO FOR THE SINNER?

When the law of God and the Spirit of God have made the sinner conscious of his sin, he will then feel his need of Christ and go to the Saviour for pardon. The publican found it so (*Luke 18:13-14*). The woman taken in adultery felt condemned and ashamed. She needed sympathy and forgiveness, and Christ was ready to grant these to her. Then He said, “Sin no more.”

If we confess and put away sin, He will forgive (*1 John 1:9*). This is grace, or unmerited favor. This gracious love of Christ awakens love in the heart of the sinner, and he then desires to serve and obey God. Here are four elements of the saving grace of Christ:

1. It forgives and justifies.

Acts 13:38-39—“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (*Luke 18:13-14*).

2. It saves from sin, or sanctifies.

Matthew 1:21—“She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.”

1 Corinthians 1:30—“But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

3. It inspires faith.

Ephesians 2:8-10—“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

4. It brings God’s power.

Romans 1:16—“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

Forgiveness of sin and power over sin comes through the exercise of simple faith in God's promises and a full surrender of the heart to Him.

5 - WHAT IS THE RELATION OF A SINNER SAVED BY GRACE TO THE LAW?

1. The law becomes the standard of his life.

1 John 5:3—"This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments."

2. He permits Christ to fulfill in him the righteousness of the law.

Romans 8:3-4—"God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

3. Christ writes the law in his heart.

Hebrews 8:10—"This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people" (*Psalm 119:11*).

To the surrendered, believing soul the law of God holds no terror. He is now free from its condemnation through Christ. In this sense he is "not under the law, but under grace" (*Romans 6:15*). He is not under the bondage of condemnation by the law.

He is now in a position to exercise that "faith which worketh by love" and purifies the soul (*Galatians 5:6*). This means a transformed life in harmony with the moral law of God.

6 - WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF GRACE, FAITH, LOVE, AND THE LAW?

John Wesley wrote in his Sermons:

"I cannot spare [to be apart from] the law one moment, no more than I can spare Christ . . . Each is continually sending me to the other,—the law to Christ, and Christ to the law. On the one hand, the height and depth of the law constrain me to fly to the love of God in Christ; on the other, the love of God in Christ endears the law to me 'above gold and precious stones' . . . This is perfect freedom; thus to keep His law, and to walk in all His commandments blameless" (*The Works of John Wesley, A.M. [3d. American ed.], Vol. 1, pp. 314-315*).

From Wesley's statement, we can see that there is a close relationship not only between the law and grace but between the law and faith, love,

and obedience too. Let us see how this works out.

Now let us consider that which forgives our past and enables us to obey God's law:

1. Grace is unmerited favor. But grace does not sanction continued transgression.

Romans 6:15—"What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid" (*verses 1, 2*).

2. Faith does not make void, but establishes, the law.

Romans 3:31—"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."

3. Faith brings overcoming power.

1 John 5:4—"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

4. Love is the fulfilling of the law.

Romans 13:10—"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

5. True love keeps the commandments.

1 John 5:3—"This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous."

So we can see that the doctrine of grace without obedience to God's law is a doctrine of disgrace.

To bring this lesson home to our hearts, consider these facts: (1) the foolish man seeks salvation by his own works in keeping the law (*Galatians 3:1-3*). (2) The vain man thinks he does not need any good works (*James 2:20*). (3) The blessed man has his sins forgiven (*Psalms 1-2*).

There surely is no position on earth more enviable than that of the blessed man who loves God and keeps His commandments. It is the grace of God that makes it all possible—the wonderful grace of God! Have you permitted God to make of you a person so greatly blessed?

The next lesson is entitled "Your Special Day with God." It will reveal how to draw closer to your heavenly Father.

Brief Review Questions —

Do we need to obey the ceremonial laws today (such as sacrificing animals)?

Do we need to obey the moral law of Ten Commandments today?

Will Jesus empower us by His grace to obey the standards given in the Bible?

OBEDIENCE THROUGH CHRIST

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—

“The apostle Paul declares: ‘The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good’ (Romans 7:12). Such a law, being an expression of the mind and will of God, must be as enduring as its Author. It is the work of conversion and sanctification to reconcile men to God by bringing them into accord with the principles of His law. In the beginning, man was created in the image of God. He was in perfect harmony with the nature and the law of God; the principles of righteousness were written upon his heart. But sin alienated him from his Maker. He no longer reflected the divine image. His heart was at war with the principles of God’s law. ‘The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.’ Romans 8:7. But ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son,’ that man might be reconciled to God. Through the merits of Christ he can be restored to harmony with his Maker. His heart must be renewed by divine grace; he must have a new life from above . . .

“The first step in reconciliation to God is the conviction of sin. ‘Sin is the transgression of the law.’ ‘By the law is the knowledge of sin’ (1 John 3:4; Romans 3:20). In order to see his guilt, the sinner must test his character by God’s great standard of righteousness. It is a mirror which shows the perfection of a righteous character and enables him to discern the defects in his own.

“The law reveals to man his sins, but it provides no remedy. While it promises life to the obedient, it declares that death is the portion of the transgressor. The gospel of Christ alone can free him from the condemnation or the defilement of sin. He must exercise repentance toward God, whose law has been transgressed; and faith in Christ, his atoning sacrifice. Thus he obtains ‘remission of sins that are past’ and becomes a partaker of the divine nature . . .

“Is he now free to transgress God’s law? Says Paul: ‘Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.’ ‘How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?’ And John declares: ‘This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous’ (Romans 3:31; 6:2; 1 John 5:3).”

—*Great Controversy, 467-468*

Obedience through Christ

INTRODUCTION

1. There were the civil laws of the Jewish nation.
2. The ceremonial (or sanctuary) laws were abolished at the cross.

Colossians 2:14—"Blotting out the _____ of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross."

Colossians 2:17—"Which are a _____ of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

3. There was the moral Ten Commandment law (**Exodus 20:1-17**).

Deuteronomy 10:4—"He wrote on the _____, according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly" (**Deuteronomy 5:22**).

I - HOW DOES THE BIBLE DESCRIBE THE TEN COMMANDMENT LAW?

1. It is perfect. **Psalm 19:7**—"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."
2. It is holy, just, good, and spiritual.

Romans 7:12, 14—"Wherefore the law is _____, and the commandment holy, and just, and good . . . For we know that the law is spiritual." 3. It is righteous. **Psalm 119:172**—"All Thy commandments are righteousness." 4. It is truth. **John 17:17**—"Thy Word is truth." 5. It is eternal. **Psalm 119:152**—"Concerning Thy testimonies, I have known of old that Thou hast founded them _____."

2 - WHAT DOES THE LAW DO FOR THE SINNER?

1. It gives a knowledge of sin. **Romans 3:20**—"By the law is the knowledge of sin" (**Romans 7:7**).
2. It brings guilt and condemnation. **Romans 3:19**—"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."
3. It acts as a spiritual mirror. **James 1:23-25**—"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 _____ himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of

man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be _____ in his deed" (*James 2:9-12*).

3 - WHAT IS THE LAW UNABLE TO DO FOR THE SINNER?

1. It cannot forgive or justify. Romans 3:20—"By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight." **2. It cannot keep from sin or sanctify. Galatians 3:21**—"Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (*Romans 9:3, 7-8*).

4 - WHAT DOES THE GRACE OF CHRIST DO FOR THE SINNER?

1. It forgives and justifies.

Acts 13:38-39—"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are _____ from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (*Luke 18:13-14*).

2. It saves from sin, or sanctifies.

Matthew 1:21—"She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall _____ His people from their sins" (*also 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 1:16*).

5 - WHAT IS THE RELATION OF A SINNER SAVED BY GRACE TO THE LAW?

1. The law becomes the standard of his life.

1 John 5:3—"This is the _____ of God, that we keep His commandments" (*also Romans 8:3-4*).

2. Christ writes the law in his heart (*Hebrews 8:10*).

6 - WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF GRACE, FAITH, LOVE, AND THE LAW?

Grace does not sanction continued transgression (*Romans 6:15*). Faith establishes the law (*Romans 3:31*). Faith brings overcoming power (*1 John 5:4*). Love is the fulfilling of the law (*Romans 13:10*). True love keeps the commandments (*1 John 5:3*).

What the Bible says about – Your Special Day with God

SCRIPTURE READING:
EZEKIEL 20:1-24

1 - WHAT IS THE BIBLE TEACHING ABOUT CREATION?

Psalm 33:6, 9—“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth . . . For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.”

Psalm 104:5—He “laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.”

This is the teaching of the Scriptures. And it sounds glorious, doesn't it? Let us now open our Bibles for further light on this subject. The complete Godhead was involved in creation. This is made clear in the following passages.

Genesis 1:1-2—“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

Ephesians 3:9—“To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ” (*Genesis 1:26; John 1:1-3*).

The Bible account of creation, in which the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit participated, is the only safeguard against erroneous concepts of the beginning of human life on our planet. And this must be accepted by faith. Listen to these words:

Hebrews 11:3—“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”

Psalm 33:9—“For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.”

Faith in the Creator and the fact of the creation solves many knotty problems of life's origin and human destiny.

2 - WHAT IS THE BASIS

OF GOD'S RIGHT TO RULE?

Revelation 4:11—"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created" (*Psalm 95:6*).

Since God created all things from nothing (*Hebrews 11:3*), He hung the earth upon nothing (*Job 26:7*), upholds all things (*Hebrews 1:3*), and sustains life (*Acts 17:28*). He therefore has undisputed final and absolute right to ownership and rulership.

3 - WHAT IS THE SIGN OF GOD'S CREATORSHIP?

Exodus 31:16-17—"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed."

This statement about the Sabbath is clear. God is the speaker in this text. The Sabbath is God's sign because God is the Creator. And He created the world and the different forms of life upon it in six days and rested on the seventh day. This is God's own stated reason for making the Sabbath a sign. And He intended that all men should observe the Sabbath and recognize Him, on the seventh day in particular, as the Creator. All the inhabitants of the world, and all their church councils, cannot not erase these facts.

On God's part, the Sabbath is the sign of His creatorship, with all the obligations toward us that devolve upon Him because of this fact of creation. It is the sign of His right to rule over us, the symbol of His gracious and timeless sovereignty. On our part, it is the sign that we gratefully acknowledge Him as our Creator and accept His right of title to, and rulership over, us and all things. It is a sign that, as His creatures, we assume the obligations that naturally come to us in this relationship. The Sabbath is a matter of holy duty and a thing of infinite beauty.

4 - WAS THE SABBATH MADE BEFORE MAN SINNED?

We should remember, first of all, that the Sabbath was made. It was not an institution springing from an idea merely. The Sabbath was made on the seventh day and out of the seventh day of creation week. Notice the following facts:

1. The Sabbath was made on the seventh day, out of the seventh day.

Genesis 2:2-3—"On the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work

which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.”

2. The seventh day is therefore God’s blessed, sanctified rest day.

Exodus 20:10—“The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God.”

God rested. He was not weary because “the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary” (*Isaiah 40:28*). But He was refreshed. “On the seventh day He rested and was refreshed” (*Exodus 31:17*). God rested because He was creating a day of rest thereby and was setting us an example. He was refreshed because He “saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good” (*Genesis 1:31*). It gave Him pleasure (*Revelation 4:11*).

God blessed and sanctified the seventh day. He rested on the seventh day and made it His rest day; then “God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested.” Since the seventh day is the day on which He rested, and since He blessed and sanctified it, it follows that upon no other day except the one on which He rested has He placed His blessing and sanctification, making it “the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.”

It is this unchangeable fact of God’s resting on the seventh day, and then blessing and sanctifying it, that settles for time and eternity God’s holy Sabbath day.

The six-day creation of our planet would have to be done all over a second time—in order to change the Sabbath day!

Exodus 20:11—“In six days the Lord made heaven and earth . . . and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

1 Chronicles 17:27—“Thou blessest, O Lord, and it shall be blessed for ever.”

Numbers 23:19-20—“God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent . . . He hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it.”

5 - WAS THE SABBATH SIGN TO BE FOR ALL MEN FOR ALL TIME?

One writer has said, “God saw that a Sabbath was essential for man, even in Paradise . . . He needed a Sabbath to remind Him more vividly of God and to awaken gratitude because all that he enjoyed and possessed came from the beneficent hand of the Creator.” Here are ten facts, most of them historical, about the true Sabbath:

1. The Sabbath was made for man—all men.

Mark 2:27—“The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for

the Sabbath.”

This does not mean for Jews only. Woman was created for man (*1 Corinthians 11:9*). Gentile men would not agree that women were made only for Jews. Neither would Jewish women agree to that. The Sabbath is universal.

2. Noah had a knowledge of a week of seven days.

Genesis 8:12—“And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more” (Read also verses 8-11).

Why is the Sabbath not spoken of for hundreds of years after it is mentioned in Genesis 2:1-3? Consider this:

Genesis 3 gives us the story of the temptation and the Fall. The fourth chapter tells of Cain and Abel. Chapter five gives genealogy. And—think of it!—chapter six brings us to Noah’s time, more than 1,500 years after creation. In an ordinary Bible, you need to turn but one leaf to cover this period of 1,500 years. Naturally the Sabbath would not be repeatedly mentioned. In Exodus, the second book of the Bible, the Sabbath is set forth in its primeval and everlasting importance (*Exodus 20:8-11*).

3. Abraham knew and obeyed God’s laws.

Genesis 26:5—“Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

Abraham, though he had not the written law, knew God’s laws and sought to obey them.

4. In Moses’ time, the Sabbath was known and observed.

God delivered Israel from Egypt that they might obey Him and keep His laws.

Psalms 105:43-45—“He brought forth His people with joy and His chosen with gladness . . . that they might observe His statutes, and keep His laws.”

God spoke and wrote His holy law, with the Sabbath commandment in the very heart of it.

Deuteronomy 5:22—“These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and He added no more. And He wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me” (*verses 7-21*).

The sanctuary was the center of Israel’s worship and life (*Exodus 25:40*). The most holy place was the heart of the sanctuary. The Ten Commandments were in the ark, the objective to which the whole sanctuary service points to. The Sabbath was in the center of the law as the sign of the Creator God, from whom goes forth light and glory to the limitless

reaches of infinity.

5. The Sabbath was for men in Isaiah's time.

Isaiah 58:13-14—"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (*Isaiah 56:1-7*).

Isaiah is sometimes called the gospel prophet. His beautiful and stirring passages on the universal place of Sabbathkeeping qualify him to be called the Sabbath prophet as well.

6. It was for men in Jeremiah's time.

Jeremiah 17:21-22—"Thus saith the Lord; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers" (*Jeremiah 17:23-27; 52:12-14; Nehemiah 13:15-18*).

Jeremiah's words need no comment.

7. It was for Jesus, the Son of man, and for men in His time.

Since Jesus was the Creator, He made the world and the Sabbath too (*John 1:1-3, 14*). It was His custom while in this world to keep it.

Luke 4:16—"He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read."

Jesus kept all His Father's commandments. He did not come to destroy them, but to show how they should be kept.

John 15:10—"If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

He rested in the tomb on the Sabbath. Read *Luke 23:52-54*. His followers sacredly observed the same day.

Luke 23:55-56—"The women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment."

His followers honored the Sabbath forty years after His death.

Matthew 24:20—“Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.”

Looking forward about forty years into the future, Jesus admonished His followers to pray that their flight from the besieged city of Jerusalem, in A.D. 70, might not be on the Sabbath day. Jesus, as a carpenter, closed shop and went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day as a regular custom. He found that the church had heaped up a great stack of traditional rules about Sabbath observance, laws not found in the Bible. These Jesus ignored or deliberately disobeyed, but He kept and honored the Sabbath which He had made at creation. Sin is “the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4), and Jesus did not sin (1 Peter 2:22).

8. It was for Paul and men of his time.

Sabbath observance was an accepted custom in Paul’s time (Acts 17:1-2; 18:1-4, 11). The apostle spoke to both Jews and Gentiles on the Sabbath.

Acts 13:14, 42, 44—“When they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down . . . And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath . . . And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the Word of God.”

Paul, a servant of God, would have no more right than you or I to dishonor God and His sign of creatorship. He was a loyal observer of the Bible Sabbath. Said he:

Acts 24:14—“This I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets” (Acts 25:8).

9. Thank the Lord! The true Sabbath will also be for the saved in the new earth.

Isaiah 66:22-23—“As the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another; shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord” (Revelation 22:14).

In the new earth, the Sabbath will be forever honored.

6 - HOW IS THE SABBATH RELATED TO THE WORK OF REDEMPTION?

1. Redemption involves a work of creation.

Since it takes creative power to redeem, God used the Sabbath as a sign of sanctification, or redemption. When He creates the new earth, the Sabbath will continue on its eternal way—the sign of God’s peace and power. Throughout all eternity, it will carry the double significance of a sign of power to create and to redeem.

2 Corinthians 5:17—“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

Psalms 51:10—“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”

2. The Sabbath is a sign of this sanctifying power.

Exodus 31:13—“Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you” (*Ezekiel 20:12, 20*).

The Sabbath is God’s flag, the symbol of His sovereignty, woven in the loom of heaven out of that intangible and precious something we call time, and raised over His fair earthly dominion in the freshness of creation’s morning. And today, after the passing of the long years, it still remains the symbol of His right to rule as Creator and Redeemer.

Dear friend, do you wish to recognize your Creator and serve Him under the gentle folds of His flag? Indeed, you do! You would not for all the world lower it to earth and trample it under your feet, miss the benign blessings it vouchsafes to you, or deny the God who made you.

But now, there is more to this vital Sabbath question than we can encompass in one lesson, so watch for more interesting facts on the subject in a coming lesson. One thing—remember, please, Christ is supreme in the Christian life, and His Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to Him as Lord and Saviour.

The next lesson explains a very important Bible prophecy. It is entitled “The Prophecy of Daniel Seven.”

Brief Review Questions —

Who is the Creator of all things?

When was the Bible Sabbath given to mankind?

Was it kept by God’s people in Bible times?

Will it be kept in the New Earth?

YOUR SPECIAL DAY WITH GOD**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

“The Sabbath was hallowed at the creation. As ordained for man, it had its origin when ‘the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy’ (Job 38:7). Peace brooded over the world; for earth was in harmony with heaven. ‘God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good’; and He rested in the joy of His completed work (Genesis 1:31).

“Because He had rested upon the Sabbath, ‘God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it,’—set it apart to a holy use. He gave it to Adam as a day of rest. It was a memorial of the work of creation, and thus a sign of God’s power and His love. The Scripture says, “He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered.’ ‘The things that are made,’ declare ‘the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world,’ ‘even His everlasting power and divinity’ (Genesis 2:3; Psalm 111:4; Romans 1:20, R. V.)

“All things were created by the Son of God. ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God . . . All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made’ (John 1: 1-3). And since the Sabbath is a memorial of the work of creation, it is a token of the love and power of Christ.

“The Sabbath calls our thoughts to nature, and brings us into communion with the Creator. In the song of the bird, the sighing of the trees, and the music of the sea, we still may hear His voice who talked with Adam in Eden in the cool of the day. And as we behold His power in nature we find comfort, for the Word that created all things is that which speaks life to the soul. He ‘who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ’ (2 Corinthians 4:6) . .

“The Sabbath was embodied in the law given from Sinai; but it was not then first made known as a day of rest. The people of Israel had a knowledge of it before they came to Sinai. On the way thither the Sabbath was kept. When some profaned it, the Lord reprovved them, saying, ‘How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws’ (Exodus 16:28)?

“The Sabbath was not for Israel merely, but for the world. It had been made known to man in Eden, and, like the other precepts of the Decalogue, it is of imperishable obligation.”

—*Desire of Ages, 281-283*

THE WEEKLY CYCLE

The writings of historians, the records of chronographers, the languages of earth, the calendars of time, and the existence of the Jewish race—all testify to the fact that the weekly cycle on our calendars today is the same as in earlier centuries—going back to the time of Christ, to Moses, and beyond.

In the beginning, God gave us the weekly seven-day cycle, with the Sabbath as the last day. That pattern has never changed. The seventh day of the week today is the true Bible Sabbath. Our seventh day is the Sabbath which Jesus kept; it was the Sabbath in the time of Moses when the Ten Commandments were written down. Historians and scientists all agree that this is true.

If there had been any change in the weekly cycle, between the time of Creation and the time of Moses, a correction would have been made when the Ten Commandments were given to the Hebrews. From that time, on down to the present, there have always been Jews to testify as to the true Sabbath. It is the same seventh day of the week which is on our calendars. While all the other ancient races are now intermingled, the Jews have been kept separate so they could testify to the fact that our seventh day is the Bible Sabbath!

The yearly cycle has been changed. In 1582, the length of the year was changed to include the leap year. This changeover resulted in October 1582 having only 21 days! But each week remained the same seven days in length. Thursday, October 4, was followed by Friday, October 15. God has divinely protected the weekly cycle down through the ages. If He had not done this, it would be impossible to keep the Sabbath holy, as He has commanded. But, because He has, we have no excuse not to. The seventh day is a holy day, made holy by the command of God. All calendars agree: The seventh day is the Sabbath. Sunday is the first day; the day called "Saturday" in the English language is the Sabbath.

However, in 108 of the 160 languages of mankind, the seventh day is called "the Sabbath"! Did you know that? Dr. William Mead Jones of London prepared a chart proving this. (A copy of this chart can be obtained free of charge from the publisher of this book: Ask for "*The Chart of the Week*" [BS-28-29]. English is one of the few major lan-

guages in which the seventh day is not called “the Sabbath.”

Here are ten examples: Hebrew: Shabbath / Greek: Sabbaton / Latin: Sabbatum / Arabic: Assabit / Persian: Shambin / Russian: Subbota / Hindustani: Shamba / French: Samedi / Italian: Sabato / Spanish: Sabado.

“By calculating the eclipses, it can be proven that no time has been lost and the creation days were seven, divided into 24 hours each.”—*Dr. Hinkley, The Watchman, July 1926 [Hinkley was a well-known astronomer].*

“The human race never lost the septenary [seven day] sequence of week days and that the Sabbath of these latter times comes down to us from Adam, though the ages, without a single lapse.”—*Dr. Totten, professor of astronomy at Yale University.*

“Seven has been the ancient and honored number among the nations of the earth. They have measured their time by weeks from the beginning. The origin of this was the Sabbath of God, as Moses has given the reasons for it in his writings.”—*Dr. Lyman Coleman.*

“There has been no change in our calendar in past centuries that has affected in any way the cycle of the week.”—*James Robertson, Director American Ephemeris, Navy Department, U.S. Naval Observatory, Washington, D.C., March 12, 1932.*

“It can be said with assurance that not a day has been lost since Creation, and all the calendar changes notwithstanding, there has been no break in the weekly cycle.”—*Dr. Frank Jeffries, Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and Research Director of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, England.*

It is remarkable how complete is the Biblical and historical evidence corroborating the fact that the Bible Sabbath was given to us by the God of heaven. Let us keep the Sabbath that Jesus kept! He worshiped on the Bible Sabbath, and never told us to stop keeping it. No one else in the Bible said to either. The seventh day is the Sabbath, for God never changed it.

How very thankful we can be that our God is so reliable. He does not change this way or that. He has a holy law which we must obey. But He sent His only begotten Son to die in order to enable us to do it.

Soon we will be in heaven, and praise Him for His great Gift.

Your Special Day with God

1 - WHAT IS THE SIGN OF GOD'S CREATORSHIP?

Exodus 31:16-17—"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations for a _____ covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed."

2 - WAS THE SABBATH MADE BEFORE MAN SINNED?

1. The Sabbath was made on the seventh day, out of the seventh day.

Genesis 2:2-3—"On the _____ day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God _____ the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."

2. The seventh day is therefore God's blessed, sanctified rest day.

Exodus 20:10, 11—"The seventh day is the _____ of the Lord thy God . . . In six days the Lord made heaven and earth . . . and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it" (*also 1 Chronicles 17:27; Numbers 23:19-20*).

3 - WAS THE SABBATH SIGN TO BE FOR ALL MEN FOR ALL TIME?

1. The Sabbath was made for man—all men.

Mark 2:27—"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

2. Noah had a knowledge of a week of seven days. Genesis 8:8-

12. Abraham knew and obeyed God's laws. **Genesis 26:5**—"Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." In Moses' time, the Sabbath was known and observed.

Psalms 105:43-45—"He brought forth His people with joy and His chosen with gladness . . . that they might observe His statutes, and keep His laws." **Deuteronomy 5:7-22.**

3. The Sabbath was for men in Isaiah's time.

Isaiah 58:13-14—"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a

delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the _____ of the Lord hath spoken it" (*Isaiah 56:1-7*).

4. It was for men in Jeremiah's time. *Jeremiah 17:21-22 (Jeremiah 17:23-27; 52:12-14; Nehemiah 13:15-18).*

5. It was for Jesus, the Son of man, and for men in His time.

Luke 4:16—"He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and as His _____ was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read."

John 15:10—"If ye keep My commandments, ye shall _____ in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

Luke 23:55-56—"The women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day _____ to the commandment."

Matthew 24:20—"Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the _____ day."

6. It was for Paul and men of his time (*Acts 13:14, 42, 44; Acts 24:14; Acts 25:8*).

7. Thank the Lord! The true Sabbath will also be for the saved in the new earth.

Isaiah 66:22-23—"As the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another; shall all flesh come to _____ before Me, saith the Lord" (*Revelation 22:14*).

4 - HOW IS THE SABBATH RELATED TO THE WORK OF REDEMPTION?

1. Redemption involves a work of creation. *2 Corinthians 5:17; Psalms 51:10.* **2. The Sabbath is a sign of this sanctifying power.** **Exodus 31:13**—"Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you" (*Ezekiel 20:12, 20*).

What the Bible says about – The Prophecy of Daniel Seven

SCRIPTURE READING:
DANIEL 7

INTRODUCTION

Daniel was but a youth when God gave him the interpretation of the king's dream about the great image of Daniel 2. In the seventh chapter, Daniel was given another vision. He was now an old man, past eighty years of age. The kingdom of Babylon had also grown old, and was soon to be conquered by the Medo-Persians. The prophecies of Daniel were written to be understood and to reveal the future to men. Jesus Himself referred to "Daniel the prophet" and said concerning his writings, "Whoso readeth, let him understand" (*Matthew 24:15*).

God knows the future (*Isaiah 46:9-10*), and He reveals important happenings of coming years through His prophets (*Amos 3:7*). You will agree, after studying this lesson, that Daniel's vision of the seventh chapter is one of the most important in the Scriptures.

1 - WHAT SYMBOLS ARE INTRODUCED EARLY IN THIS CHAPTER?

Daniel 7:2—"Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea."

First, keep in mind that winds mean strife and war. This is symbolic language. Notice these two texts from Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 49:36-37—"And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds: and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come. For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, and before them that seek their life."

Jeremiah 25:32—"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth."

Second, we learn that, in Bible prophecy, the sea, or waters, represent peoples.

Revelation 17:15—"And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multi-

tudes, and nations, and tongues.”

Thus winds on the sea denote war and strife among the peoples of earth. The symbolic language here used is perfectly plain. The picture is one familiar on the pages of history—the picture of war and conflict, of battle and blood, of strife and confusion, with one nation coming up and another going down. How wonderful it will be when the bugle of war shall be blown no more, and our ears shall hear only the sweet sounds of peace and harmony. That day will be ushered in only by the second coming of our Saviour.

2 - WHAT DO THE FOUR BEASTS REPRESENT?

Daniel 7:17—“These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.”

Daniel 7:23—“The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth.”

It is very clear that the history of the world, from Babylon to Christ's second coming, is given in Daniel 7 as in Daniel 2. There were to be but four universal kingdoms until the setting up of God's kingdom, according to Daniel 2; history has confirmed this story. Since Daniel 7 also gives us four and they are presented as succeeding one another (*Daniel 7:4-7, 23*), it is evident that we are dealing with Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

The fact that the kingdom of God is set up at the end of this line of prophecy is further proof that the same period and kingdoms are set forth in Daniel 7 as in Daniel 2. However, in Daniel 7, certain details bring in two new and important features—the little horn and the judgment.

The lion with eagle's wings represented Babylon, corresponding to the head of gold in Daniel 2. It is common knowledge that the winged lion was one of Babylon's outstanding symbols.

The bear symbolized Medo-Persia. It raised itself on one side. It was a dual monarchy of the Medes and Persians. One power became stronger than the other. This power was Persia (*Daniel 8:3, 20*).

The leopard with four heads and four wings was Greece. The extra wings indicated the almost unparalleled rapidity of Alexander's conquests. He conquered Medo-Persia in five years; and, in eight years, he marched his soldiers more than 5,100 miles. The four heads of the leopard stand for the four divisions of the empire, made after Alexander's death following a drunken debauch. His empire was soon divided among his four leading generals. The dreadful beast represented Rome. The iron kingdom of Daniel 2 is here represented as a beast with great iron teeth (*Daniel 2:40; Daniel 7:7, 19, 23*).

3 - WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEN HORNS OF THE FOURTH BEAST?

The ten horns represent ten kings. The king stands for a kingdom (*Daniel 7: 24*). So ten main kingdoms were to arise out of Rome's empire. Some of the modern nations of Europe are the outgrowth of these divisions. They can never be permanently united by men, as we have studied (*Daniel 2:43*).

4 - WHO IS REPRESENTED BY THE LITTLE HORN?

Daniel 7:8—"I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold: in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things."

All students of history know that Rome had two phases: pagan (heathen) Rome and papal Rome. When Rome fell under the invasion of the barbarian tribes, the bishop of Rome picked up the scepter. Christianity was nominally accepted by the barbarians in general, and the pope became the chief power in Europe. No history of this period is complete without that important chapter, *The Rise of the Papacy*. The papacy is the government of the "papa," or pope. For more than 1,200 years, the threads of European history were interwoven with those of the papacy. James P. Conroy said:

"Long ages ago, when Rome through the neglect of the Western emperors was left to the mercy of the barbarous hordes, the Romans turned to one figure for aid and protection, and asked him to rule them . . . and thus . . . commenced the temporal sovereignty of the popes. And meekly stepping to the throne of Caesar, the vicar of Christ took up the scepter to which the emperors and kings of Europe were to bow in reverence through so many ages." Catholics, Protestants, and all historians know that, after the breakup of pagan Rome, the papacy, or papal Rome, became the outstanding force among the ten kingdoms of Europe. There simply is no other power that answers to the ten points set forth by Daniel concerning the little horn. We shall briefly touch each point" (*American Catholic Quarterly Review, April, 1911*).

1. It came up among the ten horns.

Daniel 7:8—"I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn."

The little horn was to come up among the ten horns. This power must come up in Europe, or at least in that region. The papacy arose with its seat at Rome itself.

2. It came up after them.

Daniel 7:24—“And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them.”

It was evident that the little horn was to come up after the ten horns, as the papacy did so. The roots of the papacy were there, but it rose to power and prominence after Rome's division.

3. It was to uproot three horns.

Daniel 7:8—“Before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots.”

Daniel 7:24—“And he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.”

The little horn was to uproot three horns, or kingdoms. These three powers are generally recognized as the Heruli, the Ostrogoths, and the Vandals. They were opposed to some of the teachings and claims of the papal hierarchy. The papacy triumphed over them.

4. It was to be different from the others.

Daniel 7:24—“And he shall be diverse from the first.”

The little horn was to be different from the others. It was a religious-political power, persecuting Christians who refused to recognize its decrees. It was a mixture of religion and politics; it was also a mixture of Christianity and paganism—of Christian and pagan rites and ceremonies and philosophy. The simplicity of Christ's teaching and the power of His gospel were lost in the maze of this apostate teaching.

One need only to read the Holy Scriptures to know, beyond any doubt, that many teachings and practices of the papacy are not supported by the teachings of the holy Bible.

5. It was to be the leading power.

Daniel 7:20—“And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.”

The little horn was to be the leading power. Emperors, princes, and rulers were crowned by the pope. They kissed his feet and held his saddle stirrup. Said Henry E. Manning (Roman Catholic cardinal):

“The Vicar of the incarnate Son of God, anointed high priest, and supreme temporal ruler [the pope], sat in his tribunal, impartially to judge between nation and nation, between people and prince, between sovereign and subject” (*The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ* [1862], p. 46).

6. It was to speak great words against God.

Daniel 7:25—“And he shall speak great words against the Most High.”

The little horn was to speak great words against the Most High. The pope

is given titles that belong only to the Godhead. The Council of Trent defines papal power thus: "We define that the Holy Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff holds the primacy over the whole world" (*Labbe and Cossart [R.C.], The Most Holy Councils, Vol. XIII, col. 1, 167*).

Pope Leo XIII wrote, "We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty" (*Encyclical letter, June 20, 1894, in The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII, p. 304*).

The Catholic Encyclopedia says, "This judicial authority will even include the power to pardon sin" (*Volume XII, art. "Pope," p. 265*).

The papacy makes claims belonging only to the Godhead. The papacy is either what it claims to be or the real Antichrist; both Catholics and Protestants admit this.

7. It was to make war on God's saints.

Daniel 7:25—"And shall wear out the saints of the Most High."

The little horn was to make war on the saints. It was to persecute dissenters. The noted Catholic, Thomas Aquinas, said that convicted heretics should be put to death just as surely as other criminals. His philosophy was put into practice for hundreds of years.

8. It would "think to change" God's times and laws.

Daniel 7:25—"And think to change times and laws."

Lucius Ferraris (Roman Catholic) says:

"The Pope can modify divine law" (*Prompta Bibliotheca, "Papa," art. 2, translated*).

If you will read the Ten Commandments in almost any Catholic catechism, you will note that the second commandment is removed entirely. The tenth is made into two, and the fourth is changed. This power was to "think to change" God's law (*2 Thessalonians 2:3*). A power that changes God's law exalts itself above God. This matter is of such urgent importance to the destiny of millions of souls living today that we will carefully discuss it in the next study.

9. It was to be in supremacy for 1,260 years (A.D. 538-A.D. 1798).

Daniel 7:25—"And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."

The little horn was to be in supremacy for 1,260 years. Read Revelation 12, verses 6 and 14, and note that "time, and times, and half a time" are 1,260 days. In prophetic time, a day stands for a year (*Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6*). This method of interpretation is Biblical, and proves itself in practice.

The legally recognized supremacy of the pope began in A.D. 538, when there went into effect a decree of Emperor Justinian, making the bishop of Rome head over all the churches, the definer of doctrine, and the corrector of heretics. Twelve hundred and sixty years later would reach

to the year A.D. 1798.

10. Its dominion was to be taken away.

Daniel 7:26—"But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end."

The little horn's dominion was to be taken away. In 1798, just 1,260 years from A.D. 538, the French general, Berthier, took the pope prisoner, and he died in French exile some eighteen months later. The papacy received a "deadly wound" (*Revelation 13:3*). This was later to be healed. Therefore, the papacy will come back into power again for a short time, according to prophecies in the Revelation. No other power of history remotely approaches the point of meeting the ten requirements listed by Daniel. A great host of Bible commentators believe the papacy is the little horn. We agree with them.

5 - WHOM DID DANIEL SEE SITTING IN JUDGMENT?

Daniel 7:9-10—"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened."

Sometime between A.D. 1798 and the setting up of God's kingdom, God sits in judgment in heaven. Christ will bring His reward with Him when He returns. So all cases must be decided beforehand.

This judgment began, as we have already seen, in 1844.

6 - WHAT GREAT EVENT FOLLOWS THE JUDGMENT?

Daniel's prophecy pictures Christ receiving His kingdom, at last, and the saints entering into their eternal rest with Him.

Daniel 7:13-14—"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Daniel 7:18—"But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever" (*verse 27*).

This prophecy ends the same as does that of Daniel 2. The definite truth

is set forth, that the "Son of man" is to rule and the saints are to inherit the kingdom with Him. As we shall see in later lessons, the time for Christ to give the kingdom to His saints is very near at hand!

The Bible picture of saints and the popular concept of saints are two different things entirely. Here is the Bible definition of saints. Be sure to look up each text:

1. Those in Christ (*Philippians 1:1*).
2. Those who love the Lord (*Psalms 31:23*).
3. Those who pray (*Revelation 5:8*).
4. Those willing to suffer persecution (*Revelation 16:6*).
5. Those who keep the faith of Jesus (*Revelation 14:12*).
6. Those who keep the commandments of God (*Revelation 14:12*).

Sin is almost a forgotten word today, and a saint is ridiculed. Nevertheless, Christ Jesus came to save sinners and transform them into saints for His kingdom. We are "called to be saints" (*1 Corinthians 1:2*). And you, friend, may be numbered among them.

Brief Review Questions —

What does the lion represent?

What is the meaning of the bear?

What is symbolized by the leopard?

What is the dreadful beast?

Who is represented by the little horn power?

List five of the ten distinguishing features of this little horn:

THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL SEVEN**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

“Honored by men with the responsibilities of state and with the secrets of kingdoms bearing universal sway, Daniel was honored by God as His ambassador, and was given many revelations of the mysteries of ages to come. His wonderful prophecies, as recorded by him in chapters 7 to 12 of the book bearing his name, were not fully understood even by the prophet himself; but before his life labors closed, he was given the blessed assurance that ‘at the end of the days’—in the closing period of this world’s history—he would again be permitted to stand in his lot and place. It was not given him to understand all that God had revealed of the divine purpose. ‘Shut up the words, and seal the book,’ he was directed concerning his prophetic writings; these were to be sealed ‘even to the time of the end’ (Daniel 12:4) . . .

“As we near the close of this world’s history, the prophecies recorded by Daniel demand our special attention, as they relate to the very time in which we are living. With them should be linked the teachings of the last book of the New Testament Scriptures. Satan has led many to believe that the prophetic portions of the writings of Daniel and of John the revelator cannot be understood. But the promise is plain that special blessing will accompany the study of these prophecies. ‘The wise shall understand’ (verse 10), was spoken of the visions of Daniel that were to be unsealed in the latter days; and of the revelation that Christ gave to His servant John for the guidance of God’s people all through the centuries, the promise is, ‘Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy’ (Revelation 1:3) . . .

“From the rise and fall of nations as made plain in the books of Daniel and the Revelation, we need to learn how worthless is mere outward and worldly glory. Babylon, with all its power and magnificence, the like of which our world has never since beheld,—power and magnificence which to the people of that day seemed so stable and enduring,—how completely has it passed away! As ‘the flower of the grass,’ it has perished (James 1:10). So perished the Medo-Persian kingdom, and the kingdoms of Grecia and Rome. And so perishes all that has not God for its foundation. Only that which is bound up with His purpose, and expresses His character, can endure. His principles are the only steadfast things our world knows.

“A careful study of the working out of God’s purpose in the history of nations and in the revelation of things to come, will help us to estimate at their true value things seen and things unseen, and to learn what is the true aim of life. Thus, viewing the things of time in the light of eternity, we may, like Daniel and his fellows, live for that which is true and noble and enduring. And learning in this life the principles of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, that blessed kingdom which is to endure for ever and ever, we may be prepared at His coming to enter with Him into its possession.”

—*Prophets and Kings, 547-548*

The Prophecy of Daniel Seven

INTRODUCTION

1 - WHAT SYMBOLS ARE INTRODUCED EARLY IN THIS CHAPTER?

Daniel 7:2—“Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the _____ winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.”

Jeremiah 49:36-37—“And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds: and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come. For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, and before them that seek their life” (also Jeremiah 25:32).

Revelation 17:15—“And he saith unto me, The _____ which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.”

2 - WHAT DO THE FOUR BEASTS REPRESENT?

Daniel 7:17—“These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.”

Daniel 7:23—“The fourth beast shall be the fourth _____ upon earth.”

3 - WHO IS REPRESENTED BY THE LITTLE HORN OF THE FOURTH BEAST?

Daniel 7:8—“I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold: in this horn were eyes like the eyes of _____, and a mouth speaking great things.”

1. It came up among the ten horns.

Daniel 7:8—“I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn.”

2. It came up after them.

Daniel 7:24—“And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise _____ them.”

3. It was to uproot three horns.

Daniel 7:8—“Before whom there were _____ of the first horns

plucked up by the roots.”

Daniel 7:24—“And he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall _____ three kings.”

4. It was to be different from the others.

Daniel 7:24—“And he shall be diverse from the first.”

5. It was to be the leading power.

Daniel 7:20—“And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more _____ than his fellows.”

6. It was to speak great words against God.

Daniel 7:25—“And he shall speak _____ words against the Most High.”

7. It was to make war on God’s saints.

Daniel 7:25—“And shall wear out the saints of the Most High.”

8. It would “think to change” God’s times and laws.

Daniel 7:25—“And think to change times and laws.”

9. It was to be in supremacy for 1,260 years (A.D. 538-A.D. 1798).

Daniel 7:25—“And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the _____ of time.”

10. Its dominion was to be taken away.

Daniel 7:26—“But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his _____, to consume and destroy it unto the end.”

4 - WHOM DID DANIEL SEE SITTING IN JUDGMENT?

Daniel 7:9-10—“I beheld till the _____ were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.”

5 - WHAT GREAT EVENT FOLLOWS THE JUDGMENT?

Daniel 7:13-14, 18, 27.

What the Bible says about – How Sundaykeeping Began

SCRIPTURE READING:
MATTHEW 5:17-48

Sunday is the first day of the week. Saturday is the seventh day of the week. The question in this lesson is Who changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday? This is important because the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is commanded by God in the fourth commandment of the Decalogue (*Exodus 20:8-11*). Did God give His sanction for the change from the seventh to the first day of the week?

1 - IF THE CHANGE IS VALID, WHO AUTHORIZED IT?

Authority for the change should be found in the Bible. Since we are Bible Christians, this goes without saying that it is more authoritative with us than a dictionary is for spelling and definitions. Dictionaries change, but “the Word of our God shall stand for ever” (*Isaiah 40:8*).

Shall we build on the early Church Fathers? These are such men as Clement, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian. Some of them lived in the second century and some later. Some theologians try to prove doctrine by quoting these early Church Fathers.

Dr. Adam Clarke says in his commentary:

“But of these [the Fathers] we may safely state, that there is not a truth in the most orthodox creed that cannot be proved by their authority, nor a heresy that has disgraced the Romish Church, that may not challenge them as its authors. In points of doctrine their authority is, with me, nothing. The Word of God alone contains my creed” (*Comment on Proverbs 8*).

If the Bible gives no testimony, there is no light.

Isaiah 8:20—“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.”

2 - COULD GOD CHANGE HIS OWN LAW?

The law of God is as sacred as the Lawgiver Himself. It is a revelation of His gracious will, a transcript of His character, the expression of His infinite love and wisdom. The death of Christ on Calvary to redeem us from the curse, or penalty, of the law forever proves that God could

not change His law, not even to save His Son. The following facts prove that this is true:

1. God does not change.

Malachi 3:6—"I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye Sons of Jacob are not consumed" (*James 1:17*). ○

2. The Ten Commandments are God's own covenant.

Deuteronomy 4:13—"He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even Ten Commandments; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone."

3. God will not break His covenant or alter His words.

Psalms 89:34—"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips."

4. He keeps His covenant for a thousand generations.

Deuteronomy 7:9—"Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations."

5. God's acts stand forever.

Ecclesiastes 3:14—"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before Him." ○

3 - DID JESUS CHANGE THE LAW AND THE SABBATH?

Since Jesus and His Father are one (*John 10:30*), and since Jesus came to do the will of His Father (*John 6:38*), it follows that He would do nothing of which His Father would not approve. So He could not have come to change God's eternal law. Christ is the active agent in God's plans, by whom God created all things.

Ephesians 3:9—"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ" (*1 Corinthians 8:6*).

Christ, as Creator, made the Sabbath in the beginning. So He would not have come to earth to destroy it.

John 1:1-3—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made." ○

John 1:14—"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among

us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.”

Genesis 2:1-3—“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all his work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.”

Keep in mind that it was Christ who gave the law at Mount Sinai. This is taught by the following two Scripture texts, when placed together:

Nehemiah 9:12-13—“Moreover thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar, and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go. Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments.”

1 Corinthians 10:4—“And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.”

And, while He was on earth, Jesus walked in harmony with God’s laws. Note these six vital facts:

1. He kept His Father’s commandments.

John 15:10—“If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.”

Jesus did no sin (*1 Peter 2:22*). “Sin is the transgression of the law” (*1 John 3:4*). Therefore, He could not have broken the Sabbath commandment, as some profanely say.

2. He came to fulfill (keep) the law, not to destroy it.

Matthew 5:17-19—“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

3. He came to magnify the law.

Isaiah 42:21—“The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honourable.”

(Read Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28.)

4. He Himself kept the Sabbath.

Luke 4:16—“He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.”

5. He openly ignored the Jewish Sabbath laws not found in the Bible. Read Luke 6:1-11.

6. He indicated that the Sabbath would be sacred forty years after the cross.

Matthew 24:20—“But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.”

Jesus admonished His followers to pray that their flight from Jerusalem should not be on the Sabbath day (*Matthew 24:20*). Jesus knew that this flight (A.D. 70) would occur some forty years after His return to heaven.

It is completely conclusive that the unholy deed of attempting to change God’s everlasting, holy law cannot be charged to His holy Son, Jesus.

4 - DID PAUL CHANGE GOD’S LAW OR SABBATH?

Said the great apostle:

Romans 3:31—“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”

We find Paul exclaiming about the established law. This he could not have done had it been abolished. The thought of abrogating the law was repulsive to the apostle. “God forbid!” he says.

The yearly sabbaths of Colossians 2:16 will be explained in the next study.

5 - DO MEN CLAIM THERE IS BIBLE PROOF FOR THE CHANGE?

1. Catholics say there is absolutely no Bible proof.

Cardinal Gibbons declared:

“You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday.”—*The Faith of Our Fathers* (110th ed.), p. 89.

“Sunday is a Catholic institution, and its claims to observance can be defended only on Catholic principles . . . From the beginning to end of Scripture, there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first” (*Catholic Press [Sydney, Australia], August 25, 1900*).

2. Protestants say there is no Bible text.

In an article about the Sabbath, Smith and Cheetham say:

“The notion of a formal substitution [of the first for the seventh day] and the transference to it, perhaps in a spiritualized form, of the sabbatical obligation established by . . . the fourth commandment, has no basis whatever, either in Holy Scripture or in Christian antiquity” (*Smith and Cheetham’s Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*).

Dr. R. W. Dale (Congregationalist) says:

“It is quite clear that however rigidly or devoutly we spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath . . . The Sabbath was founded on a specific Divine command. We can plead no such command for the obligation to observe Sunday . . . There is not a single sentence in the New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday” (*The Ten Commandments, pages 100-101*).

Dr. Edward T. Hiscox, author of *The Baptist Manual*:

“There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will be said, however, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week . . . Where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament, absolutely not” (*in a paper read before a New York Ministers’ Conference held November 13, 1893*).

3. Historians testify likewise.

Article regarding the Sabbath, *Chamber’s Encyclopedia (1880)*: “Unquestionably the first law, either ecclesiastical or civil, by which the sabbatical observance of that day is known to have been ordained, is the edict of Constantine, A.D. 321.” This Roman emperor had not yet professed Christianity at the time of this edict, and he speaks of Sunday as “the venerable day of the sun.”

Augustus Neander, celebrated historian:

“The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a divine command in this respect, far from them and from the early apostolic Church to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday” (*The History of the Christian Religion and Church, Rose’s translation, p. 186*).

If the Sabbath had been changed by God, surely the record of the change would be found in His Word.

6 - DOES THE CHURCH OF ROME ADMIT SHE MADE THE CHANGE?

We return now to the prophecy of Daniel 7 where the little horn, or the papacy, was to “think to change” God’s laws.

Daniel 7:25—“He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change

times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”

Through the prophet Daniel, God foretold the 1,260-year reign of the papacy and its determination to change times and laws. The change has been attempted. That we all know. Does the papacy acknowledge the act? First of all, we turn to the *Catholic Mirror of September 23, 1893*: “The Catholic Church, for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday.”

Next we quote Peter Geiermann, *from Catholicism's Catechism*:

“Q. Which is the Sabbath day?

“A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

“Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

“A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday” (*The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine, p. 50*).

The American Sentinel (N.Y.), June 1, 1893, page 173, quotes Thomas Enright, C.S.S.R., of Redemptorist College: “The Bible says, Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day. The Catholic Church says, No! By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day, and command you to keep holy the first day of the week.”

The above remarkable statement is an accurate statement of the attitude and objective of Rome toward the Bible Sabbath over the past 1,800 years.

Four facts now stand out in bold relief: (1) The change from Sabbath to Sunday is not authorized in the Bible. (2) God predicted that the papacy would “think to change” God’s law. (3) The papacy openly declares that it has changed God’s law. (4) The papacy thus exalts itself above God, as foretold by the apostle Paul (*2 Thessalonians 2:3-4*).

The worship of Mithra, the Persian sun god, was widespread in the Roman Empire in the early centuries after Christ. It had become the leading non-Christian religion; and Christian church leaders in Rome wanted to change the holy day to Sunday, so they could win more Mithraites to the faith.

The influence of Mithraism (sun worship), the existence of the heathen Sunday festival, the rising anti-Jewish sentiment among Christians, the fact that Christians had a tendency to think of the resurrection of Christ with a certain holy joy, the interest of Roman rulers in binding together all religious elements of the empire, and the gradual apostasy of the church, all combined to bring about a gradual change from the observance of God’s holy Sabbath to the observance of Sunday.

Thus the Roman emperor, Constantine, passed the first known Sunday law in A.D. 321.

A number of years later, the apostatizing church at the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336) voted to transfer the solemnity from Sabbath to Sunday as noted above. That council in Canon 29 decreed: "Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday [the Sabbath], but shall work on that day." This definitely indicates that Christians were still keeping the Sabbath more than three hundred years after Christ's ascension, as scholars have always known.

7 - DO THE SCRIPTURES FORETELL A RESTORATION OF THE SABBATH?

The Creator of the universe, who made the seventh-day Sabbath a sign of His power and right to rule, certainly would not leave His Sabbath and to be trampled underfoot forever and His holy law to be mutilated by the mind and hand of man. Isaiah foretold a great call to Sabbath observance. And the teachers of the true Sabbath he called "The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." Here are his words:

Isaiah 58:12-14—"And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

As Israel came out of Egypt in the Exodus movement and Christ especially emphasized the Sabbath, so in these last days, after the long dark ages of apostasy, Christ has a Christian movement reaching to the ends of the earth, gathering those who keep all His commandments (*Revelation 12:17; 14:6-15*).

We must here squarely face the issue. God's law is eternal. Even if it were a changeable law, only God, the Lawgiver, could change it, and His Word affords no such record or permission. A power professing to "hold on this earth the place of God Almighty" asserts that it has the power to change God's law; but Jesus said, "Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching, for doctrines the commandments of men (*Mark 7:7*). Would you not rather be on the side of God and Christ and the eternal law that God has promised to write in the heart of every believer?

This question comes into clearer focus as we study all the texts in the New Testament that refer to the first day of the week, the day commonly called Sunday and observed by many as the Christian's rest day. The

next lesson is entitled "Sunday in the New Testament."

Brief Review Questions —

Did God change His own law? ○

Did Jesus change the law and the Sabbath?

Did Paul change God's law?

Do men agree there is no Bible proof for the attempted change? ○

Does the Church of Rome admit it made the change? ○

HOW SUNDAYKEEPING BEGAN

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—

"The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God'—because He is the Creator, and we are His creatures. 'The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten.'—*J. N. Andrews, History of the Sabbath, chapter 27.* ○

"It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men, that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden; and so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial. Had the Sabbath been

universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, 'Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.' It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment . . .

"It is a fact generally admitted by Protestants that the Scriptures give no authority for the change of the Sabbath. This is plainly stated in publications issued by the American Tract Society and the American Sunday School Union. One of these works acknowledges 'the complete silence of the New Testament so far as any explicit command for the Sabbath [Sunday, the first day of the week] or definite rules for its observance are concerned.'"—George Elliott, *The Abiding Sabbath*, page 184.

"Another says: 'Up to the time of Christ's death, no change had been made in the day'; and, 'so far as the record shows, they [the apostles] did not . . . give any explicit command enjoining the abandonment of the seventh-day Sabbath, and its observance on the first day of the week.'"—A. E. Waffle, *The Lord's Day*, pages 186-188.

"Roman Catholics acknowledge that the change of the Sabbath was made by their church, and declare that Protestants by observing the Sunday are recognizing her power. In the Catholic Catechism of Christian Religion, in answer to a question as to the day to be observed in obedience to the fourth commandment, this statement is made: 'During the old law, Saturday was the day sanctified; but the church, instructed by Jesus Christ, and directed by the Spirit of God, has substituted Sunday for Saturday; so now we sanctify the first, not the seventh day. Sunday means, and now is, the day of the Lord.'

"As the sign of the authority of the Catholic Church, papal writers cite 'the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of . . . because by keeping Sunday, they acknowledge the church's power to ordain feasts, and to command them under sin.'"—Henry Tuberville, *An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine*, page 58.

"The Roman Church has not relinquished her claim to supremacy; and when the world and the Protestant churches accept a sabbath of her creating, while they reject the Bible Sabbath, they virtually admit this assumption. They may claim the authority of tradition and of the Fathers for the change; but in so doing they ignore the very principle which separates them from Rome—that 'the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants' . . . Romanists declare that 'the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church.'"—Mgr. Segur, *Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today*, page 213.

—Great Controversy, 437-438, 447-448

THE LAW OF GOD

I

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

II

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto the thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.

III

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

IV

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

V

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI

Thou shalt not kill.

VII

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII

Thou shalt not steal.

IX

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

X

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

—Exodus 20:3-17

THE LAW OF GOD AS CHANGED BY MAN

I

I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.

[The Second Commandment has been left out.]

II [actually III]

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

III [actually IV]

Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

[The Sabbath Commandment has been changed.]

IV [actually V]

Honor thy father and thy mother.

V [actually VI]

Thou shalt not kill.

VI [actually VII]

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VII (actually VIII)

Thou shalt not steal.

VIII [actually IX - First Part]

Thou shalt not covert thy neighbor's wife.

X [X - Second Part]

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

—*The General Catholic Catechism*

“Q.—Have you any other way of proving that the [Catholic] Church has power to institute festivals of precept?”

“A.—Had she not such power . . . she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week for Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority.”—*Doctrinal Catechism*, p. 174 [Roman Catholic].

“Prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ The Catholic Church says, No. By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day and command you to keep holy the first day of the week. And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the Holy Roman Catholic Church.”—*Thomas Enright, CSSR, President, Redemptorist College, Kansas City, Missouri, February 18, 1884* [Roman Catholic].

A SABBATH TIME LINE FROM EDEN TO EDEN

In twelve links

A chain of Truth Linking God to His people in the Holy Sabbath

At the Creation: The Sabbath was given to mankind (*Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 31:16-17*).

Before Sinai: The Sabbath existed for 2,500 years (*Exodus 16:4, 26, 28, 30*).

At Sinai: The Sabbath was written down (*Exodus 20:8-11*).

After Sinai: The Sabbath was kept in the Old Testament (*Numbers 15:32-35; Jeremiah 17:21-27; fulfilled: Jeremiah 52:7-15; 2 Chronicles 36:19-21*).

Jesus Our Example: Jesus kept the Bible Sabbath (*Luke 4:16; 1 Peter 2:21; Mark 2:28; Isaiah 42:21; Mark 1:21; 1 John 2:6-7*).

The Disciples: Christ's disciples kept the Sabbath (*Luke 23:56-24:1*).

Paul: The apostles kept the Sabbath (*Acts 17:2; 13:14, 42, 44; 16:13*).

After the time of Christ: God's people were still to be keeping the Bible Sabbath when Jerusalem was destroyed 40 years after Calvary (*Matthew 24:1-3, 20*).

The Dark Ages and the Last Days: God's people were to keep the Bible Sabbath in the Christian Era, on down to the end of time (*Matthew 24:1-3, 20; Revelation 12:17*).

An end-time revival in Sabbathkeeping was predicted: The Sabbath is to be kept in our time (*Isaiah 58:12-14; Revelation 12:17, 14:12*).

In heaven and the earth made new: The Sabbath will be kept through all eternity to come (*Revelation 22:14; Isaiah 66:22-23*).

The Sabbath is your special day with God: This is because it is founded on Scripture (*Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 31:13, 17; Isaiah 56:2, 4, 6; Ezekiel 20:12, 20*).

A SUNDAY TIME LINE FROM EDEN TO EDEN

In twelve links

***A chain of Fact disproving a man-made error:
The Sunday-sacredness error.***

At the Creation: Sunday sacredness not known.
Bible texts vindicating Sunday: *None.*

Before Sinai: Sunday sacredness never found. Bible
texts vindicating Sunday: *None.*

At Sinai: Sunday sacredness totally missing. Bible
texts vindicating Sunday: *None.*

After Sinai: Sunday sacredness completely absent.
Bible texts vindicating Sunday: *None.*

Jesus, our Example: Sunday sacredness totally
ignored. Bible texts vindicating Sunday: *None.*

The Disciples: Sunday sacredness not mentioned.
Bible texts vindicating Sunday: *None.*

Paul: Sunday sacredness never spoken of. Bible texts
vindicating Sunday: *None.*

After the time of Christ: Sunday sacredness entirely
missing. Bible texts vindicating Sunday: *None.*

The Dark Ages: The error of Sunday sacredness
predicted: *Daniel 7:25, 8:10-12; Revelation 13:6-7; 17:5-6.* Bible texts vindicating Sunday: *None.*

The last days: Bible prophecy predicted a return to
the Bible Sabbath by a remnant few: *Isaiah 58:12-14;
Revelation 12:17, 14:12.* Bible texts vindicating Sunday:
None.

In heaven and the earth made new: Sunday
sacredness totally missing. It will continue to be just
another common work day, as, in the estimation of God,
it always has been (*Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11*). Bible
text vindicating Sunday: *None.*

Sunday is not a special day with God: Sunday
sacredness is nowhere in Scripture. Bible texts vindicat-
ing Sunday: *None.*

CATHOLICISM SPEAKS

"Sunday is a Catholic institution, and its claim to observance can be defended only on Catholic principles . . . From beginning to end of Scripture there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first."—*Catholic Press, Sydney, Australia, August, 1900.*

"Protestantism, in discarding the authority of the [Roman Catholic] Church, has no good reason for its Sunday theory, and ought logically to keep Saturday as the Sabbath."—*John Gilmary Shea, in the American Catholic Quarterly Review, January 1883.*

"It is well to remind the Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, and all other Christians that the Bible does not support them anywhere in their observance of Sunday. Sunday is an institution of the Roman Catholic Church, and those who observe the day observe a commandment of the Catholic Church."—*Priest Brady, in an address, reported in the Elizabeth, N.J. News of March 18, 1903.*

"*Ques.*—Have you any other way of proving that the [Catholic] Church has power to institute festivals of precept [to command holy days]?"

"*Ans.*—Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her: She could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority."—*Stephen Keenan, Doctrinal Catechism, p. 176.*

"Reason and common sense demand the acceptance of one or the other of these two alternatives: either Protestantism and the keeping holy of Saturday or Catholicity and the keeping holy of Sunday. Compromise is impossible."—*The Catholic Mirror, December 23, 1893.*

"God simply gave His [Catholic] Church the power to set aside whatever day or days she would deem suitable as Holy Days. The Church chose Sunday, the first day of the week, and in the course of time added other days, as holy days."—*Vincent J. Kelly, Forbidden Sunday and Feast-Day Occupations, p. 2.*

"Protestants . . . accept Sunday rather than Saturday as the day for public worship after the Catholic Church made the change . . . But the Protestant mind does not seem to realize that in accepting the Bible, in observing the Sunday, they are accepting the authority of the spokesman for the church, the Pope."—*Our Sunday Visitor, February 5, 1950.*

“We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty.”—*Pope Leo XIII, in an Encyclical Letter, dated June 20, 1894.*

“Not the Creator of Universe, in Genesis 2:1-3,—but the Catholic Church “can claim the honor of having granted man a pause to his work every seven days.”—*S. C. Mosna, Storia della Domenica, 1969, pp. 366-367.*

“The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus Christ, hidden under veil of flesh.”—*The Catholic National, July 1895.*

“If Protestants would follow the Bible, they should worship God on the Sabbath Day. In keeping the Sunday they are following a law of the Catholic Church.”—*Albert Smith, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, replying for the Cardinal, in a letter dated February 10, 1920.*

“We define that the Holy Apostolic See (the Vatican) and the Roman Pontiff hold the primacy over the whole world.”—*A Decree of the Council of Trent, quoted in Philippe Labbe and Gabriel Cossart, “The Most Holy Councils,” col. 1167.*

“It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest [from the Bible Sabbath] to the Sunday . . . Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church.”—*Monsignor Louis Segur, Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today, p. 213.*

“We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.”—*Peter Geiermann, CSSR, A Doctrinal Catechism, 1957 edition, p. 50.*

“We Catholics, then, have precisely the same authority for keeping Sunday holy instead of Saturday as we have for every other article of our creed, namely, the authority of the Church . . . whereas you who are Protestants have really no authority for it whatever; for there is no authority for it [Sunday sacredness] in the Bible, and you will not allow that there can be authority for it anywhere else.”—*The Brotherhood of St. Paul, “The Clifton tracts,” Volume 4, tract 4, p. 15.*

“The Church changed the observance of the Sabbath to Sunday by right of the divine, infallible authority given to her by her founder, Jesus Christ. The Protestant, claiming the Bible to be the only guide of faith, has no warrant for observing Sunday. In this matter the Seventh-day Adventist is the only consistent Protestant.”—*The Catholic Universe Bulletin, August 14, 1942, p. 4.*

The Bible is your only safe guide. Jesus can help you obey it. Trust God’s Word more than man’s traditions.

PROTESTANTISM SPEAKS

BAPTIST: "There was and is a command to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will however be readily said, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, with all its duties, privileges and sanctions. Earnestly desiring information on this subject, which I have studied for many years, I ask, where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament—absolutely not. There is no Scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week."—*Dr. E. T. Hiscox, author of the Baptist Manual.*

CONGREGATIONALIST: "It is quite clear that however rigidly or devotedly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath . . . The Sabbath was founded on a specific divine command. We can plead no such command for the observance of Sunday . . . There is not a single line in the New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday."—*Dr. R. W. Dale, The Ten Commandments, pp. 106-107.*

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL: "The day is now changed from the seventh to the first day . . . but as we meet with no Scriptural direction for the change, we may conclude it was done by the authority of the church."—*"The Protestant Episcopal Explanation of the Catechism.*

BAPTIST: "The Scriptures nowhere call the first day of the week the Sabbath . . . There is no Scriptural authority for so doing, nor of course, any Scriptural obligation."—*The Watchman.*

PRESBYTERIAN: "There is no word, no hint in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday. The observance of Ash Wednesday, or Lent, stands exactly on the same footing as the observance of Sunday. Into the rest of Sunday no Divine Law enters."—*Canon Eyton, Ten Commandments.*

ANGLICAN: "And where are we told in the Scriptures that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day."—*Isaac Williams, Plain Sermons on the Catechism, pp. 334, 336.*

METHODIST: "It is true that there is no positive command for infant baptism. Nor is there any for keeping holy the first day of the week. Many believe that Christ changed the Sabbath. But, from His own words, we see that He came for no such purpose. Those who believe that Jesus

changed the Sabbath base it only on a supposition.”—*Amos Binney, Theological Compendium, pp. 180-181.*

EPISCOPALIAN: “We have made the change from the seventh to the first day, from Saturday to Sunday, on the authority of the one holy, catholic, apostolic church of Christ.”—*Bishop Seymour, Why We Keep Sunday.*

SOUTHERN BAPTIST: “The sacred name of the seventh day is Sabbath. This fact is too clear to require argument [Exodus 20:10, quoted] . . . On this point the plain teaching of the Word has been admitted in all ages . . . Not once did the disciples apply the Sabbath law to the first day of the week,—that folly was left for a later age, nor did they pretend that the first day supplanted the seventh.”—*Joseph Judson Taylor, The Sabbatic Question, pp. 14-17, 41.*

AMERICAN CONGREGATIONALIST: “The current notion, that Christ and His apostles authoritatively substituted the first day for the seventh, is absolutely without any authority in the New Testament.”—*Dr. Lyman Abbot, Christian Union, June 26, 1890.*

CHRISTIAN CHURCH: “Now there is no testimony in all the oracles of heaven that the Sabbath is changed, or that the Lord’s Day came in the room of it.”—*Alexander Campbell, Reporter, October 8, 1921.*

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST: “There is no direct Scriptural authority for designating the first day ‘the Lord’s Day.’ ”—*Dr. D. H. Lucas, Christian Oracle, January 23, 1890.*

BAPTIST: “To me it seems unaccountable that Jesus, during three years’ discussion with His disciples, often conversing upon the Sabbath question, discussing it in some of its various aspects, freeing it from its false [Jewish traditional] glosses, never alluded to any transference of the day; also, no such thing was intimated. Nor, so far as we know, did the Spirit, which was given to bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever that He had said unto them, deal with this question. Nor yet did the inspired apostles, in preaching the gospel, founding churches, counseling and instructing those founded, discuss or approach the subject.

“Of course I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day, as we learn from the Christian Fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of paganism, and christened with the name of the sun god, then adopted and sanctified by the Papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism.”—*Dr. E. T. Hiscox, report of his sermon at the Baptist Minister’s Convention, New York Examiner, November 16, 1893.*

THE LAW OF GOD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

I

“Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.”—*Matthew 4:10*.

II

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” “Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s devices.”—*1 John 5:21; Acts 17:29*.

III

“That the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed.”
—*1 Timothy 6:1*.

IV

“Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.” “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” “For He spake in the certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works.” “There remaineth therefore a rest [keeping of a Sabbath] to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.” “For by Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth.”—*Matthew 24:20; Mark 2:27-28; Hebrews 4:4, 9, 10; Colossians 1:16*.

V

“Honor thy father and thy mother.”—*Matthew 19:19*.

VI

“Thou shalt not kill.”—*Romans 13:9*.

VII

“Thou shalt not commit adultery.”—*Matthew 19:18*.

VIII

“Thou shalt not steal.”—*Romans 13:9*.

IX

“Thou shalt not bear false witness.”—*Romans 13:9*.

X

“Thou shalt not covet.”—*Romans 7:7*.

How Sundaykeeping Began

1 - IF THE CHANGE IS VALID, WHO AUTHORIZED IT?

Isaiah 8:20—"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."

2 - COULD GOD CHANGE HIS OWN LAW?

1. God does not change.

Malachi 3:6—"I am the Lord, I _____; therefore ye Sons of Jacob are not consumed" (*James 1:17*).

2. The Ten Commandments are God's own covenant. *Deuteronomy 4:13*.

3. God will not break His covenant or alter His words. *Psalm 89:34*.

4. He keeps His covenant for a thousand generations.

Deuteronomy 7:9—"Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and _____ His commandments to a thousand generations."

5. God's acts stand forever.

Ecclesiastes 3:14—"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that _____ should fear before Him."

3 - DID JESUS CHANGE THE LAW AND THE SABBATH?

1. He created the Sabbath. *John 1:1-3; Ephesians 3:9; 1 Corinthians 8:6*.

2. He kept His Father's commandments.

John 15:10—"If ye keep My commandments, ye shall _____ in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

3. He came to fulfill (keep) the law, not to destroy it.

Matthew 5:17-19—"Think not that I am come to _____ the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all

be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

4. He came to magnify the law. *Isaiah 42:21 (Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28).* **4. He Himself kept the Sabbath.** *Luke 4:16.*

5. He indicated that the Sabbath would be sacred forty years after the cross.

Matthew 24:20—“But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the _____ day.”

4 - DID PAUL CHANGE GOD’S LAW OR SABBATH?

Romans 3:31—“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we _____ the law.”

5 - DO MEN CLAIM THERE IS BIBLE PROOF FOR THE CHANGE?

Catholics, Protestants, and Historians say there is absolutely no Bible proof.

6 - DOES THE CHURCH OF ROME ADMIT SHE MADE THE CHANGE?

Daniel 7:25—“He shall speak great _____ against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”

7 - DO THE SCRIPTURES FORETELL A RESTORATION OF THE SABBATH?

Isaiah 58:12-14—“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The _____ of the breach, The _____ of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a _____, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it” (*Revelation 12:17; 14:6-15*).

What the Bible says about – Sunday in the New Testament

SCRIPTURE READING:
LUKE 24:1-47

Jesus came to earth that man might have an accurate knowledge of God (*John 1:18*). He made it clear that to know Him, our Lord and Saviour, was to know the Father (*John 14:7*).

By the advent of Christ in human flesh, the character and the law of God were magnified and the will of God was interpreted to men. Isaiah said of Christ, "He will magnify the law, and make it honourable" (*Isaiah 42:21*). Looking through the life and teachings of the Holy Saviour, we see God more clearly, and the beauty and application of His sacred law are made wonderfully clear and plain.

Through Christ we gaze into the depths of God's law as illustrated in Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28. Here we see that the law of God takes into account not only what we do but what we think or would do if we could. The law, rightly interpreted, has to do with the heart as well as with the outward conduct.

Yes, Jesus came to make the law honorable. The way to make the fourth, or Sabbath, commandment honorable is found in Isaiah 58:13. We are to "call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him." This, Jesus did while He was here on earth. But at that time the Jews had made the Sabbath a burden with their exaggerated ideas of Sabbath observance. They had added so many man-made laws to the Sabbath commandment that it no longer was a "delight," but became more and more a yoke of bondage. As such, it misrepresented the God whom Jesus came to reveal to men.

For example, no one was permitted to eat an egg that was laid on the Sabbath because the hen had violated the fourth commandment in doing work on the Sabbath. People were prohibited from walking on the grass for fear they might thresh out a few seeds. If they wore shoes with nails, it was considered as bearing a burden. They were permitted to write one letter of the alphabet, but not two letters. They could not carry a mouthful of food two steps on the Sabbath without bearing a burden.

It was such laws that Jesus ignored. But He did not ignore the Sabbath law itself as given in the Scriptures. Rather, He kept the Sabbath as a "delight," so that He might give an example in true Sabbathkeeping.

In the light of these facts, we ask questions. Was there any need for

abolishing the Sabbath of God? No! The real need was to abolish the Sabbath regulations of the Jews. And this Jesus did.

But Christ never made any change in God's Ten Commandment law. Would He who came to "magnify the law, and make it honourable," or change it instead? How about the Sabbath commandment? Did He give any instruction about another day, telling us which day it is, what it commemorates, and how to keep it? If Jesus had changed the Sabbath, He would most certainly have made it known, and the record would be found in His New Testament, which contains the story of His life. Let us now turn to the record itself for the answer.

The first day of the week is mentioned eight times in the New Testament. This day we call Sunday. Did Christ intend that this day should replace the Bible Sabbath?

I - THE TESTIMONY OF MATTHEW

Matthew mentions the first day of the week but once.

Matthew 28:1—"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre."

This is a simple statement in connection with the story of the resurrection. It clearly sets forth the Sabbath as distinct from the first day of the week. The original Greek of Matthew 28:1 has been misused in an effort to prove that the Sabbath was changed to the first day of the week, but only the uninformed, or those who wish to mislead the uninformed, would ever try to erect a Sabbath change on Matthew 28:1.

The *Revised Standard Version* renders this verse in this way:

Matthew 28:1 (RSV)—"Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the sepulchre."

So we see that Matthew is silent on the sanctity of the first day, or Sunday. And Jesus said nothing about the day at all, according to Matthew.

2 - THE TESTIMONY OF MARK

Mark mentions the first day of the week two times.

Mark 16:1-2—"And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun."

Mark 16:9—"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils."

Now let us look at these verses closely:

1. The Sabbath is “past” before the first day of the week begins.

Mark 16:1-2—“When the Sabbath was past . . . very early in the morning the first day of the week.”

2. Jesus was buried on the day before the Sabbath.

Mark 15:42-46—“And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if He were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And he bought fine linen, and took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen, and laid Him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.”

3. Christ rested in the tomb during the Sabbath.

4. He rose from the dead the first day of the week.

Mark 16:9—“Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week.”

5. He appeared first unto Mary.

Mark 16:9—“He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils.”

6. She told others who believed not.

Mark 16:10-11—“She went and told them that had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that He was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.”

7. He appeared unto two followers.

Mark 16:12—“After that He appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.”

8. They reported to the disciples, who believed not.

Mark 16:13—“And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.”

9. Jesus appeared and upbraided the disciples for unbelief.

Mark 16:14—“Afterward He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen.”

Jesus never mentioned the first day of the week as far as Mark’s record

is concerned. If Jesus did say anything about the matter, Mark did not consider it important enough to record. Mark does say that the Sabbath "was past"; therefore it is the day before the first day of the week. Ten years after Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, Mark knew nothing whatever of any change, and incidentally mentions the first day of the week twice. ○

Both Mark and Christ are silent on the sanctity of Sunday.

3 - THE TESTIMONY OF LUKE

Luke mentions the first day of the week but once.

Luke 24:1—"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them."

According to Luke, Jesus' followers kept the Sabbath day before the first day came.

Luke 23:55-56—"And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment."

The day before the Sabbath was the preparation day which we commonly call Friday. ○

Luke 23:54—"And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on" (*Mark 15:42*).

Luke, like Mark, tells us of Jesus' appearance to two followers on the first day.

Luke 24:13-16—"And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know Him." (Read the rest of the story in verses 17-32.)

Christ appeared to the terrified disciples on the first day. Read Luke 24:33-43.

Luke gives no record that Jesus ever referred to the first day of the week. He does point out that some of Jesus' followers "rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." Naturally, this was according to the fourth commandment, but these close friends of Jesus never heard of any Sabbath change to Sunday. Both Mark and Luke give testimony that the disciples, on that resurrection Sunday, did not believe that Jesus had risen. ○

Luke and the Christ of his Gospel are silent on the sanctity of Sunday.

4 - THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN

John mentions the first day of the week twice.

John 20:1—“The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.”

John 20:19—“The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.”

Now let us get the picture here:

Mary Magdalene came to the sepulcher early the first day.

John 20:1—“The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early.”

Later Jesus appeared to her (*John 20:11-17*).

Jesus appeared later that day to the disciples (*John 20:19*).

But they were not celebrating His resurrection that day, for they did not yet believe He had been raised from the dead.

To some degree, it seems that John had a deeper understanding of Jesus than his fellow disciples. However, John gives no record that Jesus ever mentioned the first day of the week. John and Christ are silent on the sanctity of Sunday. So the four Gospel writers who give us the record of Jesus' life are absolutely silent on any change of the Sabbath or any sanctity of Sunday.

5 - THE TESTIMONY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

The first day of the week is mentioned only once in the book of Acts.

Acts 20:7—“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”

The book of Acts records eighty-four Sabbath services and only one first-day service. This latter service is recorded in Acts 20:7-14. Paul spent a week at Troas. The evening after the Sabbath (Saturday night) he held a farewell meeting. It was night; there were lights, and he preached till midnight. The only way that it could be night and also be the “first day of the week” would be that this meeting at Troas was held on what we today call Saturday night. Bible days begin at sundown. When the sun goes down on Saturday, the first day of the week begins. Thus Paul's meeting was on Saturday night. The next day, Sunday morning, Paul walked nineteen miles to Assos to meet his fellow workers who had departed by ship and sailed thence. There is no Sunday sacredness here.

Conybeare and Howson: "It was the evening which succeeded the Jewish Sabbath" (*The Life and Epistles of the Apostle*, 520).

Now they broke bread, but the disciples broke bread daily (*Acts 2:46*). If this "bread breaking" was the Lord's Supper, it still would have no bearing upon Sunday sacredness; for it commemorates Christ's death that took place on Friday, but not His resurrection, because that took place on Sunday. The Lord's Supper may be celebrated on any day (*1 Corinthians 11:26*, for positive evidence).

So we see the book of Acts is silent on Sunday sanctity.

6 - THE TESTIMONY OF PAUL

Paul's epistles mention the first day of the week just once.

1 Corinthians 16:1-3—"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem."

Many have honestly supposed that this text indicated a weekly gathering. However, it teaches just the contrary—"Let every one of you lay by him in store," which means privately or at home. Greek scholars testify to this. The believers would normally keep the Sabbath; and, after it was past, they figured their earnings of the week and set aside a gift portion for the poor.

Weymouth's translation (3d ed.) reads, "Let each of you put on one side and store up at his home." Translation after translation could be given to support what your own Bible clearly teaches. There is no evidence for a Sunday gathering of any kind. This was a collection that Paul desired to see accumulating in the homes of the Corinthian believers over a period of time, and that he wished to take to Jerusalem for poor believers. And so it is clear that Paul mentions the first day but once. And in that text he is utterly silent on first-day sanctity.

7 - FACING THE ISSUE SQUARELY

Jesus, our Creator and gracious Redeemer, gave us His holy Sabbath as a sign of creation and redemption. He gave it to us to be a delight. The Sabbath hours were given to afford time to reflect on the character of God, to attend divine worship, and to perform acts of love and mercy.

He who is our example kept the Sabbath. He did not keep Sunday. In all the New Testament, there is no record that He personally ever once mentioned the first day of the week.

The custom of Sundaykeeping is a purely human invention, though millions of sincere Christians have kept the first day of the week with no

knowledge of their responsibility to the true Sabbath. God has accepted the worship of these dear children of His. But when light comes, responsibility to walk in that light comes with it (*1 John 1:7*).

God is seeking to restore His Sabbath to its rightful place in the plan of redemption. And in your life, He is watching for that token of loyalty to truth that will lead you to honor Him fully. You will not disappoint Jesus, will you?

The next lesson will give you answers to important questions.

Brief Review Questions —

There are only eight New Testament verses which mention the first day of the week. Is Sunday sacredness in Matthew 28:1?

Is Sunday sacredness given to us in Mark 16:1-2; Mark 16:9; Luke 23:55-56; Luke 24:1; or John 20:1?

In the above passages, the women would not bring spices to the tomb on the Sabbath, yet they were willing to do it on the first day, a common working day

Is Sunday sacredness shown us in Luke 24:13-16 or John 20:19?

In the above passages, Jesus appeared to the disciples after His resurrection. The disciples were gathered together, so they could more easily hide from the Jews.

Is Sunday sacredness presented in Acts 20:7 or 1 Corinthians 16:1-3?

Regarding Acts 20:7: In his travels, Paul held meetings day after day. After the night meeting on the first day in Troas (Acts 20:7), Paul held a meeting on Tuesday in Miletus (Acts 20:17-38). But no one considers that meeting sacred.

Regarding 1 Corinthians 16:1-3, Paul told them to do their finances at home at the start of each work week, and get their donations ready, since he did not want to hold any meetings when he passed through town on his way to Jerusalem.

**LETTER FROM
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH—**

We all like to receive mail. Here is a letter from the Roman Catholic Church, originally published in America in 1869. The message was written to Protestants and is forceful and to the point, with lots of Scriptural proofs for its position.

I am going to propose a very plain and serious question to those who follow 'the Bible and the Bible only' to give their most earnest attention. It is this: Why do you not keep holy the Sabbath Day?

The command of Almighty God stands clearly written in the Bible in these words: 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work' (Exodus xx. 8-10). And again, "Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day there shall be unto you an holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord; whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death (Exodus xxxv. 2, 3).

How strict and precise is God's commandment upon this head! [in this matter!] No work whatever was to be done on the day which He had chosen to set apart for Himself and to make holy. And, accordingly, when the children of Israel "found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day," "the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp" (Numbers xv. 32, 35). **Such being God's command, then I ask again: Why do you not obey it? Why do you not keep holy the Sabbath day?**

You will answer me, perhaps, that you do keep holy the Sabbath day; for that you abstain from all worldly business and diligently go to church, and say your prayers, and read your Bible at home, every Sunday of your lives.

But Sunday is not the Sabbath day. Sunday is the first day of the week; the Sabbath day is the seventh day of the week. Almighty God did not give a commandment that men should keep holy one day in seven; but **He named His own day, and said distinctly: 'Thou shalt keep holy the sev-**

enth day,' and He assigned a reason for choosing this day rather than any other—a reason which belongs only to the seventh day of the week, and cannot be applied to the rest. He says 'For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; *wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it' [*Exodus xx. 11*].

Almighty God ordered that all men should rest from their labor on the seventh day, because He too had rested on that day; He did not rest on Sunday, but on Saturday. On Sunday, which is the first day of the week, He began the work of creation, He did not finish it [then]; it was on Saturday that He 'ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made' (*Genesis ii. 2*). **Nothing can be more plain and easy to understand than all this;** and there is nobody who attempts to deny it; **it is acknowledged by everybody that the day which Almighty God appointed to be kept holy was Saturday, not Sunday. Why do you then keep holy the Sunday, and not Saturday?**

You will tell me that Saturday was the Jewish Sabbath [God gave the Bible Sabbath to mankind 2,000 years before the first Jew, Abraham, existed], but that the Christian Sabbath has been changed to Sunday; **Changed! but by whom? Who has authority to change an express commandment of Almighty God? When God has spoken and said, Thou shalt keep holy the seventh day, who shall dare to say, Nay, thou mayest work and do all manner of worldly business on the seventh day; but thou shalt keep holy the first day in its stead?** This is a most important question, which I know not how you can answer.

You are a Protestant, and you profess to go by the Bible and Bible only; and yet in so important a matter as the observance of one day in seven as a holy day, you go against the plain letter of the Bible, and put another day in the place of that day which the Bible has commanded. The command to keep holy the seventh day is one of the Ten Commandments; you believe that the other nine are still binding; but who gave you authority to tamper with the

fourth? If you are consistent with your own principles, **if you really follow the Bible and the Bible only, you ought to be able to produce some portion of the New Testament in which this fourth commandment is expressly altered.**

Let us see whether any such passages can be found. I will look for them in the writings of your own [Protestant] champions, who have attempted to defend your practice in this matter.

1. The first text which I find quoted upon the subject is this: "Let no man judge you in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days" (*Colossians ii. 16*). [That refers to the ceremonial—sacrificial—yearly sabbaths of *Leviticus 23*, which were done away at the cross.] I could understand a Bible Christian imagining from this passage, that we ought to make no difference between Saturday, Sunday, and every other day of the week. But **not one syllable does it say about the obligation of the Sabbath being transferred from one day to another.**

2. Secondly, the words of St. John are quoted, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day (*Apocalypse [Revelation] i. 10*). Is it possible that anybody can for a moment imagine that here is a safe and clear rule for changing the weekly day of worship from the seventh to the first day? **This passage is utterly silent upon such a subject;** it only give Scriptural authority for calling some *one day* in particular (it does not even say *which* day) "the Lord's day."

3. Next we are reminded that St. Paul bade his Corinthian converts, "upon the first day of the week, lay by them in store, that there might be no gatherings" when he himself came (*1 Corinthians xvi. 2*). **How is this supposed to affect the law of the Sabbath?** It commands a certain act of almsgiving [doing one's finances at home] to be done on the first day of the week. **It says absolutely nothing about not doing certain other acts of prayer and public worship on the seventh day.**

4. But, you will say, it was "on the first day of the week" when the disciples were assembled within closed doors for fear of the Jews, and Jesus stood in the midst of them" (*John xx. 19*). **What is there in these facts to do away with the obligation of keeping holy the seventh day?** Our Lord

rose from the dead on the first day of the week, and on the same day at evening He appears to many of His disciples. Let Protestants, if they will [in obedience to Catholic tradition], keep holy the first day of the week in grateful commemoration of that stupendous mystery, the Resurrection of Christ, and of the evidences which He vouchsafed to give of it to His doubting disciples; **but this is no Scriptural authority for ceasing to keep holy another day of the week which God had expressly commanded to be kept holy for another and altogether different reason.**

5. But lastly, we have the example of the Apostles themselves. "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (*Acts xx. 7*). Here we have clear proof that the disciples heard a sermon on a Sunday. **But is that not proof they had done the same on the Saturdays also?** [*Acts xiii. 14, 42-44; xvi. 12-13; xvii. 1-2; xviii. 1-4, 11*]. [After the night meeting on the first day in Troas (*Acts xx. 7*), Paul held a meeting on Tuesday in Miletus (*Acts xx. 17-38*). But no one considers that meeting sacred.]

You will say, is it not expressly written concerning those early Christians, that they "continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house?" (*Acts ii. 46*). As a matter of fact, do we not know from other sources that, in many parts of the church, **the ancient Christians were in the habit of meeting together for public worship, and to perform the other [religious] offices, on Saturdays?** Again then, I say, [in obedience to our command] let Protestants keep holy, if they will their first day of the week; but **let them remember that this cannot possible release them from the obligation of keeping holy another day which Almighty God has ordered to be kept holy, because on that day He "rested from all His work."** [The Troas meeting was held on Sunday in *Acts 20:7*, just prior to a Miletus meeting on Tuesday in *Acts 20:17-38*, although no one today keeps Tuesday sacred because of that meeting].

I do not know of any other passages of holy Scripture which Protestants are in the habit of quoting to defend

their practice of keeping holy the first day of the week, instead of the seventh; yet, surely those which I have quoted are not such as should satisfy any reasonable man, who looks upon the written Word of God as they [the Protestants] profess to look upon it, namely, as the only appointed means of learning God's will, and who really desires to learn and to obey that will in all things with humbleness and simplicity of heart. For in spite of all that anyone might say to the contrary, **it is fully and absolutely impossible that a reasonable and thoughtful person should be satisfied, by the texts that I have quoted, that Almighty God intended the obligation of Saturday to be transferred to Sunday**. And yet Protestants do so transfer it, and never seem to have the slightest misgivings lest, in doing so, they should be guilty of breaking one of God's commandments.

Why is this? Because, **although they talk so largely about following the Bible and Bible only, they are really guided in this matter by the voice of [Roman Catholic] tradition. Yes, much as they may hate and denounce the word [tradition], they have in fact no other authority to allege for this most important change.**

The present generation of Protestants keep Sunday holy instead of Saturday, because they received it as part of the Christian religion from the last generation, and that generation received it from the generation before, and so on backwards from one generation to another, by a continual succession, until we come to the time of the so-called "Reformation," when it so happened that those who conducted the change of religion [from Catholicism to Protestantism] left this particular portion of Catholic faith and practice untouched.

But, had it happened otherwise,—had some one or other of the "Reformers" taken it into his head to denounce the observance of Sunday as a Popish corruption and superstition, and to insist upon it that Saturday was the day which God had appointed to be kept holy, and that He had never authorized the observance of any other,—all Protestants would have been obliged, in obedience to their professed principle of following "the Bible and the Bible only," either to acknowledge this teaching as true, and to return to the observance of the ancient

Sabbath, or else to deny that there is any Sabbath at all. And so, in like manner, any one at the present day who should set about, honestly and without prejudice, to draw up for himself a form of religious belief and practice out of the written Word of God, must needs come to the same conclusion: He must either believe that the seventh-day Sabbath is still binding upon men's consciences, because of the Divine command, 'Thou shalt keep holy the seventh day,' or he must believe that no Sabbath at all is binding upon them. [Paul would have no right to abolish any of the Ten Commandments.] Either one of these conclusions he might come to;—but **he would know nothing whatever of a "Christian Sabbath" distinct from the Biblical Sabbath, [that is] celebrated on a different day, and observed in a different manner,—simply because Holy Scripture itself nowhere speaks of such a thing.**

Now, mind, in all this you would greatly misunderstand me if you supposed I was quarrelling with you for acting in this matter on a true and right principle,—in other words, a Catholic principle (viz., the acceptance, without hesitation, of that which has been handed down to you by an unbroken tradition). I would not tear from you a single one of those shreds and fragments of Divine truth [Catholic truth] which you have retained. God forbid! They are the most precious things you possess, and by God's blessing may serve as clues to bring you out of that labyrinth of [Protestant] error in which you find yourselves involved, far more by the fault of your forefathers three centuries ago [when they left Rome during the sixteenth-century Reformation] than by your own.

What I do quarrel with you for, is not your inconsistency in occasionally acting on a true principle [such as Roman Catholic Sundaykeeping], but your adoption, as a general rule of a false one [your Protestant refusal to accept the rest of Roman traditional teachings; such as the Mass and the veneration of saints]. You keep the Sunday, and not the Saturday; and you do so rightly, for this was the practice of all Christians when Protestantism began [Catholic leaders erroneously say there were no Protestants prior to the sixteenth century]; but you have abandoned other Catholic observances which were

equally universal at that day, preferring the novelties introduced by the men who invented Protestantism, to the unvarying tradition of above 1500 years [of Catholic teaching]. We blame you not for making Sunday your weekly holyday instead of Saturday, **but for rejecting tradition [the sayings of the popes and councils of Rome], which is the only safe and clear rule by which this observance [of Sunday] can be justified.**

In outward act we do the same as yourselves in this matter; we too no longer observe the Sabbath, but Sunday in its stead; **but there is this important difference between us, that we do not pretend—as you do—to derive our authority for so doing from a book [the Bible], but we [Catholics] derive it from a living teacher, and that teacher is the [Roman Catholic] Church.** Moreover, we believe that not everything which God would have us to know and to do is written in the Bible, but that there is also an unwritten word of God [the sayings of popes and councils and canonized saints], which we are bound to believe and to obey . . .

We Catholics, then, have precisely the same authority for keeping Sunday holy instead of Saturday as we have for every other article of our creed, namely, the authority of “the Church of the living God, and ground of truth” (*1 Timothy iii. 15*); **whereas you who are Protestants have really no authority for it [Sunday sacredness] whatever; for there is no authority for it in the Bible,** and you will not allow that there can be authority for it anywhere else. **Both you and we do, in fact, follow [Catholic] tradition in this matter; but we follow it, believing it to be a part of God’s word, and the [Catholic] Church to be its divinely appointed guardian and interpreter. You follow it [Catholicism], denouncing it all the time as a fallible and treacherous guide which often “makes the commandment of God of none effect” (Matthew xv. 6).**

—“Why Don’t You Keep Holy the Sabbath Day?” pages 3-15, in *The Clifton Tracts*, Vol. 4, published by the Roman Catholic Church. Originally released in North America in 1869 through the T. W. Strong Publishing Company of New York City, so that those outside the papal fold might return to the not partial, but full, authority of the Mother Church of the Vatican.

Sunday in the New Testament

1 - THE TESTIMONY OF MATTHEW

Matthew 28:1—"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the _____ day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre."

Matthew 28:1 (RSV)—"Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the sepulchre."

2 - THE TESTIMONY OF MARK

Mark 16:1-2—"And when the Sabbath was _____, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun."

Mark 16:9—"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils."

1. The Sabbath is "past" before the first day of the week begins.

Mark 16:1-2—"When the Sabbath was past . . . very early in the morning the first day of the week."

2. Jesus was buried on the day before the Sabbath. *Mark 15:42-46.*

3. Christ rested in the tomb during the Sabbath.

4. He rose from the dead the first day of the week.

Mark 16:9—"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week."

5. He appeared first unto Mary. *Mark 16:9.* 6. She told others who believed not. *Mark 16:10-11.* 7. He appeared unto two followers. *Mark 16:12.* 8. They reported to the disciples, who believed not. *Mark 16:13.*

6. Jesus appeared and upbraided the disciples for unbelief.

Mark 16:14—"Afterward He _____ unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen."

3 - THE TESTIMONY OF LUKE

Luke 24:1—"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in

the morning, they _____ unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.”

Luke 23:55-56—“And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and _____ the Sabbath day according to the commandment.”

Luke 23:54—“And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on” (*Mark 15:42*).

Luke 24:13-16—“And, behold, two of them went that _____ day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And . . . Jesus Himself drew near” (*verses 17-32*).

4 - THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN

John 20:1—“The first _____ of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.”

John 20:19—“The same day at _____, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.”

5 - THE TESTIMONY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

Acts 20:7—“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until _____.”

6 - THE TESTIMONY OF PAUL

1 Corinthians 16:1-3—“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no _____ when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.”

What the Bible says about – Questions Answered

SCRIPTURE READING:
LUKE 14:1-35

In the prophecies of Isaiah, we see the prophet answering questions for those who are puzzled. “Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?” is the anxious inquiry. To this Isaiah replies, “The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come” (*Isaiah 21:12*).

Isaiah did not discourage honest questions. “If ye will inquire, inquire ye,” he said. Any “watchman” who has been set to guard the spiritual interests of the people should welcome sincere questions.

When the rich young ruler came to Jesus asking about the way of life, Christ answered him without hesitation. But insincere quibblers Jesus silenced with His penetrating questions and answers (*Matthew 22:23-33, 41-46*).

In this lesson, we want to answer questions that are often raised about the Sabbath-Sunday issue. These matters are of great importance to us; for the midnight of sin is coming upon the world, and the law here is our first question, a very important one:

1 - HAS THE SABBATH BEEN LOST DOWN THROUGH THE AGES?

Some have asked, “Has time been lost?” “Has the Sabbath been lost?” We reply No. The Sabbath has never been lost. If the Sabbath had been lost between creation (that is, Adam’s time) and Moses’ day when God gave the written law with the Sabbath as the fourth commandment, this loss of time would have been rectified. Note the following:

Forty years, or 2,080 weeks, God worked a number of miracles every week, thereby pointing out the identical seventh day 2,080 times (*Exodus 16*). In the wilderness before the children of Israel reached Mount Sinai, the manna (food from heaven) fell on each of the first five days of the week. That was one miracle. Any portion kept over one day would spoil. Then on the sixth day a double portion fell. This was another miracle. The unused portion kept over to the seventh day did not spoil. This was a third miracle. To this we might add the fact that on the seventh, or Sabbath, day no manna fell. And this could be called a

fourth miracle. God thus emphasized the sacredness of the Sabbath and clearly marked the seventh day.

If the Sabbath had been lost between Moses' time and Jesus' day, the Saviour would not have made it His custom to observe the Sabbath (*Luke 4:16*). But we have the example of the Saviour, which is indeed sufficient. "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (*1 John 2:6*).

Has the Sabbath been lost since Jesus' day? And what about the calendar? The calendar has been changed, but there has been no loss of time or change in the rotation of the days of the week.

The Julian calendar was in use when Jesus was on the earth. Its originator, Julius Caesar, died about 40 years before Christ was born. The week in use in the East at that time was precisely the same as the week of our calendar today, which is the Gregorian. The days of the month are different, but the days of the week were never changed.

The change from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar occurred in this way: The Julian calendar used for sixteen centuries was not accurate in the length of its year, being about eleven minutes too long. By A.D. 1582, the vernal equinox of March 21 had receded to March 11 and was ten days off schedule.

Scientists in the time of Gregory XIII led out in the change, and the Gregorian calendar began to function at Rome on Friday, the 5th of October, 1582. Friday the 5th was changed to Friday the 15th. The week remained untouched, and the days of the week were undisturbed.

Some nations began the use of the new calendar at once. Others began later. England waited 170 years, until 1752. Yet—all that time—these different states and nations with different calendars had the same week! Just remember that the seventh day of the week today is the same as when Christ was here, and the calendar changes have not affected it.

The Jews, scattered over the earth, have kept strict account of time; and wherever you find the orthodox Jew you find the seventh-day Sabbath. God has protected the Jewish people over the centuries, so they could testify as to which day of our week is the true Sabbath—the Bible Sabbath, the only Sabbath ever given to mankind by the God of heaven. So it is clear that the Sabbath has not been lost in our calendar.

2 - DID THE RESURRECTED CHRIST ALWAYS APPEAR ON THE FIRST DAY?

The answer is No. The record of Scripture does not support such a view. As a matter of fact, there are only three such meetings where the time is indicated.

1. The resurrection day (which was, of course, Sunday, *in John 20:19*), when Jesus met with His disciples who were "assembling for fear of the Jews."

2. A meeting “after eight days,” when the doubting Thomas met Christ (*John 20:26*).

3. The day of the ascension, which occurred “forty days” after the resurrection (*Acts 1:3, 9*). A glance at the calendar will quickly reveal to you that if the resurrection was on Sunday, the ascension, which was forty days later, could not possibly have occurred on Sunday.

It is interesting to note that those who claim that, after the resurrection, Christ always met with His disciples on Sunday do not cite *John 21:1-6* as an example. If this meeting was on a Sunday, then evidently the disciples considered fishing a proper occupation for that day. Nor did Jesus reprove them. Instead, He instructed them how to catch fish, and He cooked fish for them.

Christ appeared to His disciples at other times, but we are not told the day of the week. The time of Christ’s appearance to His disciples has no bearing on the question of a weekly day of worship. The identity of God’s holy day does not rest on such irregularities as meetings. A specific command points it out (*Exodus 20:8-11*). How much we need to study our Bibles in order to know what God would have us do!

3 - IS NOT ONE DAY JUST AS HOLY AS ANOTHER?

Christ Himself made the Sabbath at creation and repeated the Sabbath command from Sinai. And He never made any other day holy (*John 1:1-3, 14; Mark 2:27-28*).

We should remember that no one man or even all men together can make a single day holy. Only God can make a day holy. Only God can make men holy. It is God’s special presence that makes any place or day or thing holy (*Exodus 3:1-5*).

The following Bible text is often quoted to support the claim that each man may choose his own day of worship:

Romans 14:5-6—“One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.”

Paul had no authority to create new holy days. In the text quoted, Paul was speaking of yearly ceremonial days. He was seeking to divorce the Jewish Christian from continuing to regard with holiness the feast days of the ceremonial system (*Leviticus 23:1-2, 4-37, 39-44*). Note that verse 3 and verse 38 indicate that the weekly Sabbath is distinct from the ceremonial, or yearly, sabbaths.) He also sought to lead them not to judge one another on the matter of observing these ceremonial laws.

The “every day” of *Romans 14:5-6* sometimes means the “six working

days" (*Exodus 16:4*). Let us remember also that Christ is the one who esteems the seventh day above the other weekly days. He places His special blessing on it. If you invite me to a dinner at your home on Saturday and I come on Sunday, I simply miss the occasion. If a man has seven sons, he cannot make the firstborn the lastborn—and no one else can. Neither can any mere human transfer the sacredness that God placed on the seventh day to the first day.

Let us keep in mind five facts: (1) On the seventh day God rested. (2) The seventh day is the only weekly day to which God gave a sacred name. (3) It is the only one He blessed. (4) It is the only one He hallowed. (5) It is the only one He has commanded us to keep (*Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11*).

You need not fear that you will sin by not keeping Sunday—for there is no Biblical law demanding Sunday observance. There is no instruction whatever about keeping it. According to *Exodus 20:9*, the first day is just another working day.

4 - WAS THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH NAILED TO THE CROSS?

The apostle Paul would answer, "God forbid!" But Paul does make it clear that the Jewish ceremonial sabbaths were nailed to the cross. Here are his words:

Colossians 2:14-17—"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

It is plain that these sabbaths are "shadow" sabbaths. A reading of *Leviticus 23* will show that they came only once a year, and on different days of the week. They belonged to the system of "ordinances" given to the Jews. Read *Ephesians 2:15*.

Dr. Adam Clarke says:

"The apostle speaks here in reference to some particulars of the handwriting of ordinances, which had been taken away, viz., the distinction of meats and drinks . . . and the necessity of observing certain holydays or festivals, such as new moons and particular sabbaths. There is no intimation here that the Sabbath was done away with or that its moral use was superseded by the introduction of Christianity."

On *Colossians 2:16*, Dr. Albert Barnes writes:

"But the use of the term in the plural number [sabbaths], and the connection, show that he [Paul] had his eye on the great number of days

which were observed by the Hebrews as festivals, as a part of their ceremonial and typical law, and not on the moral law, or the Ten Commandments. No part of the moral law—no one of the Ten Commandments—could be spoken of as a shadow of good things to come.”

All informed students agree with these correct statements. The yearly, shadow, or ceremonial sabbaths were nailed to the cross.

5 - ARE NOT CHRISTIANS TOLD TO ASSEMBLE ON THE FIRST DAY?

No. But here is the text quoted to support this idea:

Hebrews 10:25—“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

Many honest persons have thought that Hebrews 10:25 speaks of the first day of the week, but a reading of the passage will settle the question conclusively (*2 Peter 3:10* on “the day approaching”).

6 - IS NOT SUNDAY THE LORD'S DAY?

No. John does not say that Sunday is the Lord's day when he says, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day” (*Revelation 1:10*). Sunday is just not in Revelation 1:10!

You may read the Bible from cover to cover, and nowhere is it remotely intimated that the first day of the week is the Lord's day. The Sabbath is the Lord's day. Christ said, “The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath” (*Mark 2:28*). God Himself, speaking from Sinai, said, “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” Here the Lord claims the Sabbath as His day; therefore it is the Lord's day. And speaking through the prophet Isaiah, He calls the Sabbath “My holy day” (*Isaiah 58:13*). Words cannot be plainer. The Lord's day is the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week.

7 - WHAT EXCUSES ARE SOMETIMES OFFERED FOR NOT OBSERVING THE SABBATH?

1. “I don't believe in that old Jewish Sabbath.”

The Bible never calls the Sabbath Jewish. It is the “Sabbath of the Lord thy God” (*Exodus 20:10*). It was “made for man,” not for any special race (*Mark 2:27-28*). When you stop to think of it, it is actually blasphemous to say that the seventh-day Sabbath—the memorial of the Creation of our world (*Genesis 2:1-3*)—is “just for the Jews.”

And here is a word for those who don't believe in “those old laws.”

Jeremiah 6:16—“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls” (*Isaiah 58:12-14*).

2. "I am afraid of new doctrines."

The Sabbath dates from creation. Read again Genesis 2:1-3.

3. "My mother and father kept Sunday."

God will hold them accountable only for the light they had. "Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth" (*John 9:41*). Obedience is of more importance than earthly relatives. Read Matthew 12:47-50.

We are to walk in the light while we have the light.

John 12:35—"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth."

4. "Many scholarly men keep Sunday."

Listen to these words of Hosea:

Hosea 10:13—"Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men."

1 Corinthians 1:26—"Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called" (*Proverbs 19:27*).

5. "Almost everyone keeps Sunday."

Matthew 7:13-14—"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

6. "The Sabbath can't be kept on a round world."

The God of heaven, who made the world round, commanded us to keep the Bible Sabbath. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (*Genesis 1:1; Exodus 20:8-11*).

7. "It is inconvenient to keep the Sabbath."

Matthew 16:24—"Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

The privileges and blessings of following Jesus outweigh all trials and inconveniences.

8. "Sabbathkeeping interferes with my business and family support."

Matthew 6:33—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Mark 8:36—“What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

9. “The Sabbath brings trouble and division.”

A man’s foes, said Jesus, may be those of his own household. Read Matthew 10:34-38. It may also bring persecution, but the Saviour said:

Matthew 5:11—“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake” (*John 12:42-43*).

Acts 5:29—“We ought to obey God rather than men,” said Peter (*Acts 4:18-20; 5:28*).

Thank God, all do not make excuses. They have learned that the Sabbath is a “delight,” and that it brings great blessings! Yes, there is some scorn, but they are happy to bear reproach in order to follow in the footsteps of the Man of Calvary and be part of the great movement that belts the globe in these closing hours of the judgment. May God be very near to you, dear friend, as you search to know His way for you. The Sabbath truth is being proclaimed in more than 800 language and dialect areas. Hundreds of thousands are keeping the Sabbath the world over, and thousands more are taking their stand as the days go by.

Brief Review Questions —

The Sabbath was never lost, because the seven-day week has continued on since the beginning of time. Christ appeared to His disciples on different days of the week. Does the Bible teach that one day is as holy as another?

The Bible Sabbath is part of the Ten Commandments, so it could not be destroyed by Christ’s death. Does Revelation 1:10 name Sunday as being the “Lord’s Day”?

According to Genesis 2:1-3, is the Sabbath “Jewish”?

Does the fact that so many keep Sunday, make it the right day? Or should we go by what the Bible says?

Is it inconvenient to obey God? Will God reward us in heaven for obeying Him—in spite of hardships that obedience might bring us?

HOW THE SABBATH WAS CHANGED TO SUNDAY

“There is scarcely anything which strikes the mind of the careful student of ancient ecclesiastical history with greater surprise than the comparatively early period at which many of the corruptions of Christianity, which are embodied in the Roman system, took their rise; yet it is not to be supposed that when the first originators of many of these unscriptural notions and practices planted those germs of corruption, they anticipated or even imagined they would ever grow into such a vast and hideous system of superstition and error as is that of popery.”—*John Dowling, History of Romanism, 13th Edition, p. 65.*

“It would be an error to attribute [‘the sanctification of Sunday’] to a definite decision of the Apostles. There is no such decision mentioned the Apostolic documents [that is, the New Testament].”—*Antoine Villien, A History of the Commandments of the Church, 1915, p. 23.*

“It must be confessed that there is no law in the New Testament concerning the first day.”—*McClintock and Strong, Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature, Vol. 9, p. 196.*

“Rites and ceremonies, of which neither Paul nor Peter ever heard, crept silently into use, and then claimed the rank of divine institutions. [Church] officers for whom the primitive disciples could have found no place, and titles which to them would have been altogether unintelligible, began to challenge attention, and to be named apostolic.”—*William D. Killen, The Ancient Church, p. xvi.*

“Until well into the second century [a hundred years after Christ] we do not find the slightest indication in our sources that Christians marked Sunday by any kind of abstinence from work.”—*W. Rordorf, Sunday, p. 157.*

“The ancient Sabbath did remain and was observed . . . by the Christians of the Eastern Church [in the area near Palestine] above three hundred years after our Saviour’s death.”—*A Learned Treatise of the Sabbath, p. 77.*

“Modern Christians who talk of keeping Sunday as a ‘holy’ day, as in the still extant ‘Blue Laws,’ of colonial America, should know that as a ‘holy’ day of rest and cessation from labor and amusements Sunday was unknown to Jesus . . . It formed no tenant [teaching] of the primitive Church and became ‘sacred’ only in the course of time. Outside the church its observance was legalized for the Roman Empire through a series of decrees starting with the famous one of Constantine in 321, an edict due to his political and social ideas.”—*W. W. Hyde, Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire, 1946, p. 257.*

“The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a Divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday.”—*Augustus Neander, The History of the Christian Religion and Church, 1843, p. 186.*

“The [Catholic] Church took the pagan buckler of faith against the heathen.

She took the pagan Roman Pantheon [the Roman], temple to all the gods, and made it sacred to all the martyrs; so it stands to this day. She took the pagan Sunday and made it the Christian Sunday . . . The Sun was a foremost god with heathendom. Balder the beautiful: the White God, the old Scandinavians called him. The sun has worshipers at this very hour in Persia and other lands . . . Hence the Church would seem to have said, 'Keep that old pagan name. It shall remain consecrated, sanctified.' And thus the pagan Sunday, dedicated to Balder, became the Christian Sunday, sacred to Jesus. The sun is a fitting emblem of Jesus. The Fathers often compared Jesus to the sun; as they compared Mary to the moon."—*William L. Gildea, "Paschale Gaudium," in The Catholic World, p. 58, March 1894.*

"The Church made a sacred day of Sunday . . . largely because it was the weekly festival of the sun;—for it was a definite Christian policy to take over the pagan festivals endeared to the people by tradition, and give them a Christian significance."—*Arthur Weigall, The Paganism in Our Christianity, 1928, p. 145.*

"Remains of the struggle [between the religion of Christianity and the religion of Mithraism] are found in two institutions adopted from its rival by Christianity in the fourth century, the two Mithraic sacred days: December 25, 'dies natalis solis' [birthday of the sun], as the birthday of Jesus,—and Sunday, 'the venerable day of the Sun,' as Constantine called it in his edict of 321."—*Walter Woodburn Hyde, Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire, p. 60.*

"It is not strange that Sunday is almost universally observed when the Sacred Writings do not endorse it? Satan, the great counterfeiter, worked through the 'mystery of iniquity' to introduce a counterfeit Sabbath to take the place of the true Sabbath. Sunday stands side by side with Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Holy (or Maundy) Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Whitsunday, Corpus Christi, Assumption Day, All Soul's Day, Christmas Day, and a host of other ecclesiastical feast days too numerous to mention. This array of Roman Catholic feasts and fast days are all man made. None of them bears the divine credentials of the Author of the Inspired Word."—*M. E. Walsh.*

"Sun worship was the earliest idolatry."—*Fausset Bible Dictionary, p. 666.*

"Sun worship was "one of the oldest components of the Roman religion."—*Gaston H. Halsberge, The Cult of Sol Invictus, 1972, p. 26.*

"'Babylon, the mother of harlots,' derived much of her teaching from pagan Rome and thence from Babylon. Sun worship—that led her to Sundaykeeping,—was one of those choice bits of paganism that sprang originally from the heathen lore of ancient Babylon: The solar theology of the 'Chaldeans' had a decisive effect upon the final development of Semitic paganism . . . [It led to their] seeing the sun the directing power of the cosmic system. All the Baals were thence forward turned into suns; the sun itself being the mover of the other stars—like it eternal and 'unconquerable' . . . Such was the final form reached by the religion of the pagan Semites, and following them, by that of the Romans . . . when they raised 'Sol

Invictus' [the Invincible Sun] to the rank of supreme divinity in the empire."—*Franz F. V. M. Cummont, Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans, p. 55.*

"When Christianity conquered Rome, the ecclesiastical structure of the pagan church, the title and the vestments of the 'pontifex maximus,' the worship to the 'Great Mother' goddess and a multitude of comforting divinities, . . . the joy or solemnity of old festivals, and the pageantry of immemorial ceremony, passed like material blood into the new religion,—and captive Rome conquered her conqueror. The reins and skills of government were handed down by a dying empire to a virile papacy."—*Will Durant, Caesar and Christ, p. 672.*

"The power of the Ceasars lived again in the universal dominion of the popes."—*H. G. Guinness, Romanism and the Reformation.*

"Like two sacred rivers flowing from paradise, the Bible and divine Tradition contain the Word of God, the precious gems of revealed truth. Though these two divine streams are in themselves, on account of their divine origin, of equal sacredness, and are both full of revealed truths, still, of the two, Tradition [the sayings of popes and councils] is to us more clear and safe."—*Di Bruno, Catholic Belief, p. 33.*

"Unquestionably the first law, either ecclesiastical or civil, by which the Sabbatical observance of that day is known to have been ordained, is the edict of Constantine, A.D. 321."—*Chamber's Encyclopedia, article, "Sabbath."*

Here is the first Sunday law in history, a legal enactment by Constantine I (reigned 306-337): "On the Venerable Day of the Sun ["Venerable die Solis"—the sacred day of the Sun] let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain-sowing or for vine-planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost—given the 7th day of March [A.D. 321], Crispus and Constanstine being consuls each of them for the second time."—*The First Sunday Law of Constantine I, in "Codex Justinianus," lib. 3, tit. 12,3; trans. in Phillip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Vol. 3, p. 380.*

"This [Constantine's Sunday decree of March 321] is the 'parent' Sunday law making it a day of rest and release from labor. For from that time to the present there have been decrees about the observance of Sunday which have profoundly influenced European and American society. When the Church became a part of State under the Christian emperors, Sunday observance was enforced by civil statutes, and later when the Empire was past, the Church in the hands of the papacy enforced it by ecclesiastical and also by civil enactments."—*Walter W. Hyde, Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire, 1946, p. 261.*

"Constantine's decree marked the beginning of a long, though intermittent series of imperial decrees in support of Sunday rest."—*Vincent J. Kelly, Forbidden Sunday and Feast-Day Occupations, 1943, p. 29.*

“Constantine labored at this time untiringly to unite the worshipers of the old and the new into one religion. All his laws and contrivances aimed at promoting this amalgamation of means melt together a purified heathenism and a moderated Christianity . . . Of all his blending and melting together of Christianity and heathenism, none is more easy to see through than this making of his Sunday law: The Christians worshiped their Christ, the heathen their sun-god [so they should now be combined].”—*H. G. Heggveit, Illustreret Kirkehistorie, 1895, p. 202.*

“If every Sunday is to be observed by Christians on account of the resurrection, then every Sabbath on account of the burial is to be regarded in execration [cursing] of the Jews.”—*Pope Sylvester, quoted by S. R. E. Humbert, “Adversus Graecorum Calumnias,” in J. P. Migne, Patrologie, p. 143 [Sylvester (A.D. 314-337) was the pope at the time Constantine I was Emperor].*

“All things whatsoever that were prescribed for the [Bible] Sabbath, we have transferred them to the Lord’s day, as being more authoritative and more highly regarded and first in rank, and more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath.”—*Bishop Eusebius, quoted in J. P. Migne, “Patrologie,” p. 23, 1169-1172 [Eusebius of Caesarea was a high-ranking Catholic leader during Constantine’s lifetime].*

“As we have already noted, excepting for the Roman and Alexandrian Christians, the majority of Christians were observing the seventh-day Sabbath at least as late as the middle of the fifth century [A.D. 450]. The Roman and Alexandrian Christians were among those converted from heathenism. They began observing Sunday as a merry religious festival in honor of the Lord’s resurrection, about the latter half of the second century A.D. However, they did not try to teach that the Lord or His apostles commanded it. In fact, no ecclesiastical writer before Eusebius of Caesarea in the fourth century even suggested that either Christ or His apostles instituted the observance of the first day of the week.

“These Gentile Christians of Rome and Alexandria began calling the first day of the week ‘the Lord’s day.’ This was not difficult for the pagans of the Roman Empire who were steeped in sun worship to accept, because they [the pagans] referred to their sun-god as their ‘Lord.’”—*E. M. Chalmers, How Sunday Came into the Christian Church, p. 3.*

The following statement was made 100 years after Constantine’s Sunday Law was passed: “Although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the Sabbath every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this.”—*Socrates Scholasticus, quoted in Ecclesiastical History, Book 5, chap. 22 [written shortly after A.D. 439].*

“The people of Constantinople, and almost everywhere, assemble together on the Sabbath, as well as on the first day of the week, which custom is never observed at Rome or at Alexandria.”—*Hermias Sozomen, quoted in Ecclesiastical History, vii, 19, in A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd Series, Vol. 2, p. 390 [written soon after A.D. 415].*

“Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church, but with a rigor and solemnity gradually diminishing until it was wholly discontinued.”—*Lyman Coleman, Ancient Christianity Exemplified, chap. 26, sec. 2, p. 527.*

“Constantine’s [five Sunday Laws] decrees marked the beginning of a long though intermittent series of imperial decrees in support of Sunday rest.”—*A History of the Councils of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 316.*

“What began, however, as a pagan ordinance, ended as a Christian regulation; and a long series of imperial decrees, during the fourth, fifth, and sixth, centuries, enjoined with increasing stringency abstinence from labor on Sunday.”—*Hutton Webster, Rest Days, pp. 122-123, 270.*

Here is the first Sunday Law decree of a Christian council, given about 16 years after Constantine’s first Sunday Law of A.D. 321: “Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday [in the original: ‘sabbato’—shall not be idle on the Sabbath], but shall work on that day; but the Lord’s day they shall especially honour, and as being Christians, shall, if possible, do no work on that day. If, however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out [‘anathema,’ excommunicated] from Christ.”—*Council of Laodicea, c. A.D. 337, Canon 29, quoted in C.J. Hefele, A History of the Councils of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 316.*

“The keeping of the Sunday rest arose from the custom of the people and the constitution of the [Catholic] Church . . . Tertullian was probably the first to refer to a cessation of affairs on the Sun day; the Council of Laodicea issued the first conciliar legislation for that day; Constantine I issued the first civil legislation.”—*Priest Vincent J. Kelly, Forbidden Sunday and Feast-Day Occupations, p. 203 [a thesis presented to the Catholic University of America].*

“About 590, Pope Gregory, in a letter to the Roman people, denounced as the prophets of Antichrist those who maintained that work ought not to be done on the seventh day.”—*James T. Ringgold, The Law of Sunday, p. 267.*

In the later centuries, persecution against believers in the Bible Sabbath intensified until very few were left alive. When the Reformation began, the true Sabbath was almost unknown.

“Now the [Catholic] Church . . . instituted, by God’s authority, Sunday as the day of worship. The same Church, by the same divine authority, taught the doctrine of Purgatory . . . We have, therefore, the same authority for Purgatory as we have for Sunday.”—*Martin J. Scott, Things Catholics Are Asked About, 1927, p. 236.*

“Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change [of the Sabbath to Sunday] was her act . . . AND THE ACT IS A MARK of her ecclesiastical power.”—*From the office of Cardinal Gibbons, through Chancellor H.F. Thomas, Nov 11, 1895.*

Our only safety in these last days is to cling to God and to His holy Word, our precious Bible. We dare not trust our souls to the whims of erring church councils.

Questions Answered

WHAT EXCUSES ARE SOMETIMES OFFERED FOR NOT OBSERVING THE SABBATH?

1. "I don't believe in that old Jewish Sabbath."

Jeremiah 6:16—"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the _____, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (*Isaiah 58:12-14*).

2. "I am afraid of new doctrines."

The Sabbath dates from creation. Read again Genesis 2:1-3.

3. "My mother and father kept Sunday."

God will hold them accountable only for the light they had. "Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth" (*John 9:41*). **Obedience is of more importance than earthly relatives.** Read Matthew 12:47-50.

John 12:35—"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest _____ come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth."

4. "Many scholarly men keep Sunday."

Hosea 10:13—"Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in _____ way, in the multitude of thy mighty men."

1 Corinthians 1:26—"Not many _____ men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called" (*Proverbs 19:27*).

5. "Almost everyone keeps Sunday."

Matthew 7:13-14—"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for _____ is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

6. "The Sabbath can't be kept on a round world."

The God of heaven, who made the world round, commanded us to keep the Bible Sabbath. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (*Genesis 1:1; Exodus 20:8-11*).

7. "It is inconvenient to keep the Sabbath."

Matthew 16:24—"Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man

will come after Me, let him _____, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”

8. “Sabbathkeeping interferes with my business and family support.”

Matthew 6:33—“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and _____ these things shall be added unto you.”

Mark 8:36—“What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the _____, and lose his own soul?”

9. “The Sabbath brings trouble and division.”

Matthew 5:11—“Blessed are ye, when men shall _____ you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake” (*John 12:42-43*).

Acts 5:29—“We ought to obey _____ rather than men,” said Peter (*Acts 4:18-20; 5:28*).

“The great Jehovah had laid the foundations of the earth; He had dressed the whole world in the garb of beauty and had filled it with things useful to man; He had created all the wonders of the land and of the sea. In six days the great work of creation had been accomplished. And God ‘rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.’ God looked with satisfaction upon the work of His hands. All was perfect, worthy of its divine Author, and He rested, not as one weary, but as well pleased with the fruits of His wisdom and goodness and the manifestations of His glory.

“After resting upon the seventh day, God sanctified it, or set it apart, as a day of rest for man. Following the example of the Creator, man was to rest upon this sacred day, that as he should look upon the heavens and the earth, he might reflect upon God's great work of creation; and that as he should behold the evidences of God's wisdom and goodness, his heart might be filled with love and reverence for his Maker.

“In Eden, God set up the memorial of His work of creation, in placing His blessing upon the seventh day. The Sabbath was committed to Adam, the father and representative of the whole human family. Its observance was to be an act of grateful acknowledgment, on the part of all who should dwell upon the earth, that God was their Creator and their rightful Sovereign; that they were the work of His hands and the subjects of His authority. Thus the institution was wholly commemorative, and given to all mankind. There was nothing in it shadowy or of restricted application to any people.”

—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 47-48*

What the Bible says about —

Can We Go Too Far in Sin?

SCRIPTURE READING:
GENESIS 25:29-34; 27:30-40
HEBREWS 12:16-17

1 - WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Let us notice four facts about the Holy Spirit:

1. He is closely associated with God and Christ.

The Holy Spirit is a divine person, a member of the Godhead (*1 John 5:7*).

Matthew 28:19—“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

2. He took part in creation.

Genesis 1:1-2—“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

3. He descended upon Christ at His baptism.

Matthew 3:16-17—“And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him.”

4. He represents Christ on earth.

John 14:26—“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (*John 16:7*).

Here we are on holy ground, for the Holy Ghost is the representative of Christ on earth. He is here with us, so let us tread softly. Some things about the Spirit will always be a mystery. One writer has well said: “The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them: but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human un-

derstanding, silence is golden.”

Jesus, as the Son of man, was in only one place at a time. He sends the Spirit to be everywhere. “It is expedient for you that I go away,” He said (*John 16:7*). It was better for Him to go away and send the Spirit in special power to be with His children in all parts of the world at all times.

2 - WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Spirit’s work for man may be divided into ten areas of ministry.

1. He convinces men of sin.

John 16:8—“When He is come, He will reprove [“convince,” margin] the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment.”

“Of sin,” said Jesus, “because they believe not on Me” (*John 16:9*). It is sin to reject Christ, the remedy for sin. The Holy Spirit, reproves, or convinces, men of sin and “sin is the transgression of the law.” Because Christ came to save us from our sins, from which we could not save ourselves, we doubly commit sin when we refuse His help. Suppose a man develops blood poisoning. His wife calls a doctor who is equipped to save her husband and who is eager to administer aid. But the man refuses all help. He dies. He is fully and undeniably responsible for his own death.

2. He convinces men of righteousness (*John 16:8*).

Paul says: First of all, He convinces of the righteousness of the law.

Romans 8:3-4—“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

Since the Holy Spirit convinces of sin, and since “sin is the transgression of the law,” the Spirit must of necessity uphold the righteous and unchangeable character of the law; and, second, the righteousness of Christ. Said the Saviour: “Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more” (*John 16:10*).

The Spirit rallied to support the righteousness of Christ. Jesus was accused of being what He was not, and of not being what He was. He was accused of teaching what He did not teach, and of doing what He did not do. Though guiltless, He was put to death on the cross like the vilest sinner. Yet the Spirit upheld His righteousness.

The Spirit descended upon Him after His baptism, thus signifying that Jesus was the Messiah, or Anointed One. The Spirit led Him into the wilderness of temptation, and led Him always. The Spirit was at the

tomb of Jesus when the angel rolled away the stone. Jesus was “quickened [made alive] by the Spirit” (*1 Peter 3:18*).

Jesus appeared to His disciples that night and breathed upon them, saying, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost” (*John 20:22*).

Luke 24:49—Then He said, “Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high” (*Acts 1:4*). The power was the power of the Holy Spirit.

When Christ ascended to heaven and was accepted at His Father’s side, the Holy Spirit descended upon His followers as a token of this exaltation (*Acts 2:33*).

The Spirit glorifies Christ and His sacred law. To reject these is to reject the work of the Holy Spirit.

3. He convinces men of judgment (*John 16:8*).

John 16:11—“Of judgment because the prince of this world is judged.”

The Spirit of God impresses every responsible being on earth, that he must give account to God. The law of God is the standard of the judgment, and God will judge us by Jesus Christ. As long as we live, anytime, anywhere, we can never escape the issue of God’s law and God’s Son. In the judgment we shall meet them. It is the work of God’s Spirit to impress upon men this unavoidable truth and to lead them to salvation. Listen to these words:

James 2:12—“So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty” (*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*).

Acts 17:31—“He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained.”

If all the world is to be judged, if Satan is to be judged, and if the fallen angels (*Jude 6; Hebrews 2:2*) are to be judged, “how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation” (*Hebrews 2:3*)?

4. He does the work of a comforter.

John 14:16—“I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever” (*Revelation 22:17*).

If we will throw ourselves upon God’s mercy and utterly abandon ourselves to the doing of His will, His Holy Spirit will comfort our troubled hearts through all our days in this sinful world.

5. He brings about the new birth.

John 3:5—“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot

enter into the kingdom of God.”

To those who receive Christ as a personal Saviour the promise is given:

John 1:12-13—“As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

To be born of the Spirit means to have a new life altogether:

“The Christian’s life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit” (*Desire of Ages*, p. 172).

6. He dwells in men.

John 14:17—“Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

Yes, it is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us.

Colossians 1:27—“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

And the Spirit writes God’s law in our hearts (*2 Corinthians 3:3; Hebrews 8:10; Romans 8:10*).

Here again we find Christ and the law together. Christ dwells in us by the Spirit, and the Spirit writes the law in our hearts.

7. He intercedes for men.

Romans 8:26—“The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

Since the Spirit dwells in us, He knows all our needs. And being one of the Godhead, He knows just how to present our problems in heaven. If we permit Him to lead us, He will deliver us from fear and sin (*Romans 8:15*).

8. He gives men power to witness.

Acts 1:8—“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me.”

We should be willing to witness for Christ. A man bore his testimony telling how he had been “on the mountaintop” for five years. Mr. Moody asked him how many souls he had won to Christ. The man confessed that he had not won any. Said Moody, “That is not the kind of mountaintop experience we need—Christians should be soul winners.”

9. He guides men.

Romans 8:14—“As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

John 16:13—“When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth” (*John 17:17*).

We do not receive all truth at one time (*John 16:12*). The forward movements of true religion have been given their momentum by great characters who dared to study, to believe, to teach, to practice, and even to die for unpopular truths. The names of Wycliffe, Huss, Jerome, Luther, Knox, Calvin, Wesley, and many others shine with luster on the pages recording the eradication of error and the advancement of truth. Unfortunately, too many stop right in the tracks of these great men and go no further.

God does not hold us responsible for light we do not have, but He does hold us responsible for that which we do have or might have if we improved the opportunities we have (*John 9:41; Matthew 13:15*).

10. He seals men unto the day of redemption.

Ephesians 4:30—“Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (*Ephesians 1:13; Revelation 7:3*).

The Spirit is not the seal. He is the agent who seals us with the seal of God. In another lesson, we shall touch upon the seal of God and the mark of the beast.

3 - WHAT IS PRESUMPTUOUS SIN?

Presumptuous sin is deliberate sin against light.

Psalms 19:13—“Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.”

The presumptuous sin is choosing our own way instead of God's and presuming that God will always forgive. It leads to the unpardonable sin. Noah's message was rejected, and a whole generation was lost. It is dangerous business to presume that a good God will forgive all sins under all conditions and, therefore, to sin deliberately on this basis.

The following experiences in the Bible illustrate this:

1. Nadab and Abihu (*Leviticus 10:1*).
2. Esau and the birthright (*Genesis 25:29-34; Hebrews 12:16-17*).
3. Ananias and Sapphira (*Acts 5:1-11*).
4. People in Noah's day and our own day (*Genesis 6:3-7; Luke 17:26-27*).

Our prayer should be the prayer of David: "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins" (*Psalm 19:13*).

4 - WHAT IS THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST?

It is the rejection of the Spirit's call (*Matthew 12:24-32*).

From the statements of Jesus in *Matthew 12:24-32*, it is clearly evident that the sin against the Holy Ghost is final rejection of Christ and His teachings, and attributing His work to an evil power. It is persistently rejecting the Spirit's call to repentance. It is the sin we do not forsake. If we do not shield our conscience, it will become hard and callous, and we will tread the paths of sin with utter abandon, giving no heed to the promptings of the Spirit of God. Remember, no sin is too great for God to forgive if it is confessed and put away. The sin against the Holy Ghost is the failure to confess or put away sin and unbelief in Christ, our Saviour.

5 - CAN A MAN KNOW WHEN HE HAS COMMITTED THE UNPARDONABLE SIN?

Many will commit this sin and think that all is well. Jesus said:

Matthew 7:21-23—"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."

When human probation closes, many will seek for the Word of God, but it will be too late. Probationary time will be over.

Amos 8:11-12—"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it" (*Jeremiah 8:20*).

But, thank God, He will accept all who come in sincerity to Jesus.

John 6:37—"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

If a man will come to Christ and accept Him as Lord and Saviour, in faith confess his sins and fully surrender to do God's will, He may know that he has not committed this sin. If he does not come, He may know that he is in danger of committing it. If he professes Christ, yet rejects truth and continues in his own way, he may commit it and still

think he is acceptable with God.

Jesus tasted “death for every man” (*Hebrews 2:9*). Yet most men will never benefit by Christ’s death because they will not heed the gentle calls, the persistent movings of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray with David, “Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me” (*Psalms 51:11*)? Let us “grieve not the holy Spirit of God” (*Ephesians 4:30*), who alone can seal us for the day of redemption.

Be of good courage, dear student, and put away every sin. God will help you to be victorious. But beware of delay. Continue with these lessons. In the very next Bible study you will learn how to outwit your greatest enemy, the devil, and fully overcome through faith in Christ. One more word: Do not think that you have sinned against the Holy Ghost if you have a desire to follow Jesus. This very desire is the work of God’s Spirit on your heart.

Our next lesson is also an important one: “Sin and Satan.” It is the story of how sin began in heaven. You will not want to miss it.

Brief Review Questions —

Name five of the ten things the Holy Spirit does in the lives of people here on earth?

What is the sin against the Holy Spirit?

On the next page, we will give some additional definitions of the sin against the Holy Spirit.

**THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

“When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan.

“But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. 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. It is not necessary for us deliberately 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. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place.

“The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome. Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end.

“ ‘The last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so,’ said Jesus, ‘shall it be also unto this wicked generation’ [Matthew 12:45]. There are none so hardened as those who have slighted the invitation of mercy, and done despite to the Spirit of grace. The most common manifestation of the sin against the Holy Spirit is in persistently slighting Heaven’s invitation to repent. Every step in the rejection of Christ is a step toward the rejection of salvation, and toward the sin against the Holy Spirit.

“In rejecting Christ the . . . people committed the unpardonable sin; and by refusing the invitation of mercy, we may commit the same error. We offer insult to the Prince of life, and put Him to shame before the synagogue of Satan and before the heavenly universe when we refuse to listen to His delegated messengers, and instead listen to the agents of Satan, who would draw the soul away from Christ. So long as one does this, he can find no hope or pardon, and he will finally lose all desire to be reconciled to God.”—*Desire of Ages*, 324

Can We Go Too Far in Sin?

1 - WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

1. He is closely associated with God and Christ.

Matthew 28:19—"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

2. He took part in creation. *Genesis 1:1-2.* 3. He descended upon Christ at His baptism. *Matthew 3:16-17.* 4. He represents Christ on earth. *John 14:26 (John 16:7).*

2 - WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

1. He convinces men of sin.

John 16:8—"When He is come, He will reprove ["convince," margin] the world of _____, and of righteousness and of judgment."

2. He convinces men of righteousness (**John 16:8**). *Romans 8:3-4; Luke 24:49 (Acts 1:4).*

3. He convinces men of judgment (**John 16:8**).

John 16:11—"Of judgment because the prince of this world is judged." **James 2:12**—"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the _____ of liberty" (*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Acts 17:31*).

4. He does the work of a comforter.

John 14:16—"I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may _____ with you for ever."

5. He brings about the new birth.

John 3:5—"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the _____, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

John 1:12-13—"As many as received Him, to them gave He _____ to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

6. He dwells in men. *John 14:17; Colossians 1:27.*

7. He intercedes for men. *Romans 8:26.*

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Acts 1:8—"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me."

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Psalm 19:13—"Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the _____ transgression."

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It is the rejection of the Spirit's call (*Matthew 12:24-32*).

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Matthew 7:21-23—"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that _____ the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."

Amos 8:11-12—"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of _____ the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it" (*Jeremiah 8:20*).

John 6:37—"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

What the Bible says about –

Sin and Satan

SCRIPTURE READING:
EZEKIEL 28:12-17
REVELATION 12

Optimistic as any man may be, he still must concede to himself that this is not the kind of world he would make if he had the power to create one after his own desire. With all our churches and social organizations, we still have sin, sorrow, poverty, and woe. Despite modern medical science and innumerable hospitals, the world is a vast lazar house of sickness, suffering, and death. Fear, hatred, and distrust within the hearts of men bring forth crime, war, and bloodshed. Storms, earthquakes, famines, and disasters multiply in these last hours of time. And so we raise our first question in this lesson about the relationship of God, sin, and suffering.

1 - DID GOD CREATE AN EVIL WORLD?

The age-old, insistent, persistent question of the skeptic has always been, "Why would God create a world like this and let it continue?" This question has doubtless come to every thinking man and woman at some time. The Bible answer is that "God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good" (*Genesis 1:31*). "God is love" (*1 John 4:8*). His law is love. All His dealings with all His creatures, when properly understood, are a demonstration of unchanging love. He did not create an evil world.

2 - WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF ALL OUR SUFFERING?

Sin is the obvious cause of all our ills (*Genesis 4:7; Isaiah 24:5*). Adam sinned in the beginning of our world, and the curse came upon the human race (*Genesis 3*). "The wages of sin is death" (*Romans 6:23*). In recent decades millions have been listening to spiritual deceptions. They have been told that there is nothing but God and good, that nothing is evil except as one thinks it is evil, that sin is something to be eliminated simply by believing that there is no sin, that the only real sin is believing in sin.

Modern men with ideas of inevitable progress stand aghast at the developments of these latter days and the utter inadequacy of their puny notions. The Spirit of God is doing His utmost to call them back to His Word, which says, "Sin is the transgression of the law," and "The

wages of sin is death.” There is right, and there is wrong. This we must never forget!

Harry Emerson Fosdick, noted liberal thinker, says in his book, *Living under Tension*: “Today we and our hopes and all our efforts after goodness are up against a powerful antagonism, something demonic, tragic, terrific in human nature, that turns our loveliest qualities to evil and our finest endeavors into failure. Our fathers called it sin.” It is time that modern men, above the din of their own conflicts, should hear the voice of God speaking forth His holy Ten Commandments, the transgression of which is sin.

No preaching of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, no social schemes or church meddling in politics, no giant federations of religious organizations can ever save a people or a world when the sense of sin is gone. When the spiritual sensory nerves are dead to the touch of sin, we shall burn and sear our very souls and never know it. Our God-given protection is gone.

3 - WHAT IS THE BIBLE DEFINITION OF SIN?

1 John 3:4—“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”

Disobedience to God’s laws and will is sin. Men may deny it, but they cannot refute its results. In God’s collection of spiritual facts, sin is the transgression of the law, and the transgression of the law is sin. And this truth is timeless.

4 - WHEN, AND WITH WHOM, DID SIN ORIGINATE?

It was the devil who sinned from the beginning.

1 John 3:8—“He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.”

He it was who abode not in the truth.

John 8:44—“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.”

There can be no sin without a sinner. Sin is not an evil God created and sent forth as a foul miasma. Sin is connected with the conscience—the will of rational beings. Somebody, sometime, willed to sin. Who is he? The Bible says that Lucifer, who was chief of all the angels, sinned. He was one of the covering cherubs right at the throne of God, and doubtless held a position next to the Son of God. Yet he became a rebel. He “abode not in the truth.” This indicates that he was in the truth and then left it. He was perfect in his ways till iniquity was found in him.

5 - HOW DID SIN AND SATAN ORIGINATE?

Sin originated with Satan, a created being, whose original name was Lucifer and whose original home was heaven. He was cast out into this world, and he is here on earth today. Turn to your Bible and read about Him in Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:12-17.

The following is the New Testament record about Satan and the origin of sin:

Revelation 12:7-9—"There was war in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (*Luke 10:18*).

Lucifer was created as one of God's most glorious creatures. Ezekiel represents him as the symbol of the king of Tyre. Isaiah speaks of him as symbolized by the king of Babylon. Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty, he became proud and dissatisfied. He wanted a higher position. He aspired to be like God, with all His divine prerogatives. Envy and jealousy and pride, the most subtle of all evils, took root in his soul.

And why did Lucifer sin? To give a reason would be to justify the evil deed. To offer an excuse would be inexcusable. Lucifer had everything that God could give except divinity itself. This God could not share with him; so Lucifer became Satan, the adversary. He set out to exalt himself above the Godhead. The long conflict between Christ and Satan was on. In this conflict, many angels followed Satan. They did not keep their first estate (*Jude 6*). They transgressed (*Hebrews 2:2*). They were cast out to this world with him (*Revelation 12:9*). And so will sin make us all outcasts, unless we confess and forsake it and humbly acknowledge the sovereignty of God.

6 - WHAT POSITION DOES SATAN OCCUPY ON EARTH?

1. He took over man's dominion when Adam sinned.

2 Peter 2:19—"Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."

Romans 6:16—"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are?"

2. He is the god of this world.

2 Corinthians 4:4—"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not."

3. He is the prince of this world (*John 12:31; 14:30*) and the

prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2).**4. He is also called the prince of devils (Matthew 9:34; 12:24).**

By overcoming man, Satan took his place of dominion over this earth—under God, of course, who, as Creator, is still sovereign Lord. Satan claimed this dominion when he showed Christ the kingdoms of this world, saying, “All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it” (*Luke 4:6*). Jesus did not dispute the claim, neither did He acknowledge it; for three and one-half years later He died on Calvary, to purchase the dominion back with His own precious blood.

7 - HOW DOES SATAN OCCUPY HIS TIME?**1. By going to and fro in the earth.**

Job 1:7—“The Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.”

2. By seeking whom he may devour.

1 Peter 5:8—“Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

He is a restless worker intent upon gathering as many souls as he can for his kingdom of darkness.

8 - WHAT METHODS DOES HE USE?

There are four principal avenues of approach by which the enemy works.

1. He works by deception.

In the Garden of Eden he took the form of a serpent and deceived Eve (*Genesis 3:1*).

1 Timothy 2:14—“Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”

2. He transforms himself into an angel of light.

“Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light” (*2 Corinthians 11:14*). He works through sinful men, some of whom profess to be God’s servants.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15—“Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness.”

3. He works through some organizations.

Ephesians 6:12—“We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

4. He deceives by miracles.

Revelation 16:14—“They are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty” (2 *Thessalonians* 2:8-9).

Deception is the devil’s main method—first, last, and always. He will deceive every person who does not love God and the truth supremely (2 *Thessalonians* 2:1-12). To be deceived means to think you are right when you are wrong. We should not blame the devil for our own doings, however. We may deceive ourselves (1 *Corinthians* 3:18; 1 *John* 1:8).

Satan wanted to control Peter (*Luke* 22:31-33). He did capture Judas (*Luke* 22:33). He got into Ananias’ heart and led him to lie to the Holy Ghost (*Acts* 5:1-5). Jesus warned, “Take heed that no man deceive you” (*Matthew* 24:4). These are the very days when we are to beware, lest any man or any miracle lead us to disbelieve or disobey God (*Matthew* 24:24; 2 *Timothy* 3:13).

Paul warned of the great falling away of the church, finally to be headed by the “man of sin.” This man would claim that he was another God. Satan did not like God’s laws, and he wished to exalt his own throne above God. On earth he has deceived millions with a religious system by exalting man as a god, leading him to tamper with the Ten Commandments, and trying to change them; thus he seeks to prove his claim to godship. We must not continue to be deceived by Satan, by man, by organizations, or by ourselves.

5. He works by accusation.

Revelation 12:10—“Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.”

Satan accused God to Eve (*Genesis* 3:4-5). He accused Job to God (*Job* 1:8-11; 2:4-5). He accused, or resisted, Joshua the high priest (*Zechariah* 3:1-2). And he will accuse, condemn, and trouble you with many evil condemnations.

He will come to you and tell you that you are unworthy to be saved, that you have failed too many times, or that you are too great a sinner. He will hold up your past sins to discourage you.

An old man was riding along in his buggy one rainy day. As he thought about his past life, the devil reminded him of his sins, and he began to

feel discouraged. But he sat up straight and told the devil to go see Jesus Christ about those sins because he had turned them over to Him. Then he had peace.

6. He works by affliction.

He afflicted Job.

Job 2:7—“So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.”

He bound a woman for eighteen years.

Luke 13:16—“This woman, being a daughter of Abraham . . . Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years.”

He buffeted Paul’s flesh (*2 Corinthians 12:7-10*). Satan afflicts many people, both saints and sinners. We shall touch the subject of affliction and suffering in a later study.

7. He works by persecution.

When the devil cannot bring people to believe through deception, he will seek to drive them into persecution. He is a mean and ugly master, and stirs up evil against God’s people. He persecutes the church. Read Revelation 12. He makes war on commandment keepers (*Revelation 12:17*).

John 8:44—“He was a murderer from the beginning.”

In these last days he will make war upon the church, which keep the commandments of God (*Revelation 12:17*). “He was a murderer from the beginning.” He sought to destroy man’s love for, and obedience to, his Creator; and he has, through the ages, incited false religion to persecute the saints of God even unto death. Christ died that He might “destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (*Hebrews 2:14*).

9 - WHY DID GOD MAKE LUCIFER, AND WHY DOES HE NOT DESTROY HIM?

Remember, God made Lucifer, not Satan. The change from the righteous Lucifer to the sinful Satan was made by Satan himself.

God could make His creatures in either of two ways with the power of choice or without it. He created them with the power of choice. It is the only intelligent, satisfying way. His beings thus serve Him because they love Him and choose to obey.

As long as God gave the power of choice, evil might be chosen, which is the opposite of God’s way. Of all God’s creatures, Lucifer had the least excuse to sin because he was highest. But he deliberately chose jealousy.

Had God destroyed him at once without giving him a chance to demonstrate his program, fear and doubt would have crept into the hearts of

HOW SIN BEGAN**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

“To many minds the origin of sin and the reason for its existence are a source of great perplexity. They see the work of evil, with its terrible results of woe and desolation, and they question how all this can exist under the sovereignty of One who is infinite in wisdom, in power, and in love. Here is a mystery of which they find no explanation. And in their uncertainty and doubt they are blinded to truths plainly revealed in God’s Word and essential to salvation. There are those who, in their inquiries concerning the existence of sin, endeavor to search into that which God has never revealed; hence they find no solution of their difficulties; and such as are actuated by a disposition to doubt and cavil seize upon this as an excuse for rejecting the words of Holy Writ. Others, however, fail of a satisfactory understanding of the great problem of evil, from the fact that tradition and misinterpretation have obscured the teaching of the Bible concerning the character of God, the nature of His government, and the principles of His dealing with sin.

“It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning both the origin and the final disposition of sin to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all His dealings with evil. Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in no wise responsible for the entrance of sin; that there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for the uprising of rebellion. Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it is to defend it. Could excuse for it be found, or cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. Our only definition of sin is that given in the Word of God; it is “the transgression of the law”; it is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government.

“Before the entrance of evil there was peace and joy throughout the universe. All was in perfect harmony with the Creator’s will . . . By Christ the Father wrought in the creation of all heavenly beings . . . To Christ, equally with the Father, all heaven gave allegiance.

“The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all created beings depended upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love . . . and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service.

“But there was one that chose to pervert this freedom. Sin originated with him who, next to Christ, had been most honored of God and who stood highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven. Before his fall, Lucifer was first of the covering cherubs, holy and undefiled.”

—*Great Controversy*, 492-494

Sin and Satan

1 - WHAT IS THE BIBLE DEFINITION OF SIN?

1 John 3:4—“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for _____ the transgression of the law.”

2 - WHEN, AND WITH WHOM, DID SIN ORIGINATE?

1 John 3:8—“He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.”

John 8:44—“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is ___ truth in him.”

3 - HOW DID SIN AND SATAN ORIGINATE?

Revelation 12:7-9—“There was _____ in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which _____ the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (*Luke 10:18*).

4 - WHAT POSITION DOES SATAN OCCUPY ON EARTH?

1. He took over man's dominion when Adam sinned.

2 Peter 2:19—“Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.”

Romans 6:16—“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to _____, his servants ye are?”

2. He is the god of this world.

2 Corinthians 4:4—“In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not.”

3. He is the prince of this world (*John 12:31; 14:30*) and the prince of the power of the air (*Ephesians 2:2*).

4. He is also called the prince of devils (*Matthew 9:34; 12:24*).

5 - HOW DOES SATAN OCCUPY HIS TIME?

1. By going to and fro in the earth. *Job 1:7*.

2. By seeking whom he may devour.

1 Peter 5:8—"Your adversary the devil, as a _____ . . ."

**6 - WHAT METHODS
DOES HE USE?****1. He works by deception. 1 Timothy 2:14.****2. He transforms himself into an angel of light.**

2 Corinthians 11:13-15—"Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an _____ of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness."

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Ephesians 6:12—"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the _____ of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

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Revelation 16:14—"They are the spirits of _____, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (*2 Thessalonians 2:8-9*).

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6. He works by affliction.

Job 2:7—"So went _____ forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown" (*Luke 13:16*).

7. He works by persecution.

John 8:44—"He was a _____ from the beginning."

**7 - HOW CAN WE
OVERCOME SATAN?**

Revelation 12:11—"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony" (*James 4:7*).

What the Bible says about – The Pathway to God's Throne

SCRIPTURE READING:
MATTHEW 6:5-15; 18:21-35
Luke 18:1-14

Napoleon once asked, "Do you wish to find out the really sublime?" He answered his own question by saying, "Repeat the Lord's Prayer." And apparently repeating it was all he did. But those who live that prayer have spiritual power.

It would be well for all of us to memorize the Lord's prayer (*Matthew 6:9-13*) and pray this prayer from the heart every day.

All our prayers need not be memorized, however. Prayer is really communion with God and therefore a personal and intimate experience with the Lord. Let us see if we cannot find the secret to this great power.

1 - WHAT IS PRAYER?

One well-known Christian described prayer as "the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse." This is true. Think of it in two ways:

1. The cry of a soul in need.

Psalm 31:9—"Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly."

Psalm 46:1—"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

A lifeguard on a bathing beach was asked how he could determine the cry of one really in distress, when there was so much babel and confusion. He said, "I can always tell that distinctive cry of real distress." God can also.

Many years ago, Sir John Gayre, Lord Mayor of London, was shipwrecked. Finding himself on a dangerous shore, he knelt in prayer. Then a lion approached him. Fervently the Christian prayed for help. The lion sniffed at him and then walked off. God had saved the mayor. However, such prayers, after the danger passes, generally fade away, and men forget God. Prayer is the cry of a soul in need, but it is much more than that.

2. The opening of the heart to God.

Real prayer is “the opening of the heart to God as to a friend.” It is not just asking for things. It isn’t all talking on man’s part or on God’s part. It is some of each, and more. It may be communion in utter silence at times—just a sacred sense of His holy, presence. “Be still, and know that I am God” (*Psalms 46:10*).

“As a boy,” relates a minister, “I worked side by side with my father—my friend. I used to walk long distances with him. There were no words, but just the silent symphony of the souls of a man and a boy, timed by the tramp of feet and the kindly swish of trouser legs. The man, mayhap, was thinking of what the boy one day might be; the boy was holding the man a hero for what he already was. Silent prayer, I think, is something like that.” God asks us to call Him Father; therefore we may freely come to Him with our problems and our joys.

Luke 11:2—“He said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven.”

And since Jesus is the friend of sinners, He invites the most sinful to come to God through Him.

Matthew 11:19—“The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.”

Hebrews 4:15-16—“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

2 - WHAT PRAYER IS NOT

Prayer is not an act of merit that earns God’s favor. Jesus said:

Matthew 5:45— “He . . . sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

If the Christian farmer always had good crops and his atheist neighbor poor crops, the atheist would probably join the church, but that would make him a hypocrite. If the Christian never got sick, the churches would be crowded—the whole world would profess Christianity.

If prayer would get us anything we wanted, we probably would pray not so much for holiness as for temporal benefits which would not be used to our good or God’s glory. Many are already like the little boy who failed to say grace at the table one morning. His father asked why. The answer came, “We don’t need to pray for bread today. I looked in the bread box and there is enough for three days.”

Prayer is not ostentation and show (*Matthew 6:1-8*). It is not a set form of words for a set occasion recited to the accompaniment of spinning prayer wheels or moving beads, though many who pray thus are sincere and true. Prayer is communion with God, and may take

place whenever and wherever the soul of man reaches out sincerely for his Creator.

3 - WHY DO WE PRAY?

Four questions will help to find the answer:

1. Is it to give God information?

Psalm 139:1-4—“O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.”

Does God need information? No! “Your Father knowest what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him” (*Matthew 6:8*). Still He never wearies of our coming to Him in sincere prayer. Unburden your heart. Take all the time you need. Don’t rush. Think when you pray. If you were talking to the president of the United States, you would be alert, wouldn’t you? Be alert and reverent when you talk to God, and your prayers will be heard in heaven.

2. Is it to make God willing?

Luke 11:13—“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?”

Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance; it is taking hold of God’s willingness: Prayer does not make Him willing, for He is always willing to help us.

3. Is it to change God?

Malachi 3:6—“I am the Lord, I change not.”

Do we pray to change God? No! With Him “is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (*James 1:17*). God’s promises are conditional; therefore answers vary. But God never changes. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever (*Hebrews 13:8*). His invitation is, “Come now, and let us reason together” (*Isaiah 1:18*).

4. Is it to change us?

Prayer is the greatest unused force in the universe to change what most needs to be changed—men. We pray “in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.” Read Paul’s experience in Acts 9:10-18.

4 - WHAT IS OUR PART IN GETTING OUR PRAYERS ANSWERED?

Before you go one step further, read the story of the pharisee and the publican in the Temple (*Luke 18:10-14*). This will help you to see that

sincerity of purpose means much with God. Now go and note carefully these eight points:

1. Recognize your need of God.

Isaiah 44:3—"I will pour water upon him that is thirsty."

Matthew 5:6—"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

We must recognize our need. That's what the publican did and what the pharisee did not do. A French nobleman said, "God would think twice before damning a person of my quality." Such conceit short-circuits prayer.

2. Recognize God as your indispensable helper.

John 15:5—"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing."

James 1:17—"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights."

As a man sentenced to death by the highest court looks to the governor as his only hope, so should we in all things look to God. It is only at the altar of God that we can kindle our tapers with divine fire (*Isaiah 50:10-11*).

3. Pray in faith.

James 1:5-6—"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering" (*verses 7-8*).

To pray without faith is like plugging up a water pipe and then opening up the faucet. Nothing happens. Prayer without faith is like a key with no hand to turn it in the lock. "Ask in faith" (*Hebrews 11:6*).

4. Confess and forsake all your sins.

Proverbs 28:13—"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

Psalms 66:18—"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (*Proverbs 28:9*).

Confess and forsake. We must not wait for feeling. We must act. Be specific with God. Israel found peace only when they said, "We have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king" (*1 Samuel 12:19*). "Sin is the transgression of the law" (*1 John 3:4*). We must forsake sin, which is lawlessness. Obedience must be the rule of our lives. It is the fruit of true faith. "Faith without works is dead" (*James 2:20*).

5. Pray according to God's will.

Matthew 26:39—"He went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup

pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (*verse 42*).

"We know not what we should pray for as we ought" (*Romans 8:26*). If it was fitting for Jesus to pray, Thy will be done," how much more appropriate for us. No wise parent will give a child everything he asks for. The answer sometimes is No; sometimes it is a substitute, as a rubber ball instead of scissors. And sometimes the answer may be, Not now; this is a postponement. Thus we must trust God.

6. Persevere with God.

Read Luke 18:1-8—the story of the importunate widow.

So many times we rush through the circle of prayer and scarcely remember what we prayed for. We are like a boy who can't stop to eat his breakfast on Christmas morning. Perseverance in prayer is not so much urging our wills upon God as it is being "instant in prayer"—keeping an attitude of prayer. Yet it does mean earnestness, as in the case of Elijah's praying for rain and sending his servant seven times to the hilltop to look for signs of rain.

7. Pray in Jesus' name.

John 14:13—"Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

To pray in the name of Jesus is to pray in the mind and spirit of Jesus while we believe His promises, rely upon His grace, and work His works.

8. Listen as well as talk.

Habakkuk 2:1—"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved."

Some preacher has said, "The prayer room is not so much the oratory room as the observatory room. Waiting for God to speak in prayer sometimes provides the only answer we need to our petitions."

5 - WHY ARE SOME PRAYERS NOT ANSWERED?

In order to have our prayers answered, we should remove all the obstacles that block the prayer channel. Think of these four things:

1. We must forgive others.

Matthew 6:14-15—"If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (*Matthew 18:21-35*).

2. We must pray for others.

Job 42:10—"The Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed

for his friends" (*Matthew 5:44*).

A man whose prayer is always, "O Lord bless me," can never become like God in character. We must have not only the inward look, but the outlook. John Knox prayed, "Lord, give me Scotland or I die." He prayed for his enemies.

If we do not pray for those who spitefully use us, we shall surely despise them. Sincere prayer for them is essential for our own sakes.

3. We must confess our faults one to another.

James 5:16—"Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed" (*Matthew 5:23-24*).

We must confess faults to others we have injured. This is simple decency. If you break a man's leg, do your best to fix it. If you break his heart, you are the only human being who can help patch it up. Do this now with kindness and words of sincerity.

4. We must restore anything taken by fraud or robbery.

Ezekiel 33:15—"If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die" (*the example of Zacchaeus, in Luke 19:1-9*).

Billy Sunday worked as a fourteen-year-old janitor boy for \$25 a month. With check in hand, he stood in line. At the bank window he received, by mistake, \$40 instead of the \$25. With the extra \$15 he bought a suit of clothes. When he became a Christian, according to his story, the Lord said, "Bill, you owe the Farmers Bank of Nevada County, Iowa, \$15 with interest." He paid it, and found peace. So should we make restitution to all whom we have defrauded.

6 - WHAT EXAMPLE OF PRAYER DID JESUS GIVE?

Mark 1:35—"In the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (*Luke 6:12*).

Jesus prayed early in the morning. He prayed in the evening and, at times, all night. He doubtless prayed almost incessantly during the forty days in the wilderness of temptation. He prayed in public; he prayed in private—mostly the latter. He prayed for Peter. He prayed for His disciples. He prayed for His enemies. He prayed for all who would ever believe. He prayed for you and me. He prayed through to victory in Gethsemane; and, in heaven, He "ever liveth to make intercession" for us. Shall weak mortals neglect to pray when we have available to us, through Christ, our divine Mediator, all power in heaven and earth (*Matthew 28:18*)?

7 - WHY ARE WE ESPECIALLY ADMONISHED TO PRAY NOW?

We are in the last days, dear friend, and Jesus is coming soon. Said Peter:

1 Peter 4:7—“The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.”

If we are to stand in the time of trouble that is just ahead, we must get the daily prayer habit, and pray always. Morning, noon, and night we should lift our souls to God. Jesus said:

Luke 21:34, 36—“Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares . . . Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

In our next lesson, we will discuss a matter of deep importance to every soul who is seeking God. Entitled “The Other Side of Death,” it will explain what the Bible teaches about this important subject, which is of deep interest to us all.

Brief Review Questions —

Why do we pray?

Name some of the things we must do in order to better receive answers to our prayers.

How important is it that we earnestly pray now?

PATHWAY TO GOD'S THRONE**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.

"When Jesus was upon the earth, He taught His disciples how to pray. He directed them to present their daily needs before God, and to cast all their care upon Him. And the assurance He gave them that their petitions should be heard, is assurance also to us.

"Jesus Himself, while He dwelt among men, was often in prayer. Our Saviour identified Himself with our needs and weakness, in that He became a suppliant, a petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, that He might come forth braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things. He is a brother in our infirmities, 'in all points tempted like as we are'; but as the sinless one His nature recoiled from evil; He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and a privilege. He found comfort and joy in communion with His Father. And if the Saviour of men, the Son of God, felt the need of prayer, how much more should feeble, sinful mortals feel the necessity of fervent, constant prayer.

"Our heavenly Father waits to bestow upon us the fullness of His blessing. It is our privilege to drink largely at the fountain of boundless love. What a wonder it is that we pray so little! God is ready and willing to hear the sincere prayer of the humblest of His children, and yet there is much manifest reluctance on our part to make known our wants to God. What can the angels of heaven think of poor helpless human beings, who are subject to temptation, when God's heart of infinite love yearns toward them, ready to give them more than they can ask or think, and yet they pray so little and have so little faith? The angels love to bow before God; they love to be near Him. They regard communion with God as their highest joy; and yet the children of earth, who need so much the help that God only can give, seem satisfied to walk without the light of His Spirit, the companionship of His presence.

"The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray. The whispered temptations of the enemy entice them to sin; and it is all because they do not make use of the privileges that God has given them in the divine appointment of prayer. Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence? Without unceasing prayer and diligent watching we are in danger of growing careless and of deviating from the right path . . .

"There are certain conditions upon which we may expect that God will hear and answer our prayers. One of the first of these is that we feel our need of help from Him."

—*Steps to Christ, 93-95*

The Pathway to God's Throne

1 - WHAT IS PRAYER?

1. The cry of a soul in need.

Psalm 31:9—"Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly."

Psalm 46:1—"God is our _____ and strength, a very present help in trouble."

2. The opening of the heart to God.

Luke 11:2—"He said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven."

Hebrews 4:15-16—"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come _____ unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of _____."

2 - WHAT IS OUR PART IN GETTING OUR PRAYERS ANSWERED?

1. Recognize your need of God.

Isaiah 44:3—"I will pour water upon him that is thirsty."

Matthew 5:6—"Blessed are they which do _____ and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

2. Recognize God as your indispensable helper.

John 15:5—"I am the vine, ye are the _____: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing" (*James 1:17*).

3. Pray in faith.

James 1:5-6—"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering" (*verses 7-8*).

4. Confess and forsake all your sins.

Proverbs 28:13—"He that _____ his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

Psalm 66:18—"If I regard _____ in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (*Proverbs 28:9*).

5. **Pray according to God's will.** *Matthew 26:39.*
6. **Persevere with God.** *Ephesians 6:18; Hebrews 4:16.*
7. **Pray in Jesus' name.** *John 14:13.*
8. **Listen as well as talk.** *Habakkuk 2:1.*

3 - WHY ARE SOME PRAYERS NOT ANSWERED?

1. We must forgive others.

Matthew 6:14-15—"If ye _____ men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (*Matthew 18:21-35*).

2. We must pray for others.

Job 42:10—"The Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he _____ for his friends" (*Matthew 5:44*).

3. We must confess our faults one to another.

James 5:16—"Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed" (*Matthew 5:23-24*).

4. We must restore anything taken by fraud or robbery.

Ezekiel 33:15—"If the wicked _____ the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die" (*the example of Zacchaeus, in Luke 19:1-9*).

4 - WHAT EXAMPLE OF PRAYER DID JESUS GIVE?

Mark 1:35—"In the morning, rising up a great while _____ day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (*Luke 6:12*).

5 - WHY ARE WE ESPECIALLY ADMONISHED TO PRAY NOW?

1 Peter 4:7—"The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."

Luke 21:34, 36—"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and _____ of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares . . . Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

What the Bible says about – The Other Side of Death

SCRIPTURE READING:
1 CORINTHIANS 15

If we properly approach the Bible, we will see that all its great doctrines run parallel to one another, and that there is no contradiction or confusion. This is accomplished by studying all Bible teaching on a given subject and then comparing subject with subject. Paul calls it “comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (*1 Corinthians 2:13*). We will do just that in this most important lesson. Remember, it was Christ who in the beginning created all things (*Ephesians 3:9*), and man is therefore dependent upon Christ for life (*1 John 5:12*). When man sinned he forfeited his right to life, “for the wages of sin is death” (*Romans 6:23*). And it is “our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (*2 Timothy 1:10*). Thus, there is hope of everlasting life only in Christ (*John 3:16*).

1 - WHO IS THE POSSESSOR OF IMMORTALITY?

The word, “immortal,” occurs only once in the Bible, and refers to God.

1 Timothy 1:17—“Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever.”

The word, “immortality,” is used only five times in the Bible. You will find it in 1 Timothy 6:15-16; Romans 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:10; and 1 Corinthians 15:51-54.

The saints of God receive immortality at the hour of resurrection, from the great Fountainhead of life, the divine Source of immortality. Said Paul:

1 Corinthians 15:22-23—“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.”

1 Corinthians 15:52-55—“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,

then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

As you think back over your life and recall with what frequency the word, "immortality," has been used in funeral sermons and in religious conversation, is it not surprising to discover that this word is found but five times in the Bible. It never refers to man or any part of man's nature; but the clear, emphatic declaration is made that God "only hath immortality." We do not have it naturally or inherently. We are to seek for it, discover it in the gospel, and receive it as a reality at the second coming of Christ. It is only through Christ that any sinner has hope of immortality.

From the foregoing it is clear, then, that man is dependent utterly upon the Life-giver for an endless life, even as in the beginning he was dependent upon the Life-giver for life. Man is mortal, and "mortal" means "subject to death." Only God is immortal (*1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Timothy 6:15-16*); that is, "not subject to death."

Eternal life and immortality are not for those who neglect or reject Christ. Immortality is the crowning gift of the gospel, and is reserved only for sincere ones, who, as Paul said, "by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life" (*Romans 2:7*).

2 - IS MAN ENDOWED WITH AN ETERNALLY CONSCIOUS SOUL?

In the beginning God made Adam, the first man, from the dust of the ground and gave him the breath of life. Then he became a living soul.

Genesis 2:7—"The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (*Job 33:4*).

The substantial part of man's body is composed of dust, as the Bible says. The simple statement is made that God breathed into his nostrils the "breath of life." Job said:

Job 27:3—"All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God ["breath which God gave," margin] is in my nostrils."

Then man became "a living soul." Note carefully that God did not breathe into man a living soul or endow him with a living soul, but He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. An electric light bulb, of itself, gives no light. But when an electric current is sent through its wiring, light is produced. Thus Adam's body, perfect as it was, could not perform any function or fulfill any purpose. So God switched on the current of life, and Adam then became a living, active, functioning soul. The living soul did not exist before Adam was made. And it was not breathed into Adam, but came as a result of the union of his body and the breath of life, or "the breath of the spirit of

life," as it is called in one place, which we shall note in a moment.

Now, did the first man become an immortal or a mortal soul when his life began? The Hebrew and Greek words from which we translate our English words, "soul" and "spirit," are found some 1,700 times in the Bible. The word "soul," as used in the Bible, does not always have exactly the same meaning. The same holds true for the word, "spirit." We should therefore avoid being dogmatic on any one definition.

Not one of the 1,700 appearances of these original words for "soul" and "Spirit" are said to be immortal, never dying, imperishable, indestructible, everlasting, eternal, or in possession of immortality.

Nor are the dead ever represented as being capable of a conscious existence apart from the body. Even the animals became living souls when the breath of life entered their bodies at creation. In Genesis 1:30, we read: "To every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life." The marginal rendering of "life" is "a living soul." In Revelation 16:3, the animals of the sea are called living souls. The original expression for "living soul" is *nephesh chaiyah*. This expression is used in Genesis 1:20-21, 24, in referring to the animals as "the moving creature that hath life," "every living creature," and "the living creature." Thus animals are called "living souls," or *nephesh chaiyah*. This is the identical expression used in Genesis 2:7, when man became a "living soul," or *nephesh chaiyah*. At death, this breath leaves man. These words from Genesis, describing the destruction at the Flood, are illustrative:

Genesis 7:21-22—"All flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life."

The marginal reading of Genesis 7:22 is "The breath of the spirit of life."

The question arises: Is man then a mere animal? No, indeed! Such a conclusion is entirely unwarranted. In your garden is a green-leaved bud bearing beautiful, blushing roses. Close by is an ugly weed. They are both of the vegetable kingdom, receive the same kind of sunshine and rain, and grow in identical soil. But no one calls a rose a weed or a weed a rose. The difference does not lie in the sunshine, soil, or rain, but in the plant organism. When God put life into Adam's organism He produced different results than when He put life into animal organisms.

As we have already suggested, an electric current passes into a light-bulb filament, and we get light. It passes into the heavy coils of an electric heater, and heat is the chief product. The current is connected with an electric meter, and a revolving motion is the result. We get power. Whether we get light, heat, or power depends on what the current goes

into. But it is the same current.

So when God breathed life into Adam, He was putting that life into the masterpiece of earthly creation. Said the psalmist, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (*Psalms 139:14*). Man was made only a "little lower than the angels" (*Psalms 8:5*). As poetically expressed by one writer, "What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason, how infinite in faculty! in form and movement, how expressive and admirable in action, how like an angel in apprehension, how like a god!"

3 - WHAT TWO THINGS HAPPEN WHEN MAN DIES?

1. The body turns to dust again.

Genesis 3:19—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (*Ecclesiastes 3:20*).

2. The spirit (breath of life) returns to God.

Ecclesiastes 12:7—"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

All living creatures die the same way as man. Said the wise man:

Ecclesiastes 3:19—"That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast" (*Psalms 104:26-29*).

When man was created, his body was first formed of dust. Then God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living, thinking, feeling, active being. God called him a living soul. He did not exist before.

When man dies, the simple opposite of the creative process takes place. Says the Bible, "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (*Psalms 146:4*). The breath of the spirit of life of all men, good and bad, returns to God. God also takes back the breath of life from animals, as you have read. Solomon rejects the theory that man's spirit goes upward and a beast's spirit downward (*Ecclesiastes 3:19-21*).

4 - IS MAN CONSCIOUS IN DEATH?

The Scripture is very clear on this question. Notice five points:

1. In that very day his thoughts perish.

Psalms 146:4—"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."

2. The dead know not anything.

Ecclesiastes 9:5—"The dead know not any thing."

3. Their feelings perish.

Ecclesiastes 9:6—"Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished."

4. The dead praise not the Lord.

Psalms 115:17—"The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence."

5. Death is like a sleep, Jesus said. Read John 11:11-14.

Yes, the Scriptures are plain. When death comes, all thinking and feeling end. If they do not, the Bible is false and unreliable. Thinking and feeling did not exist before God breathed life into man, and they stop entirely when the man dies. When the electric current is turned off, the bulb is there, but light is gone. Thinking and feeling come as a result of the operation of the current of life in conjunction with the body and brain of man. When the body gets too much out of order or the current of life is turned off, or both, all thinking and feeling cease.

Who started the theory of the natural immortality of man, his soul, etc.? The Egyptians believed in the immortality of the soul, and passed the doctrine onto the Greeks and Romans, who in turn gave it to Christian churches. However, this belief in natural immortality did not originate with the Egyptians, but with the devil himself. God said, "Thou shalt surely die" (*Genesis 2:17*). The devil said, "Ye shall not surely die" (*Genesis 3:4*). The devil deceived Eve and nearly the entire world. Countless millions live in fear, dread, superstition, and under religious tyranny because of the devil's lie and the multiplied horrible theories that have been built upon this original falsehood.

After man sinned, God removed him from the tree of life, lest he live forever (*Genesis 3:22-23*). God did not propose to have everlasting sinners.

In death there is no consciousness of the passing of time. When David is resurrected, it will seem but the next instant after he died—"the twinkling of an eye," as it were. In the Bible, death is called "sleep" fifty-four times.

5 - WHAT IS THE GATEWAY TO ETERNAL LIFE?

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17—"The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (*2 Timothy 4:8; Acts 2:29-34*).

According to the Scriptures, all the righteous go to heaven at one time. The voice of Jesus, at His second coming, will open the tomb of every

saint, and with the righteous living they will be rewarded together. For the sleeping saints, then, the resurrection is the gateway to eternal life. But if, as some believe, death ushers one immediately into heaven or hell, why is there to be a resurrection? If, through the ages, the good have gone to heaven at death and the bad to hell, of what value would the resurrection be? If a man is already in hell, why liberate him and then thrust him back? There is no reason for the resurrection if people are rewarded at death.

Christ said He would receive His disciples unto Himself at His second coming (*John 14:1-3*). If they and all other good people who have died are already with Christ in heaven, then His teaching about His second coming becomes a farce. Are the saints coming from heaven back to their graves to rise and go to heaven again?

All the righteous will be rewarded at once. The living will not precede the righteous dead (*1 Thessalonians 4:15-17*), and the righteous dead will not be rewarded before the righteous living (*Hebrews 11:13, 39-40*).

There are two resurrections: one at the beginning, the other at the close, of the millennium—the first, “the resurrection of life”; the second, “the resurrection of damnation” (*John 5:29*). We must decide in this life in which of these two resurrections we shall have a part. And our decision must be made before death.

2 Corinthians 6:2—“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

It is too late after death to decide. “They that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth” (*Isaiah 38:18*). The punishment of the wicked will be discussed in our next lesson. God created man with the intention that he should live forever. However, immortality was the possession he could have only after being tested. Man failed in the test. He accepted the words of Satan in preference to the words of God, and was led thereby into disobedience. Eve believed that she would not die, but rather would enter upon a higher plane of experience and become as the gods. How many millions have since been misled as she was, believing that death is not real at all, but just the gateway of release into a higher realm!

6 - CAN THE DEAD COMMUNICATE WITH THE LIVING?

Here are three Bible facts that are so important as to be a matter of life and death!

1. The dead know nothing about their own children.

Job 14:21—“His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.”

2. The dead have no part in any earthly affairs whatever.

Ecclesiastes 9:6—“Neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.”

3. God condemns attempts to communicate with the dead.

Read Deuteronomy 18:9-12 carefully and prayerfully.

The Bible says No to the question before us. Attempts to communicate with the dead are considered by God as delving into “abomination!” According to Bible prophecy, spiritism is to have a great revival in these last days, but it is not of God (*1 Timothy 4:1*).

7 - WHAT IS OUR ONLY HOPE?

Our only hope is in the resurrection and the coming of our Lord, for if the dead rise not, all who have died in Christ are perished. This is the studied conclusion of Paul:

1 Corinthians 15:16-19—“For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”

If it were God’s plan to renew the life of the sleeping saints in any other way except the resurrection, Paul would not say that “then they . . . which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” But Paul knew that the resurrection was the only gateway into eternity for all who had fallen under the cruel hand of death—so he concluded that the saints would either come forth in the resurrection or perish!

And so, dear friend, the resurrection at the return of Jesus is our only hope. And it is Christ who makes the resurrection to eternal life possible. He possesses immortality. Christ is the fountain of eternal life. If we are to live with those who have died victoriously, we must anchor our faith in Him—yes, in Him. There is no other way to heaven.

The next lesson is really part of this one: “Eternal Life in Christ.” It is a topic you will want to carefully study.

Brief Review Questions —

Does anyone besides God automatically have immortality?

What happens when a man dies?

Is man conscious in death?

THE OTHER SIDE OF DEATH**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

"In the midst of Eden grew the tree of life, whose fruit had the power of perpetuating life. Had Adam remained obedient to God, he would have continued to enjoy free access to this tree and would have lived forever. But when he sinned he was cut off from partaking of the tree of life, and he became subject to death. The divine sentence, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,' points to the utter extinction of life.

"Immortality, promised to man on condition of obedience, had been forfeited by transgression. Adam could not transmit to his posterity that which he did not possess; and there could have been no hope for the fallen race had not God, by the sacrifice of His Son, brought immortality within their reach. While 'death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,' Christ 'hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel' (Romans 5:12; 2 Timothy 1:10). And only through Christ can immortality be obtained. Said Jesus: 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life' (John 3:36). Every man may come into possession of this priceless blessing if he will comply with the conditions. All 'who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality,' will receive 'eternal life' (Romans 2:7).

"The only one who promised Adam life in disobedience was the great deceiver. And the declaration of the serpent to Eve in Eden—"Ye shall not surely die"—was the first sermon ever preached upon the immortality of the soul. Yet this declaration, resting solely upon the authority of Satan, is echoed from the pulpits of Christendom and is received by the majority of mankind as readily as it was received by our first parents. The divine sentence, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:20), is made to mean: The soul that sinneth, it shall not die, but live eternally. We cannot but wonder at the strange infatuation which renders men so credulous concerning the words of Satan and so unbelieving in regard to the words of God.

"Had man after his fall been allowed free access to the tree of life, he would have lived forever, and thus sin would have been immortalized. But cherubim and a flaming sword kept 'the way of the tree of life' (Genesis 3:24), and not one of the family of Adam has been permitted to pass that barrier and partake of the life-giving fruit. Therefore there is not an immortal sinner.

"But after the Fall, Satan bade his angels make a special effort to inculcate the belief in man's natural immortality; and having induced the people to receive this error, they were to lead them on to conclude that the sinner would live in eternal misery . . . Thus the archfiend clothes with his own attributes the Creator and Benefactor of mankind . . . Satan is seeking to overcome men today . . . by shaking their confidence in their Creator and leading them to doubt the wisdom of His government and the justice of His laws."

—*Great Controversy*, 532-534

The Other Side of Death

1 - WHO IS THE POSSESSOR OF IMMORTALITY?

1 Timothy 1:17—“Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever.”

1 Corinthians 15:22-23—“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made _____. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.”

1 Corinthians 15:52-55—“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall _____, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in _____. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

2 - IS MAN ENDOWED WITH AN ETERNALLY CONSCIOUS SOUL?

Genesis 2:7—“The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a _____” (*Job 33:4*).

Job 27:3—“All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God [“breath which God gave,” margin] is in my nostrils.”

Genesis 7:21-22—“All flesh died that moved _____ the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the _____ of life.”

3 - WHAT TWO THINGS HAPPEN WHEN MAN DIES?

1. The body turns to dust again.

Genesis 3:19—“Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return” (*Ecclesiastes 3:20*).

2. The spirit (breath of life) returns to God.

Ecclesiastes 12:7—“Then shall the _____ return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”

Ecclesiastes 3:19—“That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even _____ befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast” (Ps. 104:26-29).

**4 - IS MAN CONSCIOUS
IN DEATH?**

1. In that very day his thoughts perish.

Psalm 146:4—“His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his _____ perish.”

2. The dead know not anything.

Ecclesiastes 9:5—“The dead know not _____.”

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Ecclesiastes 9:6—“Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now _____.”

4. The dead praise not the Lord.

Psalm 115:17—“The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into _____.”

5. Death is like a sleep, Jesus said. Read John 11:11-14.

**5 - WHAT IS THE GATEWAY
TO ETERNAL LIFE?**

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17— “The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together _____ them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (2 Timothy 4:8; Acts 2:29-34).

2 Corinthians 6:2—“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (1 Corinthians 15:16-19).

**6 - CAN THE DEAD COMMUNICATE
WITH THE LIVING?**

1. The dead know nothing about their own children.

Job 14:21—“His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it _____; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.”

2. The dead have no part in any earthly affairs whatever.

Ecclesiastes 9:6—“Neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.”

What the Bible says about – Eternal Life in Christ

SCRIPTURE READING:
REVELATION 20:14-15; 21
MALACHI 4:1, 3

The doctrine of an eternally burning hell in which lost sinners suffer endlessly in the awful pain of “hellfire” is still held by millions of serious-minded Christians. This belief is an outgrowth of the “natural immortality” idea. That is, if the sinner, as well as the saint, were immortal, neither would ever really die, but would live on forever in a place of ghastly torment or of unrivaled bliss.

In the light of our last lesson, you yourself must decide whether this doctrine is Scriptural. Using sanctified reason, you must decide, too, whether a just God would permit the wicked to suffer throughout eternity for the sins they committed in a few brief years. One writer has said:

“If eternal hell is real, love is eternally frustrated and heaven is a place of mourning and concern for the lost. Such joy and such grief cannot go together. There can be no split personality for the real lovers of God and surely not for God Himself. God cannot be faithless to Himself no matter how faithless we are” (*A Reader’s Notebook by Gerald Kennedy, Copyright 1953, Harper & Brothers*).

However, the fact that a just God will not punish sinners throughout eternity in hellfire does not remove the prospect that a just God will punish sinners with fire and destroy them. “The wages of sin is death,” said Paul. Fire is the best means of destruction. And death is destruction—simply the cessation of life. This is the reward of the wicked. So the Bible teaches, as we shall now see.

1 - WHAT IS THE BIBLE MEANING OF THE WORD, “HELL”?

There are three meanings. Let us look at them, one at a time:

1. *Hell sometimes means the “grave.”* The Hebrew word widely used for “grave” is *sheol*. In Psalm 16:10, we have it rendered “hell,” referring to the grave. “Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.” In Acts 2:27, this Scripture is quoted by Peter. In this verse, the Greek word for “hell” is *hades*. Its meaning is “grave,” the same as *sheol* in the Hebrew. As you know, the New Testament was originally written in Greek. In Acts 2:31, Peter definitely says that Psalm 16:10, the verse we speak of, refers to Christ’s

resurrection. Christ was not left in “hell,” that is, not in the grave, but was raised from the dead. The word, *hades*, is used eleven times in the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians 15:55, it is translated “grave.” Otherwise it is translated “hell,” signifying the grave or “state in the grave.”

2. *Hell also signifies a “place of burning.”* In the New Testament the word is *Gehenna*, or the “Valley of Hinnom,” described as “a deep, narrow glen, south of Jerusalem, where, after the introduction of the fire gods of Ahaz, the idolatrous Jews offered their children to Moloch.” In this Valley of Hinnom, the bodies of dead animals and the refuse of the city were cast. Fires burned continuously, and worms infested the carcasses of animals. What the fire did not destroy, the worms consumed. It thus was a type of complete annihilation. *Gehenna*, the place of burning, is used twelve times, being translated “hell.”

3. *Hell sometimes represents darkness* and the third meaning of the word, “hell,” is found in 2 Peter 2:4. “God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.” The Greek word here is *Tartarus*, not *Gehenna* or *hades*. In this text, hell represents the darkness that enshrouded Satan and his angels, when they were separated from God, and heaven and the darkness that has come to earth because of the presence of the prince of darkness (*Isaiah 60:2*).

2 - WHERE DO ALL MEN GO AT DEATH?

Surprisingly, the Scriptures declare that all men go to hell (or the grave) when they die. Here are five facts about death:

1. **The dead go into the house of death, appointed to all living.**

Job 30:23—“For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living.”

2. **This house is the grave (*sheol*).**

Job 17:13—“If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness.”

3. **This grave is *hades* in the Greek New Testament.**

1 Corinthians 15:55—“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (*See margin.*)

4. ***Hades* is translated “hell” in Acts 2:27, 31, meaning the “grave.”**

Acts 2:27, 31—“Because Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” “He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption.”

Hades is translated as “hell” ten times in the New Testament.

5. The spirit (breath of life) of all men goes to God at death.

Ecclesiastes 12:7—"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

Hell, or the grave, is an impartial place. "There is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked" (*Ecclesiastes 9:2*). "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave [*sheol*]" (*Psalms 89:48*)? The rich and poor, the high and low, the righteous and the wicked—all meet in that abode. Into the grave have gone the vilest characters that have ever lived, and its portals have opened to receive the loveliest and sweetest mortals whose gentle footsteps ever graced the earth.

Yes, death is an "enemy" (*1 Corinthians 15:26*) and the grave is not a comforting consolation, but we thank God that "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord" (*Revelation 14:13*). They have the hope of the resurrection. And we may also rejoice that the wicked are now slumbering in silence rather than screaming in torture and agony.

3 - WHEN WILL THE DEAD COME OUT OF THE GRAVE?

The righteous come out of the grave, or *hades*, at the sound of the "last trump" (*1 Corinthians 15:51-52, 55*). This trump sounds at Christ's second coming (*1 Thessalonians 4:16*). And this is at the beginning of the millennium (*Revelation 20:6*). Christ's promise of His glorious return, to gather His chosen ones unto Himself (*John 14:1-3*), will someday be fulfilled. At the sound of the "trump of God," the saints who have slept in silence, unconscious of the passing of time, will suddenly be awakened. Some have slumbered for thousands of years; others have had only a brief period in the grave. To all, the time will seem the same—as just a moment. They will come forth with their faces glowing with joy, health, and immortality.

The living righteous will be caught up with these resurrected saints, and they will go to be with Christ and reign with Him a thousand years. What a glad and glorious reunion this will be.

But when will the wicked dead come out of the grave? They will be raised from their graves a thousand years later (*Revelation 20:5*). "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." This is the Bible teaching.

Hell (*hades*, or the grave) gives up its dead (*Revelation 20:13*). This occurs at the end of the millennium, when the saints and the New Jerusalem descend from heaven to earth. The untold millions of the wicked dead are raised from the grave, or *hades*. Satan goes out to deceive them. He then leads them in assault against the city of God, the home of the saints (*Revelation 20:5-9*). Notice carefully what happens next.

4 - WHERE WILL THE WICKED AND HELL (THE GRAVE) BE CAST?

They will be cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:14-15—“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

Yes, they will be cast into a literal lake of fire. Nine times does Jesus give warning concerning this “hell” of fire.

This is the “place of burning,” the final *Gehenna* of Scripture. This *Gehenna* is mentioned twelve times in the New Testament.

5 - WILL THE WHOLE MAN BE CAST INTO THIS FIRE?

The answer is clear: all of him—“both soul and body in hell” (*Gehenna*).

Matthew 10:28—“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (*Matthew 5:30; 18:8-9*).

Since there is no fire in the grave, this consignment to a place of burning could not take place at death. The burning hell Jesus is speaking of is not one into which some ghostlike spirit or soul is cast, but one into which men are cast bodily. Since at death the body goes into the grave, where there is no burning, this hell that Jesus here speaks of has no connection with ordinary death. It refers to the second and final death by fire, when the wicked are destroyed at the close of the millennium.

6 - HOW LONG WILL THE WICKED BURN?

1. Until body and soul are destroyed.

Matthew 10:28—“But rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

2. Until neither root nor branch is left.

Malachi 4:1—“For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.”

3. Until they are devoured—the “second death.”

Revelation 20:9, 14—“And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them . . . And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.”

The wicked will burn forever, as long as life lasts.

Revelation 20:10—“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

If you will read Exodus 21:6, you will find that “for ever” may mean only as long as a man lives. Jonah said that he was shut up in the great fish and “the earth with her bars was about me for ever” (*Jonah 2:6*). Yet he was in this strange abode only three short days.

It is perfectly plain that the wicked are going to be completely destroyed. This will be the second death. At the first death, the wicked went into the grave. The second death marks the end of the sinner, the end of death, and the end of the grave. God is forever through with sin, sinners, death, and the grave. Those who suffer the second death will be destroyed by eternal fire. Jesus declared, “These shall go away into everlasting punishment” (*Matthew 25:46*). Notice it does not say “punishing,” but “punishment” and has reference to the result rather than to the method.

7 - WHAT IS THE MEANING OF “EVERLASTING” FIRE?

Everlasting, or eternal, fire is fire that God uses to destroy everlastingly the enemies of His truth.

Matthew 25:41—“Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

Sodom and Gomorrah are given in the Scriptures as an example of this fire.

“Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire” (*Jude 7*).

Don't forget that these cities were burned to ashes.

2 Peter 2:6—“And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.”

This is the kind of “everlasting punishment” the wicked receive.

Matthew 25:46—“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

This fire is also called “unquenchable fire.”

Mark 9:43-44—“And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

Jerusalem was destroyed by such a fire.

Jeremiah 17:27—“But if ye will not hearken unto Me to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched” (*Jeremiah 52:12-13*).

This fire is called unquenchable. This word simply indicates that no power will quench the fire until it has consumed everything, just as you have read in your lesson. Jerusalem is not burning today. Yet God said it would be destroyed by a fire, “and it shall not be quenched.” It was not quenched, but burned everything up and burned out. So shall the wicked be destroyed.

The “worm” is a symbol of complete and final destruction. In the Valley of Hinnom, the worms consumed what the fire did not destroy.

8 - WHEN AND WHERE WILL THE WICKED BURN IN HELL?

Peter tells us the wicked are reserved to the day of judgment to be punished.

2 Peter 2:9—“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished” (*Proverbs 11:31*).

The earth will become, temporarily, a fiery hell.

2 Peter 3:7—“But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”

Keep in mind that this happens at the end of the millennium, after the wicked dead are raised.

Revelation 20:5—“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.”

Revelation 20:9—“Fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.”

So complete will be the destruction, that the wicked will be as though they had not been.

Obadiah 16—“For as ye have drunk upon My holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.”

Psalms 37:10—“For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.”

Then God will make a glorious new earth.

2 Peter 3:13—“Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

9 - HOW CAN WE ESCAPE DESTRUCTION AND HAVE ETERNAL LIFE?

Let us fully accept Christ and be diligent to be without spot of sin.

2 Peter 3:14—“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

God will write our names in His book. And no one whose name is retained there after the judgment will be destroyed by fire (*Revelation 21:8; 22:15*).

Revelation 20:15—“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

God never intended that any man should ever suffer in hell. It is “prepared for the devil and his angels” (*Matthew 25:41*). God wishes us to have a home with Him forever and ever. Christ died that we might inherit a home with Him. It is by His mercies that we receive this rich reward. His second coming will soon open the literal gates of heaven to receive the redeemed. Is it not all wonderful? Let us praise God for the glorious plan of salvation!

The next lesson deals with a topic of special importance in our daily lives: “The Bible and Better Health.” This is subject you will want to carefully study. All of us want better health.

Brief Review Questions —

Where do all men go at death?

When will the dead come out of the grave?

Where will the incorrigibly wicked finally be cast?

How long do the wicked suffer in hellfire, before they no longer exist?

How can we escape destruction and live forever with Christ?

ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

“The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). While life is the inheritance of the righteous, death is the portion of the wicked. Moses declared to Israel: ‘I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil’ (Deuteronomy 30:15). The death referred to in these Scriptures is not that pronounced upon Adam, for all mankind suffer the penalty of his transgression. It is ‘the second death’ that is placed in contrast with everlasting life.

“In consequence of Adam’s sin, death passed upon the whole human race. All alike go down into the grave. And through the provisions of the plan of salvation, all are to be brought forth from their graves. ‘There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust’; ‘for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive’ (Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:22). But a distinction is made between the two classes that are brought forth. ‘All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation’ (John 5:28, 29). They who have been ‘accounted worthy’ of the resurrection of life are ‘blessed and holy.’ ‘On such the second death hath no power’ Revelation 20:6). But those who have not, through repentance and faith, secured pardon, must receive the penalty of transgression—‘the wages of sin.’ They suffer punishment varying in duration and intensity, ‘according to their works,’ but finally ending in the second death. Since it is impossible for God, consistently with His justice and mercy, to save the sinner in his sins, He deprives him of the existence which his transgressions have forfeited and of which he has proved himself unworthy. Says an inspired writer: ‘Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.’ And another declares: ‘They shall be as though they had not been’ (Psalm 37:10; Obadiah 16). Covered with infamy, they sink into hopeless, eternal oblivion.

“Thus will be made an end of sin, with all the woe and ruin which have resulted from it. Says the psalmist: ‘Thou hast destroyed the wicked, Thou hast put out their name forever and ever. O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end’ (Psalm 9:5, 6). John, in the Revelation, looking forward to the eternal state, hears a universal anthem of praise undisturbed by one note of discord. Every creature in heaven and earth was heard ascribing glory to God (Revelation 5:13). There will then be no lost souls to blaspheme God as they writhe in never-ending torment; no wretched beings in hell will mingle their shrieks with the songs of the saved.

“Upon the fundamental error of natural immortality rests the doctrine of consciousness in death—a doctrine, like eternal torment, opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures, to the dictates of reason, and to our feelings of humanity.”

—*Great Controversy, 544-545*

Eternal Life in Christ

1 - WHERE DO ALL MEN GO AT DEATH?

- 1. The dead go into the house of death, appointed to all living.**
Job 30:23—"For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for _____ living."
- 2. This house is the grave (sheol).**
Job 17:13—"If I wait, the _____ is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness."
- 3. This grave is hades in the Greek New Testament.**
1 Corinthians 15:55—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (See margin.)
- 4. Hades is translated "hell" in Acts 2:27, 31, meaning the "grave."**
Acts 2:27, 31—"Because Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."
"He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption."
- 5. The spirit (breath of life) of all men goes to God at death.**
Ecclesiastes 12:7—"Then shall the dust _____ to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

2 - WHERE WILL THE WICKED AND HELL (THE GRAVE) BE CAST?

Revelation 20:14-15—"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the _____ death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

3 - WILL THE WHOLE MAN BE CAST INTO THIS FIRE?

Matthew 10:28—"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather _____ him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

4 - HOW LONG WILL THE WICKED BURN?

- 1. Until body and soul are destroyed.**
Matthew 10:28—"But rather fear him which is able to destroy _____ soul and body in hell."
- 2. Until neither root nor branch is left.**
Malachi 4:1—"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall _____ _____."

saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.”

3. Until they are devoured—the “second death.”

Revelation 20:9, 14—“And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and _____ them . . . And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.”

Revelation 20:10—“And the devil that _____ them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

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Matthew 25:46—“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the _____ into life eternal.”

Mark 9:43-44—“And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

Jeremiah 17:27—“But if ye will not hearken unto Me to _____ the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched” (*Jeremiah 52:12-13*).

6 - WHEN AND WHERE WILL THE WICKED BURN IN HELL?

2 Peter 2:9 (*Proverbs 11:31*); **2 Peter 3:7**; **Revelation 20:5**; **Revelation 20:9**; **Obadiah 16**; **Psalm 37:10**; **2 Peter 3:13**.

7 - HOW CAN WE ESCAPE DESTRUCTION AND HAVE ETERNAL LIFE?

2 Peter 3:14; **Revelation 20:15**.

What the Bible says about – The Bible and Better Health

SCRIPTURE READING:
JOHN 5:1-16
2 CORINTHIANS 12:7-10

God created man with good health. It was never His intention that any man, woman, or child should be sick, languish in pain, suffer, or die. Doubting God's love and disbelieving His word led Eve to reject God's authority. Death was the result. Let no man be deceived into thinking that sin, sickness, sorrow, suffering, and death are but the figments of human imagination. They are very real and should be faced realistically. Only the remedy provided by God can cure permanently! Let us look now at God's cure for (1) sin, (2) death, and (3) sickness.

1 - WHAT IS GOD'S PROVISION FOR SIN AND DEATH?

Christ redeems us from the curse (*Galatians 3:13*) by giving us grace to walk in the newness of life (*Romans 6:4*). When Jesus took the sinner's place, His blood atoned for man's sin, but man "must be born again" and grow up "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (*Ephesians 4:13*). Christians must be "Christianized." This is the function of the Spirit working within the Christian. God also provides a way of escape from death. Since Christ died for us (*Romans 5:8*), we need not perish in the final conflagration. Although the gospel does not save us from the first death, Christ does save us from the second death (*Revelation 20:6*).

Ezekiel 33:11—"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live."

John 3:16—"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

It is the privilege of every reader of these lines to escape the second death. If you have not yet made this surrender, will you not kneel right now and offer this simple prayer to God?

Psalms 51:10—"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

2 - WHAT PROVISION IS MADE FOR SICKNESS?

Remember, now, God wants us to enjoy good health. He is not the

cause of sickness or death, and should not be blamed for either.

3 John 2—“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”

Lamentations 3:33—“He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.”

He does bring good out of our afflictions if we let Him.

Hebrews 12:11—“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”

We must always remember that Satan often afflicts men. Men also bring suffering upon themselves by sinning against the laws of the body. “Whosoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (*Galatians 6:7*). We need also to be reminded that some are born with a richer heritage of health than others. The sins of our forefathers are felt by us—as the law of God says, “visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation” (*Exodus 20:5*).

Remember, too, that God has the power to heal our diseases. We read in Psalm 103:3: “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.” Sickness, suffering, and death are the common lot of all. Our own violation of God’s moral and physical laws increases our difficulties and hastens death. Yet, in mercy, God heals us. At times God heals supernaturally. When Jesus was on earth He often left an entire village without one sick person, one body wracked with pain, one blind eye, one deaf ear, one stammering tongue, or one lone cripple in it. He has the same healing power today. We will discuss this more fully later. The healing processes of nature are also of God. And the more we learn of the intricate workings of the infinite God as revealed in these human bodies of ours, the more fully do we understand that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made,” and that within us are the forces of God combining to fight against disease (*Psalms 139:13-18*).

3 - DOES GOD HEAL ALL THE SICK?

To the question “Does God heal all the sick?” we must answer, No.” We know that He could (*Psalms 103:3*), but we know also that He does not always deem it best. In fact, only those true Christians who live to see Christ come and who are translated to heaven will escape the first death. Remember the following: Jesus can heal. He healed Peter’s mother-in-law (*Matthew 8:14-15*). But Paul was not healed (*2 Corinthians 12:7-9*). Therefore, continued sickness need not be a sign of weak faith or a lack of Christian experience. It is more important for the sick to trust God than to be healed. He who makes bodily healing the first of all desires may be deceived. Satan is on the alert to catch in his snare those who will do anything but make the will of God first in their lives. There are many false cures wrought for those who go to charlatans and

false healers for the benefits they seek.

4 - ARE MIRACLES A TEST OF TRUE RELIGION?

We repeat, Jesus worked many miracles while here on earth (see Matthew 9 for several examples), but He warned us against wonder workers. Listen to these words:

Matthew 24:24—“There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”

The Word of God is the only standard by which all religions should be tested.

Isaiah 8:20—“To the law and to the testimony: If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.”

There are three reasons why it is wholly unsafe to make miracles a test of true religion. First: The miracle worker himself may be false. Satan is a miracle worker. He transforms himself into an angel of light. “Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness” (2 Corinthians 11:15). Jesus said there would be many in the last days. Second: There may be healing without salvation, as in the case of the ten lepers cleansed by Jesus (Luke 17:12-19). Only one returned to give glory to God. To him Jesus said, “Thy faith hath made thee whole.” He received soul healing also, but the other nine did not.

Third: There may be salvation without healing, as witnessed in the case of Paul, already mentioned. God knew that in the last days people would judge truth by miracles, and that they would be deceived thereby. Therefore, Jesus gave His urgent warning. But notice carefully—there is a plan for all to follow who seek healing.

5 - WHAT PLAN SHOULD BE FOLLOWED IN PRAYER FOR THE SICK?

1. Confess all faults and sins, and call for the elders to pray and anoint the sick one.

James 5:14-16—“Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

2. Have faith to submit the will to God’s will, whatever His will may be (Matthew 26:42).

This is simple and clear. We confess faults one to another, pray one for another, and are anointed. We confess our sins to God. The results we leave with Him, saying, "All things work together for good to them that love God" (*Romans 8:28*). It is perfectly proper and consistent to seek sound medical advice from a good physician after such prayers have been offered. But there is another step, as we shall see.

6 - WHY SHOULD WE OBEY PHYSICAL LAWS?

In answer to this question, note these four points:

1. We owe it to ourselves.

A man may drive his car hard. But he gives it good care. He has it greased regularly; he keeps the oil at the proper level and changed when necessary. He uses the best gas and oil he can afford to buy, and keeps the tires inflated. He accepts the fact that the builders of the car perhaps know more about the care of the car than he does, and so he follows the manufacturer's instructions. We owe it to ourselves to treat our bodies with equal intelligence. Cars can have new parts put in, but with our bodies this is not always true. Remember the words of Henry Ford, "When a man dies a part wears out." Take care of your body, and it will take care of you.

2. We owe it to our families and to society.

Every man and woman owes it to his home and to his children who are dependent upon him to live just as long and as well as possible. The possession of the gift of life carries with it the high responsibility to live and contribute of our talents to the good of the race.

3. We owe it to God, who made our bodies the temple of His Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20—"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (*Romans 12:1*).

To God, the Creator, in whom "we live and have our being" (*Acts 17:28*), we shall render an account of the use made of life and its countless blessings and opportunities. And our bodies are the temples of His Spirit. All His laws are for our good. Obedience to them brings the greatest good to us and to others, and brings honor to God.

4. If we defile our bodies, God will destroy us.

1 Corinthians 3:17—"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

We really destroy ourselves. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but

in Me is thine help" (*Hosea 13:9*). If we have been defiling our bodies, God will forgive us and help us to get the victory. As a captive in ancient Babylon, "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank" (*Daniel 1:8*). We should also purpose to abstain from vice and intemperance of all kinds.

7 - WHAT ARE THE MAIN ESSENTIALS OF GOOD HEALTH?

This question may be answered as follows:

"Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power—these are the true remedies" (*Ministry of Healing, 127*).

Outdoor life in the sunshine, fresh air, exercising every day is the best life. This means rural living, of course. But if this is not possible, city living may be improved healthwise by following these simple rules:

1. Trust in God and keep a cheerful spirit.
2. Get outdoors for at least an hour every day, for a good walk.
3. Breathe deeply and naturally, filling the lungs with pure, fresh air.
4. Don't be afraid of a moderate amount of sunshine.
5. Eat regularly, not between meals, of fruits, vegetables, nuts, grains, and wholesome protein foods. Avoid rich desserts.
6. Bathe daily and drink a couple of glasses of water early in the morning, with one or two between meals.
7. Sleep seven to nine hours, every night, on a good bed.
8. Be moderate. Never indulge your appetite.

Following simple rules like these is just as much a part of good religion as is going to prayer meeting.

8 - WHAT SPECIAL INSTRUCTION IS GIVEN ON EATING AND DRINKING?

In the beginning God gave Adam fruits, nuts, grains, and vegetables to eat.

Genesis 1:29—"God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."

Genesis 3:18—"Thou shalt eat the herb of the field."

God, who made man, originally gave him what we would call a vegetarian diet. Man's intestinal tract is built for that kind of diet. Up until the time of the Flood, no permission was granted for flesh eating. Men lived as long as 969 years (*Genesis 5:27*).

After the Flood, Noah was permitted to eat flesh (*Genesis 9:3-5*). But he knew the difference between clean and unclean meats. Read *Genesis 7:2; 8:20*. In Moses' day, this distinction was put into writing (*Leviticus 11*). When, after the Flood, meat eating was permitted, man's life span rapidly declined; so that, by the time we reach the time of Abraham, we find that patriarch passed away at the age of 175 (*Genesis 25:7*). But unclean meats were never permitted.

The distinction between clean and unclean meats was not of Jewish origin. God gave the commandments covering it, and Noah knew of God's instruction centuries before Abraham was born.

Pork eating is a prolific cause of the disease, trichinosis. Tiny parasites enter the human system and infest the body until death results. Dr. Maurice Hall says that about one in every seven Americans probably has it. There are at least forty diseases one may think he has which may be mistaken for the real disease, trichinosis. Don't let anybody lead you to believe that Jesus Christ made hogs clean. The swine is not ceremonially unclean, but physically unclean and unfit for food.

Strong drink should not be used by the Christian.

Proverbs 20:1—"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (*Proverbs 23:29-32*).

Fermented wines and strong drink are certainly condemned in God's Word. Alcohol deceives. It makes a man think he is wise when he is foolish, sober when he is drunk, strong when he is weak. Alcohol is a poison. We should eat for strength, not drunkenness (*Ecclesiastes 10:17*). Coffee contains a poison, caffeine. Tea has caffeine and tannic acid. One physician said, "We are a nation of tea and coffee drunkards." The Christian should study carefully the matter of his eating and drinking.

All filthy habits should be discarded by the followers of Jesus.

2 Corinthians 7:1—"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Tobacco contains a narcotic poison, nicotine. The cigarette is the worst form in which to use tobacco—though all forms are harmful. The relationship between cigarette smoking and cancer of the lungs has now been established. Tobacco, injurious to the body and mind, is a waste of money and a filthy, breath-fouling, enslaving habit. God commands us to be separate from the world and "touch not the unclean thing" (*2 Corinthians 6:17*). "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh" (*2 Corinthians 7:1*).

The amount of money spent for tobacco and liquor is about ten times the amount of contributions for religious work. This fact alone should cause every Christian to lay aside these two evils. "Wherefore do ye

spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not" (*Isaiah 55:2*)? Let us glorify God in our body. This is one sure way to build a highway to health and happiness.

9 - HOW CAN ONE LIVE A TRULY TEMPERATE LIFE?

Evil habits may be broken off and right habits established to take their place. This can be done by the grace of Christ and the exercise of our own will. We should come to Him, lay all our evil practices at His feet, and cooperate with Him in a new and abundant way of living. All God's biddings are enablings. Here are the words of Paul:

1 Corinthians 9:25-27—"Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached, to others, I myself should be a castaway."

Philippians 4:13—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Philippians 3:13:14—"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

If you wish special reading matter on the subjects of alcohol, tobacco, or on the topic of diet, we shall be glad to refer you to inexpensive helps.

God bless you, dear friend, as you now plant your feet upon this beautiful highway to good health and happiness.

The next lesson, "Living in Christ," is a topic which will encourage you in the pathway of Christian life and growth.

Brief Review Questions —

Does our kind heavenly Father want us to be healthy?

Has He told us in the Bible how we can live healthier lives?

THE BIBLE AND BETTER HEALTH**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

“The sanctification set forth in the Scriptures embraces the entire being—spirit, soul, and body. Paul prayed for the Thessalonians that their ‘whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Again he writes to believers: ‘I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God’ (Romans 12:1). In the time of ancient Israel every offering brought as a sacrifice to God was carefully examined. If any defect was discovered in the animal presented, it was refused; for God had commanded that the offering be ‘without blemish.’ So Christians are bidden to present their bodies, ‘a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.’ In order to do this, all their powers must be preserved in the best possible condition. Every practice that weakens physical or mental strength unfits man for the service of his Creator. And will God be pleased with anything less than the best we can offer? Said Christ: ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.’ Those who do love God with all the heart will desire to give Him the best service of their life, and they will be constantly seeking to bring every power of their being into harmony with the laws that will promote their ability to do His will. They will not, by the indulgence of appetite or passion, enfeeble or defile the offering which they present to their heavenly Father.

“Peter says: ‘Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul’ (1 Peter 2:11). Every sinful gratification tends to benumb the faculties and deaden the mental and spiritual perceptions, and the Word or the Spirit of God can make but a feeble impression upon the heart. Paul writes to the Corinthians: ‘Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God’ (2 Corinthians 7:1). And with the fruits of the Spirit—“love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness”—he classes ‘temperance’ (Galatians 5:22, 23) . .

“ ‘Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s’ (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). He whose body is the temple of the Holy Spirit will not be enslaved by a pernicious habit. His powers belong to Christ, who has bought him with the price of blood. His property is the Lord’s. How could he be guiltless in squandering this entrusted capital? Professed Christians yearly expend an immense sum upon useless and pernicious indulgences, while souls are perishing for the Word of life . .

“To those who comply with the conditions, ‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate . . and touch not the unclean,’ God’s promise is, ‘I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty’ (2 Corinthians 6:17, 18).”

—*Great Controversy, 473-475*

The Bible and Better Health

1 - WHAT IS GOD'S PROVISION FOR SIN AND DEATH?

Ezekiel 33:11—"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the _____ of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (*John 3:16; Psalm 51:10*).

2 - WHAT PROVISION IS MADE FOR SICKNESS?

3 John 2—"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in _____, even as thy soul prospereth."

Lamentations 3:33—"He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men."

Hebrews 12:11—"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

3 - ARE MIRACLES A TEST OF TRUE RELIGION?

Matthew 24:24—"There shall arise false _____, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

Isaiah 8:20—"To the law and to the testimony: If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is _____ light in them."

4 - WHAT PLAN SHOULD BE FOLLOWED IN PRAYER FOR THE SICK?

1. Confess all faults and sins, and call for the elders to pray and anoint the sick one.

James 5:14-16—"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them _____ over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

2. Have faith to submit the will to God's will, whatever His will may be (*Matthew 26:42*).

5 - WHY SHOULD WE OBEY PHYSICAL LAWS?

1. We owe it to ourselves and our families, but especially to God, who made our bodies the temple of His Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20—"Know ye not that your body is the tem-

ple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? for ye are _____ with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (*Romans 12:1*).

2. If we defile our bodies, God will destroy us.

1 Corinthians 3:17—"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

6 - WHAT SPECIAL INSTRUCTION IS GIVEN ON EATING AND DRINKING?

Genesis 1:29—"God said, Behold, I have given you every _____ bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." **Genesis 3:18**—"Thou shalt eat the herb of the field." **Proverbs 20:1**—"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (*Proverbs 23:29-32*). **2 Corinthians 7:1**—"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

7 - HOW CAN ONE LIVE A TRULY TEMPERATE LIFE?

1 Corinthians 9:25-27—"Every man that striveth for the mastery is _____ in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached, to others, I myself should be a castaway."

Philippians 4:13—"I can do _____ things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Philippians 3:13-14—"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and _____ forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the _____ of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

What the Bible says about – Living in Christ

SCRIPTURE READING:
JOHN 15:1-11
EPHESIANS 1:1-8

One evening a student asked Phillip Brooks a serious question: “Is conscious personal fellowship with Jesus Christ a part of Christianity?” The great preacher replied decisively: “It is Christianity—personal fellowship with Jesus Christ is Christianity. That is what differentiates the religion of the Bible from all others. A man is a Christian so far as he knows Jesus Christ.”

This agrees with the words of Christ who said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent” (*John 17:3*).

When a person knows Christ and is truly converted—when he repents of his sins, confesses them to God, and trusts in the merits of Christ for salvation—something very definite happens in his life. He is a different man. The apostle Paul explains what happens to the one who goes through this experience:

Galatians 2:20—“I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

By this figure, Paul wishes to teach that the old life has been crucified and buried and that a new life has begun. And that life is Christ’s life—“Christ liveth in me.” And of course the kind of life that Christ will live in the new believer is quite different from the sinful life of the unconverted man. In this lesson, we shall let the Scriptures answer many pointed questions about the new life. So follow the questions and Bible answers very closely.

1 - CHRIST LIVES IN US BY HIS SPIRIT

1. What did Christ promise His disciples just before He returned to heaven?

John 14:16-17—“I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth.”

2. What is to be the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the

believer?

John 14:17—"Ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

1 John 3:24—"He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us." ○

Here is the explanation of a great mystery. Christ dwells in us by His Holy Spirit.

3. How will the Holy Spirit help us in the study of God's Word?

John 14:26—"The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 16:13—"When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth."

John 17:17—"Thy Word is truth."

4. How does the indwelling of the Spirit affect the character?

Ephesians 3:14, 16-19—"I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." ○

Our prayer should be, "Lord, fulfill Thy promise and send Thy Spirit to dwell in my heart" (*Acts 2:37-39*).

2 - THE CLOSENESS OF FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS

1. With what plant did God compare His people in Old Testament times?

Psalm 80:8—"Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it."

Jeremiah 2:21—"I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto Me?" ○

The figure of Israel as the vine of God, the planting of the Lord, was a choice topic of meditation and study with the Jews.

2. Whom did Christ say was the true vine?

John 15:1—"I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman."

3. What spiritual lesson did Christ draw from the vine?

John 15:4-5—"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing."

Our abiding in Christ and Christ's abiding in us represent a close personal union between Christ and His followers, a union as close as a branch merged in the parent stock of the vine.

One writer has said, "Do you ask, 'How am I to abide in Christ?'—In the same way as you received Him at first."

Colossians 2:6—"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him."

Hebrews 10:38—"The just shall live by faith."

"You gave yourself to God, to be His wholly, to serve and obey Him; and You took Christ as your Saviour. You could not yourself atone for your sins or change your heart; but having given yourself to God, you believed that He, for Christ's sake, did all this for you. By faith you became Christ's, and by faith you are to grow up in Him,—by giving and taking. You are to give all,—your heart, your will, your service,—give yourself to Him to obey all His requirements. You must take all—Christ, the fullness of all blessing to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your everlasting helper,—to give you power to obey" (*Steps to Christ*, 69-70).

4. Since Christ dwells in us by His Holy Spirit, what fruit may we expect in our lives?

Galatians 5:22-25—"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law . . . If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

5. If we walk in the Spirit, what things will we not do?

Galatians 5:16, 19-21—"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh . . . Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before as I have also told you in time past, that they which

do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

6. What other fruits, besides the graces of the Spirit, will be seen in the lives of those who truly receive the Holy Spirit in their hearts?

Acts 1:8—“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

The forgiveness of sins that are past and the entrance of the Holy Spirit into the heart, to produce the blessed fruits of righteousness, are such wonderful experiences that the true Christian cannot refrain from telling others of the salvation he enjoys. And the very telling of the story produces new Christians, for the Word of God will not return unto Him void. And so the Christian bears fruit in the precious souls who are saved through the influence of his life and work.

3 - DAILY SPIRITUAL FOOD FOR THE CHRISTIAN

1. What spiritual lesson did God seek to teach the Israelites in the giving of the manna?

Deuteronomy 8:3—“He [God] humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.”

2. How did the prophets amplify this figure of living by God's Word?

Jeremiah 15:16—“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart” (*Ezekiel 2:8-10; 3:1-3*).

That which is eaten becomes a part of the very being. Thus, when we eat God's Word, we make it a part of ourselves.

3. What application did Jesus make of the giving of the manna?

John 6:35—“I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.”

John 6:48-51—“I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

4. When the Jews pretended to take His words literally, how did Christ emphasize His teaching?

John 6:53, 55—“Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you . . . For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.”

“To eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ is to receive Him as a personal Saviour, believing that He forgives our sins, and that we are complete in Him. It is by beholding His love, by dwelling upon it, by drinking it in that we are to become partakers of His nature. What food is to the body, Christ must be to the soul” (*Desire of Ages*, 389).

5. How did Christ explain this to His disciples privately?

John 6:63—“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

The literary and cultural power of the words of Christ are tremendous, but the real power of His Word is in the producing of a transformed life. Speaking of the effect of the Bible upon the English people in a past generation, J. R. Green said, “The whole temper of the nation felt the change . . . A new conception of life, a new moral and religious pulse, spread through every class.” This transforming power is the power of God, which operates through the life-giving Word (*1 Peter 1:2-25*).

6. In His model prayer, what did Christ teach us to ask?

“Give us this day our daily bread” (*Matthew 6:11*). In the light of His later teaching, as recorded in John 6, it is evident that Christ intended to include spiritual as well as physical food in this request. As we must eat physical food every day in order to maintain health and strength, so we must partake each day of the spiritual food, provided in God’s Word, if we expect to maintain a living connection with Christ, who is the living Word (*John 1:1-3, 14*).

4 - LIVING THE LIFE OF VICTORY

1. In His prayer for the disciples just before His crucifixion, how did Christ reveal the secret of victory?

John 17:17—“Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth.”

Knowledge of God and His truth is progressive. We are sanctified, or made holy, as we daily trust God’s promises and obey the commandments of the Scriptures. The work of making us holy is God’s work. But our business is to trust and obey the Lord! The limitations of the human mind make it impossible for a man to grasp all truth at once. He must learn day by day, here a little, there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept (*Isaiah 28:10, 13*).

When a man is converted he may know very little of the Christian life. He knows the “first principles” “of the doctrine of Christ,” the “foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God” (*Hebrews 5:12; 6:1*), but he may know very little else. If he opens his heart to the Holy Spirit and studies the Word, he will be led into all truth—all truth that is necessary for his salvation and living of the Christian life. And as Christ indicates in His prayer, the Christian will find this truth in the Word of God. Peter makes this clear by saying:

1 Peter 2:2-3—“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”

2. As the Christian partakes of God’s Word, in what should he grow?

2 Peter 3:18—“Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Grace is the unmerited favor and love of God. It is His power at work in the yielded life. We are to experience this transforming power every day. And no other means of grace is more effective in changing the life than the daily reading of God’s Word.

3. With what has God endowed every man?

Romans 12:3—“God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”

Faith, wonderful faith. How much we all need it! “By grace are ye saved through faith,” said Paul (*Ephesians 2:8*). Faith is simply trusting God, believing that His way is best for us, accepting His Word when in temptation we are inclined to doubt and hedge. Faith we shall need every step of the journey from earth to our mansions in the waiting glory land!

4. Beginning with this foundation, how does the Christian develop character?

2 Peter 1:5-8—“Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Scriptures make the secret of victory clear. Sanctification, or the process of making us Christlike, is a progressive work which starts when a person accepts Christ and continues as long as life lasts. It takes time to develop a Christian character—all the time there is. Each one is therefore challenged to use, to the full, every opportunity that is offered him

to acquire the Christian graces—the study of God’s Word, prayer, association with other Christians, attendance at church. Sabbath observance, morning and evening worship in the home, the reading of Christian literature, and witnessing to others of what God has done for him. And through it all, God’s work is to transform us. He it is who saves. Never forget this!

5. What should be the attitude of the follower of Christ as he walks the Christian pathway?

Philippians 3:8, 10-14—“I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord . . . that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

The next lesson in this set of Bible lessons is “Satan’s War against the Church.” It is a study in the history of the Christian church for over a thousand years—and yet all is based on one special chapter in the Bible.

Brief Review Questions —

Christ is the Vine, and what does He want us to be?

What does it mean to partake of Christ, the Bread of Life?

Does the Bible teach that we can be overcomers, and have victory in our lives?

LIVING IN CHRIST**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

“God does not require us to give up anything that it is for our best interest to retain. In all that He does, He has the well-being of His children in view. Would that all who have not chosen Christ might realize that He has something vastly better to offer them than they are seeking for themselves. Man is doing the greatest injury and injustice to his own soul when he thinks and acts contrary to the will of God . . .

“It is a mistake to entertain the thought that God is pleased to see His children suffer. All heaven is interested in the happiness of man. Our heavenly Father does not close the avenues of joy to any of His creatures. The divine requirements call upon us to shun those indulgences that would bring suffering and disappointment, that would close to us the door of happiness and heaven. The world’s Redeemer accepts men as they are, with all their wants, imperfections, and weaknesses; and He will not only cleanse from sin and grant redemption through His blood, but will satisfy the heart-longing of all who consent to wear His yoke, to bear His burden . . .

“Many are inquiring, ‘How am I to make the surrender of myself to God?’ You desire to give yourself to Him, but you are weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and controlled by the habits of your life of sin. Your promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand. You cannot control your thoughts, your impulses, your affections. The knowledge of your broken promises and forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in your own sincerity, and causes you to feel that God cannot accept you; but you need not despair. What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him.

“Desires for goodness and holiness are right as far as they go; but if you stop here, they will avail nothing. Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians. They do not come to the point of yielding the will to God. They do not now choose to be Christians.

“Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally yourself with the power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God you will be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith.”

—*Steps to Christ, 46-48*

Living in Christ

1 - CHRIST LIVES IN US BY HIS SPIRIT

1. What did Christ promise His disciples just before He returned to heaven?

John 14:16-17—"I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of _____."

2. What is to be the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the believer?

John 14:17—"Ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." **1 John 3:24**—"He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us."

3. How will the Holy Spirit help us in the study of God's Word?

John 14:26—"The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in _____ name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." **John 16:13**—"When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." **John 17:17**—"Thy Word is truth."

4. How does the indwelling of the Spirit affect the character? *Ephesians 3:14, 16-19.*

2 - THE CLOSENESS OF FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS

1. Whom did Christ say was the true vine?

John 15:1—"I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman" (**John 15:4-5**). **Colossians 2:6**—"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so _____ ye in Him."

2. Since Christ dwells in us by His Holy Spirit, what fruit may we expect in our lives?

Galatians 5:22-25—"The _____ of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law . . . If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

3. If we walk in the Spirit, what things will we not do?

Galatians 5:16, 19-21—"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the _____ of the flesh . . ."

3 - DAILY SPIRITUAL FOOD FOR THE CHRISTIAN

What spiritual lesson did God seek to teach the Israelites in the giving of the manna? *Deuteronomy 8:3; Jeremiah 15:16* (*Ezekiel 2:8-10; 3:1-3*); *John 6:35; John 6:48-51*.

4 - LIVING THE LIFE OF VICTORY

1. In His prayer for the disciples just before His crucifixion, how did Christ reveal the secret of victory?

John 17:17—“Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth” (***1 Peter 2:2-3***).

2. As the Christian partakes of God’s Word, in what should he grow?

2 Peter 3:18—“Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

3. With what has God endowed every man?

Romans 12:3—“God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”

4. Beginning with this foundation, how does the Christian develop character?

2 Peter 1:5-8—“Giving all diligence, add to your faith _____; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and _____, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

5. What should be the attitude of the follower of Christ as he walks the Christian pathway?

Philippians 3:8, 10-14—“I count _____ things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord . . . that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the _____ of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

What the Bible says about – Satan's War against the Church

SCRIPTURE READING: REVELATION 12

In the prophecy of Daniel 7, we found pagan Rome represented by a “dreadful and terrible” beast with ten horns. You will recall that, among the ten horns there came up a “little horn,” which symbolized papal Rome.

In the twelfth chapter of Revelation we find Satan working through both pagan and papal Rome to make war against God's Son, God's people, and God's law. Let us familiarize ourselves with the characters of this prophecy, for we are now living in the hour of final fulfillment!

1 - WHO IS REPRESENTED BY THE WOMAN WITH THE SUN, MOON, AND TWELVE STARS?

Revelation 12:1—“There appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.”

A number of times in the Bible God uses a woman to symbolize the church.

Hosea 2:19—“I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness and in mercies.”

Isaiah 62:5—“As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.”

This woman of Revelation is clothed with the sun-symbol of the gospel light of the pure church.

Notice also that a corrupt woman symbolizes a corrupt church.

Ezekiel 23:2-4—“Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother: and they committed whoredoms in Egypt; they committed whoredoms in their youth: there were their breasts pressed, and there they bruised the teats of their virginity. And the names of them were Aholah the elder, and Aholibah her sister: and they were Mine, and they bare sons and daughters. Thus were their names; Samaria is Aholah, and Jerusalem Aholibah” (*Revelation 17:3, 6, 15-16*).

Another text or two might be quoted to show that a pure woman sym-

bolizes the true church:

Jeremiah 6:2—"I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman."

2 Corinthians 11:2—"I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

So this woman, in Revelation 12:1, undoubtedly represents the true church; whereas the sun aptly represents the gospel and the glory of the church established by Christ.

The moon symbolizes the types and shadows of the Old Testament, which passed away when the full gospel sun arose upon the earth. And the twelve stars suggest the twelve tribes and the twelve apostles.

The Old Testament days had their glory of types and shadows and the glory of the majesty of law. This glory of Judaism was as the shining of the moon. But love and grace and the Spirit of God, as revealed in Christ and the New Testament, are like the shining of the sun. Justice is deep and abiding, but love and mercy are warm, kind, and gracious. Their rays bring life and light, and warm the heart with an overwhelming desire to do the will of God and keep His commandments.

2 - WHO WAS THE MAN-CHILD BORN TO THE WOMAN?

The man-child born to the woman was Christ. He it is who is destined to rule with a rod of iron.

Revelation 12:5—"She brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron."

Psalms 2:7-9—"The Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

The man-child was caught up to God's throne. Even so, Jesus, after His victory over sin and death, ascended to His Father's throne.

Revelation 12:5—"And her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne."

Ephesians 1:20-21—"Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

That this child is Christ would seem to be no question. He is to rule

with a rod of iron. Of Christ it is said:

Revelation 2:27—“He shall rule them with a rod of iron.”

He was to be caught up to God’s throne.

Hebrews 8:1—“We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.”

3 - WHAT WAS MEANT BY THE GREAT RED DRAGON?

Revelation 12:3-4—“There appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And His tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”

Satan, the “great dragon” and “that old serpent” (*Revelation 12:9*) worked against Christ and the church through pagan, or heathen, Rome. This was the legally constituted power that became the tool for the “devouring” of the man-child. Of pagan Rome we read in *Daniel 8:25*, “He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes.” As a general rule, we find the nations of earth brought to view in the Bible when they have some connection with God’s work and people. The “third part of the stars of heaven” are the angels who were “cast . . . to the earth” when Lucifer was thrust out of heaven (*Revelation 12:7-9*). Observe carefully the following points:

1. The dragon had ten horns, as did the dreadful beast of *Daniel 7*. This represents the ten divisions of pagan Rome.
2. The dragon was a common symbol of old Roman ensigns.
3. Rome, under Augustus, brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem to enroll for taxation, and there Jesus was born (*Luke 2:1-5, 11*).
4. Rome, through King Herod, tried to destroy Christ as a babe (*Matthew 2:3-18*).
5. Rome, under Pilate, put Christ to death.
6. The tomb of Jesus was sealed with a Roman seal (*Matthew 27:65-66*).
7. The tomb was guarded by a Roman watch, or guard.
8. Thus Satan worked by means of the great red dragon, which was pagan Rome, against the Son of the woman.

4 - WHAT PICTURE IS GIVEN OF WAR IN HEAVEN?

Revelation 12:7-10—“There was war in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found anymore

in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.”

Michael signifies Christ. Notice these three Scriptures:

Jude 9—“Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation.”

1 Thessalonians 4:16—“The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.”

John 5:28—“The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice.”

The voice of the archangel then is the voice of Christ, and Michael is the archangel. Satan, of course, is the “great dragon,” “that old serpent.” So here we have the picture of conflict between Christ and Satan—a conflict that began in heaven and will continue until Satan is destroyed.

W. A. Spicer writes: “This picture of the original conflict in heaven is evidently thrown in here to show the animus of Satan in his warfare against the man-child, the Son of man. They had met before. Jesus was not only Son of man, but He was the eternal Son of God. As Commander of heaven’s hosts, He had expelled Satan and the rebellious angels from heaven.”

When Christ came to earth, Satan assaulted Him. He sought to have Him slain as a babe (*Matthew 2:13-16*). He tried in vain to conquer Him in the wilderness of temptation (*Matthew 4:1-11*). He trailed the Saviour day and night, seeking to lead Him to sin against God’s law or to give up His plan of saving man. Satan did not rest until Jesus was nailed to the cross.

But what seemed to be victory for Satan was actually defeat. Said John:

Revelation 12:10—“Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down.”

Christ’s death was a guarantee that Satan could no longer deceive the inhabitants of heaven or earth. His malice and deceit were unmasked before the universe. Jesus humbled Himself to the death of the cross, but will be exalted “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named” (*Ephesians 1:21*). Satan sought to exalt himself, and was cast down.

At the end of the millennium Satan and his hosts will perish in the lake

of fire after seeking to make an assault on the camp of the saints, the city of God, the New Jerusalem, which descends from heaven. This will be Satan's final defeat, his utter and complete end in ignominious failure. He will be annihilated, and never will he be anymore (*Ezekiel 28:19*).

5 - AGAINST WHOM DOES SATAN DIRECT HIS ATTACKS?

Revelation 12:11-13—"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child."

Satan, having failed to defeat Christ, sensed anew that, not only God, but now time was against him. As John said, "He knoweth that he hath but a short time." Some four thousand years of battle against earth's inhabitants lay behind him, with every passing year bringing him nearer to the day of awful retribution.

In fury Satan turned upon the church—the followers of Jesus. The apostles drank of the cup of sacrifice and martyrdom, as Jesus had predicted. Paganism, Satan's carefully constructed system of error, was now headed by the pagan Roman power. Under the emperors Nero, Domitian, Tarjan, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Maximinus, Decius, Valerian, Aurelian, and Diocletian, the early church suffered the tortures of persecution and the pangs of cruel death. Multitudes sealed their testimony with their blood, "and they loved not their lives unto the death." Not the least of these was the great apostle Paul.

6 - WHAT LONG PERIOD OF TRIAL COMES TO THE CHURCH?

Revelation 12:6—"The woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

Revelation 12:14-16—"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swal-

lowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.”

In an earlier study (on Daniel 7), we learned that a day stands for a year in prophecy. So here we have 1,260 literal years. Read Revelation 12, verses 6 and 14; and note that “time, and times, and half a time” are 1,260 days. In prophetic time, a day stands for a year (*Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6*). This method of interpretation is clearly Biblical.

Numbers 14:34—“After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years.”

Ezekiel 4:6—“When thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.”

The following facts become apparent at once:

The “saints” were persecuted for a time, times, and dividing of time. A time, times, and half a time is the same as 1,260 days, or years (*Revelation 12:14, 6*). It is clear that the woman here represents the church during the same period as the “saints” of Daniel 7:25. This period is the 1,260 years (A.D. 538. to A.D. 1798) of papal Rome’s supremacy, during which papal Rome persecuted the saints. Satan thus persecuted the woman (*Revelation 12:13*) during these dark days. And Satan was more or less successful in his assault on the early church. Persecution is not easy to endure, and popularity is often preferred. When errors began creeping in, the church began to take on the color and complexion of heathen Rome.

James Wharey’s *Sketches of Church History, Century II, sec. VII*, reads: “At the end of the second century, within a little more than one hundred and fifty years after the first preaching of the gospel, it is obvious to remark the changes already introduced into the Christian church. Christianity already began to wear the garb of heathenism.

“Out of this mixture of Judaism, Christianity, and paganism came the papacy, or papal Rome, which persecuted the saints in the centuries following pagan Rome. Satan, having filled the church itself with error, brought about the exaltation of the ‘man of sin’ to rule over even the kings and princes. The long, dismal night of the Dark Ages came and dragged on for century after century. The noonday of the papacy was indeed the midnight of the world.

“The persecution of this 1,260-year period has been touched upon earlier. We shall refrain from discussing the horrors of the torture and the death of its millions of victims. On the illustrious roster of martyrs are such names as Huss, Jerome, Latimer, Cranmer, Tyndale, and many others.

“But the earth helped the woman. She fled into ‘the wilderness’ regions of Europe. In the mountain fastnesses, the Alpine retreats, and the Piedmont valleys, the faithful of God sought refuge.

“Then the New World opened up as an asylum for the persecuted. To this land of liberty, millions have flocked to live free from tyranny and oppression. The power that came up out of the ‘earth’ helped the woman” (*Sketches of Church History, Century II, sec. VII*).

7 - WHAT CONFLICT DEVELOPED BETWEEN THE DRAGON AND THE REMNANT OF THE WOMAN'S SEED?

Revelation 12:17—“The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

At this point let us pause and summarize our lesson by making six simple statements:

1. Satan persecuted Christ through pagan Rome.
2. Then he persecuted the early church through pagan Rome.
3. Next he persecuted the church for 1,260 years through papal Rome.
4. Finally, he “went to make war with the remnant of her seed.”
5. The “remnant” church is the “last” church, in these last days.
6. God’s remnant church may be identified by three characteristics (*Revelation 14:12*).

Let us now concentrate on the meaning of this prophecy to us. As you know, the Protestant Reformation took place during the 1,260-year period (A.D. 538 to A.D. 1798), and it stirred the wrath of Satan deeply; but, as time has gone by, apostasy has been making its inroads into the great Protestant movement. Moreover, the Reformation was unable to eradicate all the errors of the papal system. For example, the man-made change in God’s law was not remedied (*Exodus 20:8-11*). So the arrested reformation is still to be completed.

God has set His hand, in our day, to gather His remnant people. As the remnant of cloth is the last piece from the bolt, so the remnant church is the church of the last days. This church will have the true faith of Jesus and keep God’s commandments—all of them. The hour of God’s judgment has come. The law of God is the standard of that judgment. God’s message of the judgment hour must go to every nation on earth (*Revelation 14:6-7*). A people is being gathered who “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (*Revelation 14:12*).

Satan, knowing that his time now is truly short, is stirred to “make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus” (*Revelation 12:12*). Yet “the Lord knoweth them that are His” (*2 Timothy 2:19*). And “the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations” (*2 Peter 2:9*).

The great lesson of Revelation 12 is that Satan, who was cast out of heaven for his rebellion, wages continuous warfare against Christ,

the Son of God; against God's people; and against the divine law of God. The keeping of the commandments of God will be one of the things that will identify His remnant people, and Satan will seek to discourage them by bringing reproach and trouble upon them. The issue of God's Son and God's law is to become worldwide; and, upon our relationship to this issue, our eternal destiny will be determined. May God help us all to be on God's side.

Your next lesson will make the issues in this controversy still clearer. You will not want to miss it. Entitled "The Mark of the Beast," it is a special study based on the book of Revelation.

Brief Review Questions —

What does the pure woman represent?

Who was the Man-child, born by the woman?

Who is Michael?

Who is symbolized by the great red dragon?

Who is Satan especially trying to attack and destroy?

SATAN'S WAR AGAINST THE CHURCH

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—

"The very first effort of Satan to overthrow God's law—undertaken among the sinless inhabitants of heaven—seemed for a time to be crowned with success. A vast number of the angels were seduced; but Satan's apparent triumph resulted in defeat and loss, separation from God, and banishment from heaven. When the conflict was renewed upon the earth, Satan again won a seeming advantage. By transgression, man became his captive, and man's kingdom also was betrayed into the hands of the archrebel. Now the way seemed open for Satan to establish an independent kingdom, and to defy the authority of God and His Son. But the plan of salvation made it possible for man again to be brought into harmony with God, and to render obedience to His law, and for both man and the earth to be finally redeemed from the power of the wicked one. Again Satan was defeated, and again he resorted to deception, in the hope of converting his defeat into a victory. To stir up rebellion in the fallen race, he now represented God as unjust in having permitted man to transgress His law." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 331

Satan's War against the Church

1 - WHO IS REPRESENTED BY THE WOMAN WITH THE SUN, MOON, AND TWELVE STARS?

Revelation 12:1—"There appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."

The woman represents a pure church. *Hosea 2:19; Isaiah 62:5; Jeremiah 6:2; 2 Corinthians 11:2.*

2 - WHO WAS THE MAN-CHILD BORN TO THE WOMAN?

Revelation 12:5—"She brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all _____ with a rod of iron" (*Psalm 2:7-9*). "And her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne" (*Ephesians 1:20-21*).

Hebrews 8:1—"We have such a high _____, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens."

3 - WHAT WAS MEANT BY THE GREAT RED DRAGON?

Revelation 12:3-4—"There appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red _____, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And His tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born."

4 - WHAT PICTURE IS GIVEN OF WAR IN HEAVEN?

Revelation 12:7-10—"There was war in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found anymore in heaven. And the great dragon was _____, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out _____ him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night" (*Jude 9*).

1 Thessalonians 4:16—“The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.”

Revelation 12:10—“Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down.”

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Revelation 12:11-13—“They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives _____ the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great _____, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child.”

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7 - WHAT CONFLICT DEVELOPED BETWEEN THE DRAGON AND THE REMNANT OF THE WOMAN'S SEED?

Revelation 12:17—“The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the _____ of her seed, which keep the _____ of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

What the Bible says about – The Mark of the Beast

SCRIPTURE READING:
REVELATION 13 AND 14

In Revelation 13 and 14, an issue is sharply drawn between God and the leopard beast. Religion and government will cooperate in forcing the “mark” of the beast upon the world. God’s people, though small in number, comparatively speaking, will stand out in definite distinction from the world in general. It will be God’s last great test of loyalty, and His remnant people will stand in the spirit and faith of Elijah and John the Baptist. As the second coming of Christ approaches, no one can escape the issue. Everyone must decide. Satan will make war on God’s people; but God will be with them and will come in glory to deliver them and reward them, along with the faithful of all ages.

1 - WHO IS THE LEOPARD BEAST OF REVELATION 13?

The leopard beast represents the same power as the little horn of Daniel 7. And this power is papal Rome. The following will make this clear. Please look up the following texts:

1. It came up out of the sea (*Revelation 13:1*) or among multitudes (*Revelation 17:15*).

The little horn came up among the ten kingdoms of Europe. The leopard beast came up “out of the sea,” which means that it arose among many peoples. Thus the two correspond here.

2. Like the “great red dragon,” it had seven heads and ten horns (*Revelation 13:1; 12:3*).

Both the leopard beast and the great red dragon of your last lesson have seven heads and ten horns, identifying them both as Roman. The leopard beast is papal Rome; the dragon represents Satan working through pagan Rome. The terrible beast of Daniel 7 (pagan Rome) had ten horns, and then the little horn arose. In Revelation the dragon beast, or pagan Rome, is followed by the leopard beast, or papal Rome.

To make it crystal clear, the terrible beast of Daniel 7 is the same as the great red dragon of Revelation 12—pagan Rome. The little horn, of Daniel 7, is the same as the leopard beast of Revelation 13. Now, let us continue the comparisons.

3. It had feet as a bear and a mouth as a lion (*Revelation 13:2*).

The leopard beast had the feet of a bear and the mouth of a lion, thus combining the symbols of Daniel 7, in which a lion stood for Babylon, a bear for Medo-Persia, and a leopard for Greece. The leopard beast had seven heads and ten horns, connecting it also with Rome. Thus papal Rome is a composite of the systems of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and pagan Rome.

4. The dragon (pagan Rome) gave its “seat,” or “see,” to the leopard beast (Revelation 13:2).

Papal Rome took the rulership following pagan Rome. A Roman Catholic writes:

“Long ages ago, when Rome through the neglect of the Western emperors was left to the mercy of the barbarous hordes, the Romans turned to one figure for aid and protection, and asked him to rule over them; and thus . . . commenced the temporal sovereignty of the popes. And meekly stepping to the throne of Caesar, the vicar of Christ took up the scepter to which the emperors and kings of Europe were to bow in reverence through so many ages” (*American Catholic Quarterly Review*, April, 1911):

The word, “seat,” means the “seat of government.” The word “see,” used in the “Holy See,” means the same. There the pope sits today in the City of Rome, the seat of the ancient pagan empire. Pagan Rome gave papal Rome its seat, or see.

5. The world “wondered after” and “worshipped” the beast (Revelation 13:3-4, 7-8).

The papacy is a world power. So the whole world wondered after the beast.

6. The beast spoke “blasphemies” (Revelation 13:5-6; Daniel 7:25).

By claiming to be the vicar of Christ on earth, and by assuming prerogatives that belong only to God, he “sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (*2 Thessalonians 2:4*). This is the very same power as the “little horn” of Daniel 7:24-25.

7. It was to continue 42 months (1,260 days, or years [Revelation 13:5; Daniel 7:25]).

The beast was to rule 42 months, or 1,260 days, or years. This again corresponds to the “little horn” of Daniel 7:24-25.

8. It was “to make war with the saints” (Revelation 13:7; Daniel 7:25).

Again we have a parallel with the little horn which was a persecuting power.

9. One head was to be wounded and taken captive (Revelation 13:3, 10).

This took place in 1798, when the French general, Berthier, took Pope Pius VI prisoner, and hastened him as a captive from prison to prison. He died in the French fortress of Valence eighteen months later. In 1870, the papacy received another blow, when Rome was seized by Italy. The pope became a voluntary "prisoner of the Vatican." Hence, in 1798, he who sent others into captivity went himself into captivity.

But the deadly wound was to be healed. In 1929, the Italian Government recognized Vatican City as an independent state. The pope was again king. On March 9, 1929, the pope said, "The peoples of the entire world are with us."

Today the papacy is coming back into great power.

"Yet since then (A.D. 798), the papacy has been lifted to a pinnacle of spiritual power unreachd, it may be, since earliest Christian history" (*The Modern Papacy*, p. 1).

10. The beast has a number—the number of a man's name (Revelation 13:17-18).

The man would naturally be the head of the papacy, or the pope. A leading title for the pope is "Vicar of the Son of God." In Latin this is *Vicarius Filii Dei*. Adding up the numeral letters (Roman numbers) in this title we have: **V—5, I—1, C—100**, (A and R, no value), **I—1, V (U)—5**, (S and F, no value), **I—1, L—50, I—1, I—1, D—500**, (E, no value), **I—1**. This totals 666, the number the Bible gives for the beast. This follows the ancient custom of a person's having a name and a number also.

The Douay Bible (Catholic) gives this note on Revelation 13:18: "Six hundred sixty-six. The numeral letters of his name shall make up this number."

We would give this word of caution: The beast is not identified exclusively by the number 666. This is but the tenth point we have given. The number 666 is just another point in favor of a position already proved.

2 - WHAT IS THE IMAGE TO THE BEAST? (Revelation 13:14-15)

Someone has said that "the papacy was a church dominating the state." An "image" to the papacy would therefore be another religious power functioning after the same order of things. The "image" power attempts to force, by pressure of civil law, the mark of the beast upon man.

The papacy dominates the state so that its own plans may be forwarded by civil law and government influence. Modern-day Protestantism is organizing its forces to play a forceful role in political, social, economic, and religious problems. By using civil law, it will someday force the papal mark upon the people. This image will not be fully formed until religious laws are enforced by state authority and punished by civil agencies of the government. These religious laws will bring persecution, perplexity, and hardship upon those who conscientiously

tiously follow the Scriptures.

3 - WHAT IS THE SEAL OF GOD AND THE COUNTERFEIT MARK?

God has a sign, or mark, of His power and authority, as we read in the Scriptures:

Exodus 31:16-17—“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.”

God’s sign is the seventh-day Sabbath. It was made at the close of creation to be a reminder of God’s creative power (*Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11*). It was based on the unchangeable facts of God’s creation (*Exodus 31:17; 20:8-11*). It will remain unchanged throughout all eternity (*Isaiah 66:22-23*).

God’s authority is based on the fact that He is Creator. He Himself states that the Sabbath is a sign because “in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed” (*Exodus 31:17*). All the universe might dispute God’s statement, but they could not change the fact that the seventh day is God’s sign according to His own Word.

God made the Sabbath the sign or seal of His law. Laws are authenticated by the seal of the lawgiver. Now, a seal gives the name, title, and territory of a ruler. The Sabbath command does this. No other commandment does. God has “signed,” or set His seal to, this law.

The fourth commandment is the only one that identifies the giver of the law, the source of authority, and the extent of the law’s application. The lawgiver’s name is “the Lord thy God.” His title is Creator, or Maker, of heaven and earth. His territory, or dominion, is “heaven and earth” (*Exodus 20:11*).

You recall that God predicted that the papacy would think to change His law.

Daniel 7:25—“He shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws.”

The Sabbath commandment deals with time. It is also a part of the law. The papacy claims that the change of the law in which she thought to transfer the solemnity of the seventh-day Sabbath (Saturday) over to Sunday is *the mark of her power and authority*. Yes, she put aside God’s sign and put up her own, and claims the act of changing the Sabbath as a mark, or proof, of her power. Note the following from a recognized Catholic authority:

“Q.—Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?”

“A.—Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her;—she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority” (*A Doctrinal Catechism, (3rd Amer. ed., rev.), Stephen Keenan, p. 174*).

From the office of Cardinal Gibbons, through Chancellor C. F. Thomas, came this statement: “Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act . . . and the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical authority in religious things” (italics supplied). Thus God’s sign, or mark, or symbol, or flag, was pulled down and the Sunday institution was raised in its place; and the act was set forth as a proof and mark of papal power by the papacy itself.

4 - WILL THE PAPAL MARK OF SUNDAYKEEPING EVER BECOME LAW?

Revelation 13:15—“He had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”

Revelation 13:17—“That no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

Both the way of life and business will be affected. Most states already have Sunday laws. Protestantism has been much more forward in seeking to enforce the papal mark than has Catholicism. This is true to the prophecy. The “image to the beast” is the one that is to press this matter to the limit of death itself. Religious freedom will be sacrificed on the altar of the “beast” by the “image of the beast” operating through the civil power.

5 - WHAT WARNING DOES GOD GIVE AGAINST THE PAPAL MARK?

Revelation 14:9-10—“If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.”

How could we expect God to remain silent on such an issue as changing the only commandment that gives His sign and seal as Creator and Redeemer of the world? But God’s wrath could not justly be visited upon men unless they had warning.

6 - WHAT CHOICE MUST WE MAKE?

When we squarely face this issue, we choose between God and man. Our worship is "in vain" if we choose the "commandments of men" in place of the commandments of God (*Mark 7:7*). Each of us will be responsible for the light he has (*John 9:41*).

Monsignor Segur (Catholic) writes:

"The observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the Roman Catholic Church" (*Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today*, p. 213).

Thomas Enright, CSSR (Catholic), was quoted in the *American Sentinel*:

"The Bible says, Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day. The Catholic Church says, No! By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day and command you to keep holy the first day of the week. And lo, the entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the holy Catholic Church" (*American Sentinel N.Y., June 1, 1893*, p. 173).

As Elijah would say, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him" (*1 Kings 18:21*). Surely this question of allegiance to God is one that demands the attention of every judgment-bound soul!

7 - HOW ARE GOD'S OBEDIENT CHILDREN IDENTIFIED?

1. They carry these messages of warning to the ends of the earth (*Revelation 14:6-10*).

2. They keep all the commandments of God, and they have the true "faith of Jesus."

Revelation 14:12—"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

3. As God's servants they are sealed.

Revelation 7:1-3—"After these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (*Romans 6:16*).

4. Satan will make war with them.

Revelation 12:17—"The dragon was wroth with the woman,

and went to make war with the remnant of her seed.”

5. They will be looking for the second coming of Christ.

Revelation 14:14-15—“And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe” (*Isaiah 25:9*).

The great issue discussed in this lesson will soon involve the whole world. Men will try to save themselves from the evils that overwhelm them by enforcing the papal rest day in order that proper attention may be given to religion. Those who refuse the papal mark and choose God’s sign will be persecuted, even as Jesus was.

On the side of the commandment keepers will be God and His angels. Satan will lead the world to persecute them. But Christ will come again in power and majesty, and gather unto Himself those who “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” God’s Sabbath is His sign, and it becomes a testing truth in these closing days of earth’s history.

As God’s children hold fast to the Sabbath of “the commandments of God,” they also cling to Jesus, the Man of Calvary. So it shall be, dear friend. The mark of the beast will soon be enforced by law. No one will be marked until it is enforced by law. Please get this point clear. There is only one way to avoid the mark. Said the prophet:

Ezekiel 20:20—“Hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.”

In other words, begin to observe the true seventh-day Sabbath of the Bible, and there can be no mark of the beast in your life. Let me ask a question: Is there room for the mark of apostasy when the seal of God is in the life? of course not. So you see, the way to prevent disaster is to prepare your heart to seek God and obey Him. I know you will make the right decision.

The next lesson is entitled “Following in Jesus’ Steps” and is a fascinating study in several Bible principles.

Brief Review Questions —

Name the leopard beast, the dragon, the second beast, and the image to the beast.

THE MARK OF THE BEAST
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—

“The most fearful threatening ever addressed to mortals is contained in the third angel’s message. That must be a terrible sin which calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy. Men are not to be left in darkness concerning this important matter; the warning against this sin is to be given to the world before the visitation of God’s judgments, that all may know why they are to be inflicted, and have opportunity to escape them . . .

“In the issue of the contest all Christendom will be divided into two great classes—those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel ‘all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond’ (Revelation 13:16), to receive ‘the mark of the beast,’ yet the people of God will not receive it. The prophet of Patmos beholds ‘them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God’ and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb (Revelation 15:2, 3).”

—*Great Controversy*, 449-450

CHAPTER SUPPLEMENT: THE NUMBER AND THE MARK

“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding COUNT THE NUMBER of the Beast: for it is the NUMBER OF A MAN; and HIS NUMBER is SIX HUNDRED THREESCORE AND SIX.” *Revelation 13:18*.

“And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the NAME of the beast, or the NUMBER of HIS NAME.” *Revelation 13:17*.

“The number [is] indicated by the letters of HIS NAME.” *The Twentieth Century New Testament*.

“Verse 18, Six Hundred Sixty Six. The numeral letters of HIS NAME shall make up this number.” *The Rheims Douay [Catholic] Bible, note on Revelation 13:18*.

“The method of reading, generally adopted, is that known as the GHEMATRIA of the Rabbins, which assigns each letter of a name its usual numerical value, and gives the sum of such numbers as the equivalent of the NAME.” *Marvin R. Vincent, D.D., Word Studies in the New Testament, Comment on Revelation 13:18*.

“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who WORSHIP the BEAST and HIS IMAGE, and whosoever receiveth the MARK OF HIS NAME.” *Revelation 14:11*.

“The beasts of Daniel and John are empires. The ten-horned beast [of Revelation 13] is the Roman power . . . The head is the governing power in the body.” *H. Grattan Guinness, Romanism and the Reformation, pp. 144-145*.

“The NUMBER IN THE MARK in Revelation 13 will be found in the title of the leader of *‘Mystery, Babylon the Great.’* It is the number of the man of sin of 2 Thessalonians 2, the little horn of Daniel 7, the beast of Revelation 13. It is the number of the one who led out through long centuries in killing the martyrs and uniting Christianity with paganism.” *Jean Delacroix.*

“The pope is of such lofty and supreme dignity that, properly speaking, he has not been established in any rank of dignity, but rather has been placed upon the very summit of all ranks of dignities . . . He is likewise the divine monarch and supreme emperor and king of kings.

“Hence the pope is CROWNED with a TRIPLE CROWN, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions.” *Lucius Ferraris, Prompta Bibliotheca, Vol. VI, pp. 438, 442 [R.C. sourcebook].*

“Q. What are the letters supposed to be in the pope’s crown, and what do they signify, if anything?

“A. The letters inscribed in the Pope’s miter are these: VICARIUS FILII DEI, which is the Latin for ‘VICAR OF THE SON OF GOD.’ Catholics hold that the church, which is a visible society, must have a visible head. Christ, before His ascension into heaven, appointed St. Peter to act as His representative . . . Hence to the Bishop of Rome, as head of the church, was given the title, Vicar of Christ.” *Our Sunday Visitor, “Bureau of Information,” Huntington, Indiana, April 18, 1915 [nationwide R.C. weekly journal].*

“Now we challenge the world to find another name in these languages: GREEK, HEBREW, and LATIN (see John 19:20), which shall designate the same number.” *Joseph F. Berg, The Great Apostasy, pp. 156-158.*

“Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change [of the Sabbath to Sunday] was her act . . . AND THE ACT IS A MARK of her ecclesiastical authority in religious things.” *From the office of Cardinal Gibbons, through Chancellor H. F. Thomas, November 11, 1895.*

“The observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an HOMAGE they pay in spite of themselves to the AUTHORITY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.” *Monsignor Louis Segur, Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today, p. 213.*

“Q. How prove you that the church hath power to command feasts and holy days?

“A. By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of, and therefore they fondly contradict themselves by keeping Sunday strictly, and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same church.

“Q. How prove you that?

“A. Because BY KEEPING SUNDAY they ACKNOWLEDGE THE CHURCH’S POWER to ordain feasts, and to command them under sin.” *The Douay Catechism*, p. 59.

“PROVE TO ME from the BIBLE ALONE that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. THERE IS NO SUCH LAW IN THE BIBLE! It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone.

“The Bible says, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ THE CATHOLIC CHURCH SAYS, NO. By my divine power, I ABOLISH THE SABBATH DAY and command you to keep holy the first day of the week. And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the holy Catholic Church!” *Priest Thomas Enright, C.S.S.R, president Redemptorist College, Kansas City, Mo., in a lecture at Hartford, Kansas, February 18, 1884, and published in The American Sentinel [R.C. journal], June 1893, p. 173.*

“All dogmatic decrees of the pope, made with or without his general council, are infallible . . . Once made, no pope or council can reverse them . . . This is the Catholic principle, that the church cannot err in faith.” *The Catholic World, June 1871, pp. 422-423.*

“We have no right to ask reasons of the church, any more than of Almighty God, as a preliminary to our submission. We are to take with unquestioning docility, whatever instruction the church gives us.” *The Catholic World, August, 1871, p. 589.*

“Nowhere is dogmatic intolerance so necessary a rule of life as in the domain of religious belief . . . There can be but a single true religion, which, by the very fact of its existence, protests against all other religions as false.” *Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 14, p. 765.*

A LEGAL SEAL / THE MARK OF THE BEAST / THE SEAL OF GOD

The Mark of the Beast

1 - WHO IS THE LEOPARD BEAST OF REVELATION 13?

1. It came up out of the sea (*Revelation 13:1*) or among multitudes (*Revelation 17:15*).
2. Like the “great red dragon,” it had seven heads and ten horns (*Revelation 13:1; 12:3*).
3. It had feet as a bear and a mouth as a lion (*Revelation 13:2*).
4. The dragon (pagan Rome) gave its “seat,” or “see,” to the leopard beast (*Revelation 13:2*).
5. The world “wondered after” and “worshipped” the beast (*Revelation 13:3-4, 7-8*).
6. The beast spoke “blasphemies” (*Revelation 13:5-6; Daniel 7:25*).
7. It was to continue 42 months (1,260 days, or years [*Revelation 13:5; Daniel 7:25*]).
8. It was “to make war with the saints” (*Revelation 13:7; Daniel 7:25*).
9. One head was to be wounded and taken captive (*Revelation 13:3, 10*).
10. The beast has a number—the number of a man’s name (*Revelation 13:17-18*).

2 - WHAT IS THE IMAGE TO THE BEAST? (*Revelation 13:14-15*)

3 - WHAT IS THE SEAL OF GOD AND THE COUNTERFEIT MARK?

Exodus 31:16-17—“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a _____. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.”

4 - WILL THE PAPAL MARK OF SUNDAYKEEPING EVER BECOME LAW?

Revelation 13:15—“He had power to give life unto the image of

the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”

Revelation 13:17—“That no man might _____, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

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6 - HOW ARE GOD’S OBEDIENT CHILDREN IDENTIFIED?

- 1. They carry these messages of warning to the ends of the earth (*Revelation 14:6-10*).
- 2. They keep all the commandments of God, and they have the true “faith of Jesus.”

Revelation 14:12—“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that _____ the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

- 3. As God’s servants they are sealed (*Revelation 7:1-3; Romans 6:16*).
- 4. Satan will make war with them.

Revelation 12:17—“The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the _____ of her seed.”

- 5. They will be looking for the second coming of Christ.

Revelation 14:14-15—“And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the _____ of the earth is ripe” (*Isaiah 25:9*).

Ezekiel 20:20—“Hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may _____ that I am the Lord your God.”

What the Bible says about – Following in Jesus' Steps

SCRIPTURE READING:
MATTHEW 3:1-17
JOHN 13:1-17
1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-29

In this lesson, we will study the example of Jesus, to determine what He would have His followers do today in matters of religious ceremony.

When the Saviour called the disciples to His service His invitation was, "Follow me." To Peter, Andrew, James, and John on the shores of the Sea of Galilee; to Matthew at the receipt of customs; to the rich young ruler who sought the way to life eternal; to Peter after the resurrection—to all who came to Him in sincerity He gave the same invitation, "Follow me." And to all who turn to Jesus for light and comfort and salvation in every age He has the same call, "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me" (*John 12:26*). Christ's example is for the Christian a sufficient reason for every rule of life, for every ordinance of the church.

I - WHAT EXAMPLE DID JESUS SET FOR HIS CHURCH AT THE RIVER JORDAN?

He was baptized by John in the Jordan River.

Matthew 3:13—"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him."

He was baptized by John the Baptist (or Baptizer), not because He had sinned, but as an example to us, and "to fulfil all righteousness" (*Matthew 3:15*). Heaven was pleased, for we read, "Lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (*Matthew 3:17*). He commanded His disciples to baptize converts among "all nations."

Matthew 28:19—"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Baptisms are to be conducted in "the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The true Christian will obey the command of Christ that brings him into such a close relationship with God. The baptized believer is actually adopted into the royal family of God and takes the royal name of Christian.

2 - SPRINKLING OR IMMERSION, WHICH?

Baptism by water is God's plan. This is made clear by Jesus' words to

Nicodemus:

John 3:5—“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

John baptized at Aenon, “because there was much water there” (*John 3:23*).

Jesus is our example; He walked into the old Jordan River, and John baptized Him. Jesus then “went up straightway out of the water” (*Matthew 3:16*). To the candid mind there surely can be no doubt about the method used by John. Had he used “sprinkling,” one pail of water would have sufficed for a great host of people. But Jesus was immersed in the Jordan.

Philip and the eunuch went into the water, and came out (*Acts 8:36-39*). Philip baptized in the same manner as John the Baptist. He and his candidate “went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.” They then came “up out of the water.”

Here we have but one candidate. He could have been sprinkled with a few drops of water or a cup of water might have been poured over his head, but this would not have been baptism according to Jesus’ example and commandment; hence Philip immersed the eunuch in a pool of water by the side of the road.

The word “baptize,” in the Greek, means “to immerse,” “to dip under.” The word “baptize” is from the Greek word, baptize, which comes from the root bapto, signifying “to immerse,” “to dip,” “to cover with fluid,” “to plunge,” etc., as material is dipped into a vat of dye, as the blacksmith plunges hot metal into a tank of water. The meaning is definitely not “sprinkle” or “pour.”

3 - IS THE METHOD OF BAPTISM IMPORTANT?

Yes, because the method is designed to illustrate the meaning and purpose of baptism. Said Paul:

Romans 6:3-6—“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

Notice these four points:

1. Baptism commemorates Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection.
2. It symbolizes the death and burial of the “old man” of sin.

3. It represents resurrection to “newness of life” in Christ Jesus.
4. It indicates the washing away of sin (*Acts 22:16*).

Since baptism commemorates the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and Jesus died and rose but once, those who immerse the individual three times instead of once miss the important point of Jesus’ sacrifice “once” for all (*1 Peter 3:18*). Those who baptize the candidate face down, depart from the regular mode of burial. The “old man” of sin must die and be buried, and the “new man” (*Ephesians 4:22, 24*) be brought forth to “walk in newness of life” (*Romans 6:4*). This is symbolized by the candidate’s closing his eyes, holding his breath, being buried under the water, being raised up, opening his eyes and breathing again, then walking out of the watery grave. Sprinkling or pouring simply cannot symbolize this spiritual work of grace in the Christian. Baptism is first and foremost an outward symbol of the change made by God’s grace in the sinner’s heart.

4 - WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN BEFORE BAPTISM?

1. The candidate should be carefully taught.

Matthew 28:19-20—“Teach all nations, baptizing them . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”

The candidate should be taught “all things” that Jesus commanded. This is really much more necessary today than in the apostles’ time, for the following reasons:

There was a definite risk and sacrifice even in professing Christianity in the days of the apostles. Baptism tended to eliminate a mere nominal profession of His name. People do not relish scorn, reproach, division in the family or martyrdom just to take up a new religion. But, today, it is a matter of honor to be counted a church member. So every candidate for baptism should understand fully what it means to become a follower of Christ.

In those days, Jesus Christ Himself was the issue. No one thought of any Sabbath but the Bible Sabbath. So that was not an issue. But today it is. Today, *the teachings of Christ, as well as Christ Himself, is the issue*. What will the candidate do? Accept Christ and reject His teachings? This is impossible. To receive Jesus as Lord and Saviour means to accept “all things whatsoever” He commanded.

One may join a church that preaches Christ and yet deny almost every fundamental doctrine of Bible religion. We have, in the churches today, everything from fanaticism and playing with rattlesnakes, on the one hand, to ethereal ideas that there is no sin or death, but only God and life and good. Millions seek some mystic “higher plane” while evading the eternal teaching of the Word of God and avoiding the everlasting

truths that “sin is the transgression of the law” of God, that “the wages of sin is death,” and that Jesus is the only Saviour from the transgression of the law. It is therefore clearly essential that candidates for baptism be thoroughly taught “all things” that Jesus commanded, else the profession of Christ may mean fatal delusion and dangerous heresy.

2. He must believe.

Mark 16:16—“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

After being taught, the candidate should, in his heart, believe in Christ as Lord, as a personal Saviour, and in His teaching. It is not enough to say, “I believe in Christ.” Today that may mean almost anything. He should believe His Word and teachings as recorded in the Bible; and, by faith, follow his Saviour.

3. He must repent of his sins.

Acts 2:38—“Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.”

To repent means to turn away from sin. It means to turn to God and righteousness. Man, of his own free will and choice, must make the decision to turn to God and away from sin and error.

A vital element of true repentance is “godly sorrow,” which “worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of” (*2 Corinthians 7:9-10*). This repentance God will give us if we are willing to turn away from every sin (*Acts 5:31; Romans 2:4*). God’s love melts the heart, and the Holy Spirit makes us truly sorry for sin when we behold the precious Saviour dying for the sins we have committed.

4. He must be willing to die to sin (*Romans 6:3, 11-13*).

As Jesus died for sin, man must die to sin. He will choose to lose a hand, a foot, an eye, before he wills to use them to do evil (*Mark 9:43-47*). His hands will not hold ill-gotten gain or lift to his lips the red and stirring wine that bringeth forth “babbling” and “woe.” Nor will he stain his fingers or foul his breath with the poisons of tobacco. His feet will not cross the forbidden places of the world’s alluring and sinful pleasures. He will not yield his members as instruments of unrighteousness.

5. He must be ready to live for God (*Romans 6:11, 13*).

And Christ will dwell in him by His Holy Spirit. When Satan knocks at his heart door, he will find the “old man” gone—dead. A little girl put it this way: “When Satan comes to my door and calls for me, I tell him that Jesus lives here, and then Satan goes away.” When God calls, we yield our members as “instruments of righteousness unto God.” With Isaiah we say, “Here am I; send me” (*Isaiah 6:8*). Such are “born again” men and women. Candidates for baptism should learn, believe, repent, die to sin, and surrender to God; therefore, infant baptism is not Bibli-

cal. We may dedicate our children to God, but infant baptism is without meaning in the light of these facts. There is no example for it in the New Testament!

5 - WHAT IS THE DOOR TO CHRIST'S CHURCH?

We are "baptized into Jesus Christ" (*Romans 6:3*). The church members are called the members of Christ's body, and we are baptized into this body of Christ on earth. Christ calls Himself "the door," but we are baptized into Him. Thus baptism is an entrance. Notice three points:

1. Christ is the head of the Christian body (*Ephesians 4:15-16*).
2. We become members of Christ's body, the church, at baptism (*1 Corinthians 12:20, 27*).
3. We are baptized "into one body" (*1 Corinthians 12:13*).

Some ask about being baptized more than once. In Acts 19:1-5 is the record of believers who were baptized twice. Important new truth had come to them, and they acted upon it and were rebaptized.

Some ask whether baptism of the Spirit is not sufficient (*Acts 10:44, 47-48*). Here Peter commanded these sincere believers to be baptized "in the name of the Lord." They had already been baptized with the Holy Ghost.

6 - WAS THE LORD'S SUPPER ESTABLISHED AS A CHRISTIAN ORDINANCE?

Yes, the Lord's Supper is an ordinance established by Christ. Said Paul:

1 Corinthians 11:23-26—"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come."

Keep in mind five lessons about the Lord's Supper:

1. It is to be celebrated in remembrance of Him.
2. It commemorates "the Lord's death till He come."
3. The bread represents His body, "which is broken for you."
4. The wine symbolizes His blood shed for man.

Matthew 26:28—"This is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

5. It foreshadows Christ's return. Baptism commemorates the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. The Lord's Supper is held in remembrance of His death, "till He come." It thus anticipates the second coming of Christ. It links together the cross and the second coming. This ordinance should be regularly observed by Christians.

7 - WHAT WORK OF PREPARATION SHOULD PRECEDE THE COMMUNION SERVICE?

1. Each member should examine himself.

1 Corinthians 11:28—"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

Many are so occupied pulling the mote out of the eye of another that they neglect the beam in their own eye. They miss the whole spirit of Calvary.

2. A man may eat unworthily if he comes unprepared.

1 Corinthians 11:29—"He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

We are guilty if we partake of communion in the spirit of a feast or if we do not examine ourselves, sense our own unworthiness, and then rejoice in the Saviour's forgiving love and mercy. After sin is put away, this service should not be a season of sorrowing. We stand, not in the shadow, but in the saving light of His cross.

3. Jesus rebuked pride by washing the disciples' feet.

John 13:4-5—"He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded."

The washing of the disciples' feet was in itself a ceremonial and meaningful washing. Jesus said to Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me" (*John 13:8*). He also added that washing the feet would clean them "every whit." Then He added that one of them, though washed, was not clean. None of this would make sense, unless the washing has a symbolic meaning (*John 13:1-17*); so ponder it in your own heart.

4. He instructed us to follow His example in feet washing.

John 13:13-15—"Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

You can see from Christ's words that this service is as much a gospel ordinance as the Lord's Supper, which was ordained by Christ at the same time.

8 - WHAT IS THE SPIRIT OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN?

Jesus did not wash the disciples' feet merely to stage a show. He wanted them to learn the spirit of heaven and to know that no service that needs to be done is beneath the dignity of His followers. He humbled Himself to do this task as He lifted every needful and lowly service to the plane of Godlike ministry.

"The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints." And when we reach heaven, we shall find the Saviour still manifesting this same spirit of service that characterized His life on earth. In heaven He will "gird Himself, and . . . come forth and serve them" (*Luke 12:37*). This will take place after His second coming (*Luke 12:37, 40*).

9 - HOW LONG WILL JESUS' SACRIFICE BE REMEMBERED?

And Jesus promised, "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom" (*Matthew 26:29*). That means that, throughout eternity, we will be reminded of the price paid for our redemption by our wonderful Lord. The last vestige of sin itself will be removed—only the tokens of love, divine, incomprehensible love, will remain. May you, dear student, be there to enjoy the endless pleasures of eternity with your Saviour.

The next lesson, "Taking God as a Partner," is an important study in a Bible truth which many overlook today. You will agree it is one of the most practical studies of the entire series.

Brief Review Questions —

Is Jesus our example in how to be baptized?

What preparation should we make for baptism?

Did Jesus give us the Lord's Supper?

Did He give us the ordinance of foot washing?

Do we please Him when we follow His instructions?

FOLLOWING IN JESUS' STEPS
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—

"At the words, 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me,' Peter surrendered his pride and self-will. He could not endure the thought of separation from Christ; that would have been death to him. 'Not my feet only,' he said, 'but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.'

"These words mean more than bodily cleanliness. Christ is still speaking of the higher cleansing as illustrated by the lower. He who came from the bath was clean, but the sandaled feet soon became dusty, and again needed to be washed. So Peter and his brethren had been washed in the great fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Christ acknowledged them as His. But temptation had led them into evil, and they still needed His cleansing grace. When Jesus girded Himself with a towel to wash the dust from their feet, He desired by that very act to wash the alienation, jealousy, and pride from their hearts. This was of far more consequence than the washing of their dusty feet."—*Desire of Ages*, 646

"'Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life.' It is by receiving the life for us poured out on Calvary's cross, that we can live the life of holiness. And this life we receive by receiving His Word, by doing those things which He has commanded. Thus we become one with Him. 'He that eateth My flesh,' He says, 'and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me' (John 6:54, 56, 57). To the holy Communion this Scripture in a special sense applies. As faith contemplates our Lord's great sacrifice, the soul assimilates the spiritual life of Christ. That soul will receive spiritual strength from every Communion. The service forms a living connection by which the believer is bound up with Christ, and thus bound up with the Father. In a special sense it forms a connection between dependent human beings and God.

"As we receive the bread and wine symbolizing Christ's broken body and spilled blood, we in imagination join in the scene of Communion in the upper chamber. We seem to be passing through the garden consecrated by the agony of Him who bore the sins of the world. We witness the struggle by which our reconciliation with God was obtained. Christ is set forth crucified among us.

"Looking upon the crucified Redeemer, we more fully comprehend the magnitude and meaning of the sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven. The plan of salvation is glorified before us, and the thought of Calvary awakens living and sacred emotions in our hearts. Praise to God and the Lamb will be in our hearts and on our lips; for pride and self-worship cannot flourish in the soul that keeps fresh in memory the scenes of Calvary."

—*Desire of Ages*, 660-661

Following in Jesus' Steps

I - WHAT EXAMPLE DID JESUS SET FOR HIS CHURCH AT THE RIVER JORDAN?

Matthew 3:13—"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be _____ of him."

Matthew 28:19—"Go ye therefore, and _____ all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

2 - SPRINKLING OR IMMERSION, WHICH?

John 3:5—"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of _____ and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

3 - IS THE METHOD OF BAPTISM IMPORTANT?

Romans 6:3-6—"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His _____? Therefore we are _____ with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

4 - WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN BEFORE BAPTISM?

1. The candidate should be carefully taught.

Matthew 28:19-20—"Teach all nations, _____ them . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

2. He must believe.

Mark 16:16—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

3. He must repent of his sins.

Acts 2:38—"Peter said unto them, _____, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

4. He must be willing to die to sin (*Romans 6:3, 11-13*).

5. He must be ready to live for God (*Romans 6:11, 13*).

5 - WAS THE LORD'S SUPPER ESTABLISHED AS A CHRISTIAN ORDINANCE?

1 Corinthians 11:23-26—"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is My body, which is broken for you: this do _____. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come."

Matthew 26:28—"This is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for _____ for the remission of sins."

6 - WHAT WORK OF PREPARATION SHOULD PRECEDE THE COMMUNION SERVICE?

1. Each member should examine himself.

1 Corinthians 11:28—"Let a man _____ himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

2. A man may eat unworthily if he comes unprepared.

1 Corinthians 11:29—"He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

3. Jesus rebuked pride by washing the disciples' feet.

John 13:4-5—"He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to _____ the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded."

4. He instructed us to follow His example in feet washing.

John 13:13-15—"Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also _____ wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

What the Bible says about – The Gift of Prophecy

SCRIPTURE READING:
2 CHRONICLES 20:20
REVELATION 12:17

Adam and Eve had the joy of talking face to face with their Maker. Sin abruptly ended that privilege, but we can all have that privilege, when we get to heaven, if now we will prepare our lives for eternal life with God and Christ.

After Adam and Eve sinned and could no longer commune with God face to face, God promised them a Saviour (Genesis 3:15) and deliverance from the consequences that they had chosen.

But how were they, with the face-to-face communion broken, to learn of God's plans for them and find His will? This was a problem they could not solve.

God chose to solve the problem of instructing mankind by giving them inspired messages by inspired prophets—such as Moses, Daniel, Amos, and the Apostles.

This special guidance is often called “the gift of prophecy,” or “prophetic guidance

In this lesson, we will examine this important gift of God to man, through which He seeks to lead all men to eternal life.

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

The gift of prophecy is a blessing from God to mankind, and it will remain in the church until the final unifying of the faith.

Ephesians 4:11-13—“And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

Paul compares the church to the body; the various parts of which are parts of the body.

1 Corinthians 12:1-17, 28—“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant . . . Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit . . . For to one is given by

the Spirit the word of wisdom,—to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit. To another prophecy . . . But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body . . . For the body is not one member, but many . . . And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers.”

The prophets are the eyes of this spiritual body.

1 Samuel 9:9—“Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer; for he that is now called a prophet [speaker for God] was beforetime called a Seer” [see-er for God; *compare Luke 11:34 and Proverbs 29:18*].

WILL THERE BE PROPHETS IN THE LAST DAYS?

The apostle Peter predicted that there would be prophets in the last days.

Acts 2:17-18—“And it shall come to pass in the last days saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy.”

The above statement by Peter is based on a prediction in the Old Testament by Joel (*Joel 2:28*).

The warning that Christ gave against false prophets indicates that there will also be true ones. Satan will use counterfeits to divert attention from the genuine.

Matthew 7:15—“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”

God’s law and God’s prophets tend to be found together. If His people do not obey His law, then they will not have the guidance of His prophet.

Lamentations 2:9—“The law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the Lord.”

Ezekiel 7:26—“Then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients” (*compare 20:3, 12, 13, 16*).

Jeremiah 26:4-6—“Thus saith the Lord: If ye will not hearken

to Me, to walk in My law, which I have set before you, to hearken to the words of My servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending them, but ye have not hearkened; Then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make of this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.”

Proverbs 29:18—“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”

The true church, just before Jesus returns, will again have the gift of prophecy, because it keeps the law of God by faith in Christ.

Revelation 12:17—“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Revelation 19:10—“For the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy.”

Just before Christ's return, His people will again be obeying His moral law through His empowering grace.

Revelation 14:12, 14—“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus . . . And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.”

HOW DOES PROPHECY COME TO US?

It comes to us from God through His prophets.

2 Peter 1:21—“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.”

Revelation 1:1-2—“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John: Who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.”

WHAT ARE THE MARKS OF A TRUE PROPHET?

A true prophet will speak in harmony with the Bible.

Isaiah 8:20—“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.”

Deuteronomy 13:1-3—“If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,

and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”

A true prophet will exalt God and Christ rather than himself.

Jeremiah 1:4-9—“Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth.”

2 Corinthians 10:5—“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

A true prophet will reprove men of sin.

Ezekiel 3:17-19—“Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if you warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.”

A true prophet will emphasize the necessity of Jesus in the heart.

1 John 4:1-3—“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and

even now already is it in the world.”

A true prophet will live a godly life and will produce good fruit.

Matthew 7:15-18, 20—“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit . . . Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

The predictions of a true prophet will come to pass.

Deuteronomy 18:21-22—“And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.”

Jeremiah 28:9—“The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him.”

A true prophet will have visions and dreams.

Numbers 12:6—“And he said, Hear now My words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak to him in a dream.”

Both men and women can be called as prophets of God.

Examples of men who were called to be prophets: Enoch (*Jude 14*), Moses (*Exodus 3:9-10*), Elijah (*1 Kings 17:1-3*), John the Baptist (*Luke 1:13-17*), John the Revelator (*Revelation 1:10*).

Examples of women who were called to be prophets: Miriam (*Exodus 15:20*), Deborah (*Judges 4:4*), Huldah (*2 Kings 22:14*), Anna (*Luke 2:36*). Philip’s daughters (*Acts 21:9*).

The weakest of the weak may be called to this work.

1 Corinthians 1:27-29—“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; That no flesh should glory in His presence.”

2 Corinthians 12:9—“And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (*also 13:4*).

WHAT ARE THE TESTS OF A TRUE PROPHET?

We are commanded not to despise prophets, but to test them.

1 Thessalonians 5:20-21—“Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 John 4:1).

We must test them by the Word of God.

Isaiah 8:20—“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.”

While in vision, a prophet has no breath, and his natural strength is gone until the angel strengthens him.

Daniel 10:17-18—“As for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me.”

While in Vision, a prophet can nevertheless speak.

Daniel 10:15-16—“And when he [the angel] had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb [unable to speak]. And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake.”

While in vision, a prophet keeps his eyes open.

Numbers 24:16—“He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open.”

While in vision, a prophet is unconscious of his surroundings.

2 Corinthians 12:2, 4—“I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven . . . How that He was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

HOW DOES THE GIFT OF PROPHECY HELP US?

The abiding gift of prophecy provides counsel and guidance before a crisis.

Noah, was sent with warnings before the Flood came (*Genesis 6:9-17*). Moses was sent to lead the people of God out of Egypt (*Exodus 3:4-12; 4:10-16; Deuteronomy 4:10-12*). Elijah called men back to obedience to God and warned of judgments because they refused to render obedience (*1 Kings 17:1; 18:20-41; 2 Kings 2:11-13*). John the Baptist called all

men to repentance and announced the soon coming of Christ (*Mark 1:2-5; Luke 7:28*).

The messages of the prophet bring comfort and encouragement to the people of God.

2 Peter 1:19—“We have also a more 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 day star arise in your hearts.”

1 Corinthians 14:3—“He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.”

It is only as the people heed the words that God sends them through the prophet that they can have truest success.

2 Chronicles 20:20—“Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper.”

The counsel of the true prophet protects from unBiblical errors and enables the people of God to obey His Written Word.

Ephesians 4:11-16—“And He gave . . . prophets . . . for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”

We may expect the prophetic gift among the remnant of the true church, down in the time of the end:

Revelation 12:17—“And the dragon [Satan, through his own agencies] was wroth with the woman [the true church], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Revelation 19:10—“The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Brief Review Questions —

Name several of the marks and tests of a true prophet?

FOLLOWING IN JESUS' STEPS**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

"Before the entrance of sin, Adam enjoyed open communion with his Maker; but since man separated himself from God by transgression, the human race has been cut off from this high privilege. By the plan of redemption, however, a way has been opened whereby the inhabitants of the earth may still have connection with heaven. God has communicated with men by His Spirit, and divine light has been imparted to the world by revelations to His chosen servants. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).

"During the first twenty-five hundred years of human history, there was no written revelation. Those who had been taught of God, communicated their knowledge to others, and it was handed down from father to son, through successive generations. The preparation of the written Word began in the time of Moses. Inspired revelations were then embodied in an inspired book. This work continued during the long period of sixteen hundred years—from Moses, the historian of creation and the law, to John, the recorder of the most sublime truths of the gospel . . .

"Written in different ages, by men who differed widely in rank and occupation, and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by different writers; often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the underlying harmony.

"As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects. One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of the subject; he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation; another seizes upon a different phase; and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind—a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life.

"God has been pleased to communicate His truth to the world by human agencies, and He Himself, by His Holy Spirit, qualified men and enabled them to do this work. He guided the mind in the selection of what to speak and what to write. The treasure was entrusted to earthen vessels, yet it is, nonetheless, from Heaven. The testimony is conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language, yet it is the testimony of God; and the obedient, believing child of God beholds in it the glory of a divine power, full of grace and truth."

—*Great Controversy*, 5-7

The Gift of Prophecy

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

Ephesians 4:11-13—“And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the _____ of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:1-17, 28; 1 Samuel 9:9).

WILL THERE BE PROPHETS IN THE LAST DAYS?

Acts 2:17-18—“And it shall come to pass in the _____ days saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy.”

Matthew 7:15—“Beware of _____ prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”

Proverbs 29:18—“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the _____, happy is he.” **Lamentations 2:9**—“The law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the Lord.”

Revelation 12:17—“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the _____ Christ.” **Revelation 19:10**—“For the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy.”

Revelation 14:12, 14—“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the _____ of God, and the _____ of Jesus . . . And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.”

HOW DOES PROPHECY COME TO US?

2 Peter 1:21—“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were _____ by the Holy Ghost” (Revelation 1:1-2).

WHAT ARE THE MARKS OF A TRUE PROPHET?

Isaiah 8:20; Deuteronomy 13:1-3; Ezekiel 3:17-19; 1 John 4:1-3; Matthew 7:15-18, 20; 1 Corinthians 1:27-29; 2 Corinthians 12:9;

13:4.

WHAT ARE THE TESTS OF A TRUE PROPHET?

1 Thessalonians 5:20-21—“Despise not prophesying. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 John 4:1).

Isaiah 8:20—“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no _____ in them.”

Jeremiah 28:9—“The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath _____ sent him” (**Deuteronomy 18:21-22**).

Daniel 10:17-18—“As for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there _____ left in me. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me.”

Daniel 10:15-16—“And when he [the angel] had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the _____, and I became dumb [unable to speak]. And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake.”

Numbers 24:16—“He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes _____” (**Numbers 12:6; 2 Corinthians 12:2, 4**).

HOW DOES THE GIFT OF PROPHECY HELP US?

2 Peter 1:19—“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, _____ the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.”

2 Chronicles 20:20—“Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; _____ His prophets, so shall ye prosper” (**Ephesians 4:11-16**).

Revelation 12:17—“And the dragon [Satan, through his own agencies] was wroth with the woman [the true church], and went to make war with the _____ of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Revelation 19:10—“The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

What the Bible says about – Taking God as a Partner

SCRIPTURE READING:
MALACHI 3

1- WHAT IS GOD'S CLAIM CONCERNING THE EARTH?

The claim to ownership is one of the highest claims that the Lord can make. These four statements assert God's ownership of all:

1. He owns the earth.

Psalm 24:1—"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."

The king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, looked over his capital city and said: "Is not this great Babylon that I have built . . . by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" He forgot that God is God, and He is the owner and ruler of all. For seven years Nebuchadnezzar wandered about, out of his mind and eating grass like an ox, until his reason returned and he understood that power and wealth were only lent to him by God.

2. He owns the vast creation.

Psalm 50:10-11—"For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are Mine."

3. He owns all the silver and gold.

Haggai 2:8—"The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts."

4. He owns us.

Psalm 100:3—"Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture" (*Isaiah 43:1*).

Man himself is God's possession, as is illustrated by the story of the Vermont judge during the war between the states. He informed the attorney for a slaveholder who was trying to extradite a runaway slave, that "his evidence of ownership" was not adequate. "Well, what does your honor require?" asked the lawyer. "Nothing less than a bill of sale from the Creator Himself," the judge replied.

2 - ON WHAT FOUR GROUNDS CAN GOD CLAIM OWNERSHIP OF ALL?

1. He created all things.

Exodus 20:11—“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it” (*Genesis 1:1; Psalm 95:5*). ○

God made the earth out of nothing (*Hebrews 11:3*) and hung it upon nothing (*Job 26:7*). He took of the dust of the earth and made man. He made everything and furnished the material. He owns everything. Some men think they own it or at least some part of it—or ought to. Some say they are going to rule it. But the owner and ruler is God; and He is very much alive today. How comforting is this thought in a day when the world is threatened with atomic destruction. Said the psalmist: “[God] laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever” (*Psalm 104:5*).

2. He upholds and sustains all things.

Hebrews 1:3—“Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” ○

Acts 17:28—“For in Him we live, and move, and have our being.”

“Upholding all things by the word of His power. ‘Men call it gravitation. What is gravitation? Oh, it is the power that makes the earth go round the sun! Well, what is this power that makes the earth go round the sun? Oh, that’s gravitation! And so we think in circles. What is that power but the will and power of God? Yes, and our lives are sustained by Him! Our hearts beat day and night, and our blood flows through its channels. We eat and drink, work and play, think and love and worship, and we don’t understand it all; but in our hearts we know that “in Him we live, and move, and have our being” (*Acts 17:28*).

3. He purchased all after it was lost.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20—“Ye are not your own . . . ye are bought with a price.”

Dear friend, God made you, and He bought you with the blood of Jesus Christ. Shall any man withhold himself from this gracious God and Saviour? ○

Every loaf of bread and every blessing comes marked with the cross of Calvary. Had God’s plan not been carried out, there would be neither man nor bread.

4. He gives power to get wealth.

Deuteronomy 8:18—“But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth.”

Some are better managers than others. Some are sharp dealers. But our talents are gifts of God. He gives us all some talent to earn a living for ourselves and our families. We may use these talents, misuse them, or half-use them.

3 - HOW IS MAN RELATED TO THESE POSSESSIONS OF GOD?

He is the steward of God's goods. And “a steward is a person entrusted with the management of estates or affairs not his own. He administers what belongs to another.” “As between me and my fellow men, what I hold belongs to me, and I have a right to defend title to it; but as between me and God, it belongs to Him” (*R. L. Davidson*).

Heaven's goods are entrusted to the earthly steward.

Luke 12:42—“And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?”

Matthew 25:14—“For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.”

Every man is entrusted by the Master with wealth, a little or a lot—with most of us, it is a little. We will be judged, not by the amount we have, but by what we do with it and how we handle it.

4 - WHAT IS REQUIRED OF STEWARDS?

1. Faithfulness.

1 Corinthians 4:2—“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”

Faithfulness—that is a grand word. “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much” (*Luke 16:10*). Unfaithfulness works the same way. To the faithful steward the owner of all will say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant” (*Matthew 25:21*).

2. Accountability.

Matthew 25:19—“After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them” (*Luke 16:1-2*).

The Spirit of God reproves men of sin and judgment (*John 16:8*). Surely every man who has not crushed out the thought knows that he must render an account to God for life, health, wealth, time, and all things.

5 - WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN STEWARD'S FIRST RESPONSIBILITY?

The great duty of a steward is to make the best possible use of that which is entrusted to him, not for himself, but for the owner. The sinful steward will make himself first. The Christian steward will make God first. Here are three texts to make it plain.

1. Psalm 116:12—"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?"

2. Proverbs 3:9—"Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase."

3. Matthew 6:33—"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

6 - HOW DO GOD'S STEWARDS FILL HIS EARTHLY STOREHOUSE?

There are two ways to keep God's storehouse full.

1. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse.

Malachi 3:10—"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

What is the tithe? The tithe means one tenth. If a man earns \$1, his tithe is 10 cents. If he earns \$100, it is \$10. If he earns \$1,000, his tithe is \$100. And that is when it may get hard. The more God blesses, the harder it seems for some men to pay tithe, as the poet said:

"I was so poor, my purse so small,

"I hardly felt one tenth at all.

"I gladly gave from my poor store

"With but the wish I could give more.

"But now my purse, which was so small,

"Contains one million, all in all;

"And wonder I each passing day

"If I can give one tenth away!"

A man who inherits money for which he puts forth not an ounce of effort is tempted not even to tithe it. But he should, and he will, if he is a good steward. The tithe is not man's plan, but the plan of God's own devising. It reveals man's faithfulness and his recognition of God's ownership of the entire ten tenths.

2. Bring offerings also.

Psalm 96:8—"Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name: bring an offering, and come into His courts."

God requires the tithe. What a man gives above that is his offering, or gift. The offerings of two men drawing the same amount of salary might vary depending upon their generosity or their ability to give.

7 - HOW FULLY WAS THIS PLAN TO BE CARRIED OUT?

Land, trees, flocks, herds, salary—all are to be tithed.

Leviticus 27:30, 32—“And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s: it is holy unto the Lord . . . And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.”

Jacob promised to pay tithe to God on the very necessities of life.

Genesis 28:20-22—“Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.”

In the New Testament, Jesus approved tithe even on a very small income.

Matthew 23:23—“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”

Jesus reproached the pharisees for paying tithe on the small garden vegetables and then neglecting to be just and honest in larger matters. Yet He told them that their tithing on the little herbs of the garden was right. If a man is honest in tithe and dishonest otherwise, his tithing honesty will not cover the other dishonesty. The reverse is also true.

8 - FOR WHAT PURPOSE WAS THE TITHE USED?

In Abraham’s day the tithe was paid to God’s priest.

Genesis 14:18-20—“Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the Most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.”

The first mention of tithe in the Bible is in the days of Abraham, who

paid tithe to Melchizedek. Up until that time the family was the unit of organization in God's work, and there was no centralized worship. Just as soon as a priest appeared outside the family unit, then the tithe appeared. It is simply God's plan of supporting His organization. Israel paid tithe to the Levites.

Numbers 18:21—"And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation."

In the time of Moses, and thereafter, the tithe supported the Levites who looked after the Temple services. Jesus approved the tithe in His day, even though He rebuked the Jews for other shortcomings. Not until God forsakes the church are we free to withdraw our support. And Paul advises that the same plan be followed for the support of the gospel ministry.

1 Corinthians 9:13-14—"Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preached the gospel should live of the gospel."

Paul insisted that those who preached the gospel should live of it, just as the Levites lived of their Temple work. Paul often declined help, but later regretted that he had not required the people to do more. If the Jews paid, what shall Christians, with the whole world to reach with the gospel, do then?

9 - WHAT CURSE IS PRONOUNCED ON UNFAITHFULNESS?

Malachi 3:8-9—"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation."

Here is a curse against robbers. The selfish man reaps his own sowing. The unprofitable servant, who merely receives but does not impart, will be cast out.

Matthew 25:30—"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

10 - WHAT BLESSING IS PRONOUNCED ON FAITHFUL TITHE PAYERS?

God pours out upon them a great blessing.

Malachi 3:10-11—"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the

windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.”

Here are three promises for tithers:

1. Acts 20:35—“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

2. Luke 6:38—“Give, and it shall be given unto you.”

3. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7—“He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully . . . Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

The good and faithful servant will enter into the joy of the Lord at Christ’s coming. What a wonderful assurance Jesus gave:

Matthew 25:21—“His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”

Peter said, “Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.” Jesus said, “There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God’s sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting” (*Luke 18:28-30*).

On an English cathedral an inscription reads: “What I spent, I had. What I saved, I lost. And what I gave, I have.”

“That man is no fool who parts with what he cannot keep, to get what he cannot lose.” Dear friend, pay tithe for the support of the gospel. It is God’s way to enrich your life and further the work of His kingdom. He doesn’t need your money. But you need His presence and blessing in this great partnership of life.

The next lesson will be especially helpful. The Bible will present ten ways by which you may identify God’s true church. And that is the title of the study.

Brief Review Questions —

How much of the earth does God own?

What does He ask us to give back to Him?

Should we do it?

What will happen if we do?

TAKING GOD AS A PARTNER**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

"The tithing system did not originate with the Hebrews. From the earliest times the Lord claimed a tithe as His, and this claim was recognized and honored. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God (Genesis 14:20). Jacob, when at Bethel, an exile and a wanderer, promised the Lord, 'Of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee' (Genesis 28:22). As the Israelites were about to be established as a nation, the law of tithing was reaffirmed as one of the divinely ordained statutes upon obedience to which their prosperity depended.

"The system of tithes and offerings was intended to impress the minds of men with a great truth—that God is the source of every blessing to His creatures, and that to Him man's gratitude is due for the good gifts of His providence.

" 'He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things' (Acts 17:25). The Lord declares, 'Every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills' (Psalm 50:10). 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine' (Haggai 2:8). And it is God who gives men power to get wealth (Deuteronomy 8:18). As an acknowledgment that all things came from Him, the Lord directed that a portion of His bounty should be returned to Him in gifts and offerings to sustain His worship.

" 'The tithe . . . is the Lord's.' Here the same form of expression is employed as in the law of the Sabbath. 'The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God' (Exodus 20:10). God reserved to Himself a specified portion of man's time and of his means, and no man could, without guilt, appropriate either for his own interests.

"The tithe was to be exclusively devoted to the use of the Levites, the tribe that had been set apart for the service of the sanctuary. But this was by no means the limit of the contributions for religious purposes. The tabernacle, as afterward the temple, was erected wholly by freewill offerings; and to provide for necessary repairs and other expenses."

—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 525-526

"God has made men His stewards. The property which He has placed in their hands is the means that He has provided for the spread of the gospel. To those who prove themselves faithful stewards He will commit greater trusts. Saith the Lord, 'Them that honor Me I will honor' (1 Samuel 2:30). 'God loveth a cheerful giver,' and when His people, with grateful hearts, bring their gifts and offerings to Him, 'not grudgingly, or of necessity,' His blessing will attend them, as He has promised. 'Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.' Malachi 3:10."

—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 529

Taking God as a Partner

1 - WHAT IS GOD'S CLAIM CONCERNING THE EARTH?

He owns the earth. Psalm 24:1—"The _____ is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." **Psalm 50:10-11**—"For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are Mine." **He owns all the silver and gold. Haggai 2:8**—"The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts." **He owns us. Psalm 100:3**—"Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are _____, and the sheep of His pasture" (*Isaiah 43:1*).

2 - ON WHAT BASIS CAN GOD CLAIM OWNERSHIP OF ALL?

1. He created all things. Exodus 20:11. He upholds and sustains all things. Hebrews 1:3. Acts 17:28—"For in Him we live, and move, and have our being." **2. He purchased all after it was lost. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20**—"Ye are not your own . . . ye are bought with a _____." **3. He gives power to get wealth. Deuteronomy 8:18**—"But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth."

3 - WHAT IS REQUIRED OF STEWARDS?

Faithfulness. Luke 12:42; Matthew 25:14.

1 Corinthians 4:2—"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found _____." **Matthew 25:19**—"After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them" (*Luke 16:1-2*).

4 - WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN STEWARD'S FIRST RESPONSIBILITY?

Psalm 116:12—"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His _____ toward me?" **Proverbs 3:9**—"Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase." **Matthew 6:33**—"But seek ye _____ the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

5 - HOW DO GOD'S STEWARDS FILL HIS EARTHLY STOREHOUSE?

1. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse.

Malachi 3:10—“Bring ye all the _____ into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and _____ a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

2. Bring offerings also.

Psalm 96:8—“Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name: bring an _____, and come into His courts.”

6 - HOW FULLY WAS THIS PLAN TO BE CARRIED OUT?

Leviticus 27:30, 32—“And _____ the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s: it is _____ unto the Lord . . . And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.”

Genesis 28:20-22—“Jacob _____ a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.”

Matthew 23:23—“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these _____ to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”

7 - FOR WHAT PURPOSE WAS THE TITHE USED?

Numbers 18:21—“And, behold, I have _____ the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation” (also *Genesis 14:18-20; 1 Corinthians 9:13-14*).

8 - WHAT CURSE IS ON UNFAITHFULNESS?

Malachi 3:8-9—“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have _____ Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation.” **Malachi 3:10-11**—“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse . . . and prove Me now” (**Acts 20:35; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Matthew 25:21**).

What the Bible says about – The Remnant

SCRIPTURE READING:
REVELATION 14:6-15

1 - WHAT IS THE FIRST ANGEL'S MESSAGE?

Revelation 14:6-7—“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 nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

This message has five characteristics:

1. It brings the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

It is not an offshoot from some denomination, but a mighty, invincible, worldwide movement, growing from a small beginning to envelop the earth.

2. It calls men to “fear God.”

Surely such a message is needed today, for the world has lost God from its thinking. Thus God is calling men away from sin to righteousness, from transgression of His law to obedience. “Fear God, and keep His commandments” (*Ecclesiastes 12:13*).

3. It calls men to “give glory” to God.

We give glory to God when we “make confession unto Him” (*Joshua 7:19*). We give glory for His truth's sake. Christ is “glorified in His saints” (*2 Thessalonians 1:10*). His saints “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (*Revelation 14:12*).

4. It announces the hour of God's judgment.

This could not be done unless the time of the judgment were known. The investigative judgment, symbolized by the cleansing of the Sanctuary, began in 1844, at the end of the 2,300-year period. “The hour of His judgment is come.”

We are to “fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.” The judgment is a serious and solemn matter. The law of God is the standard, and Jesus Christ is our advocate.

5. It calls men to worship the Creator.

God is worthy of worship because He is the Creator. "Thou art worthy, O Lord to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things" (*Revelation 4:11*). The seventh-day Sabbath, as taught in the fourth commandment, is the sign of the Creator. "It is a sign . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed" (*Exodus 31:17*). Since the Bible record of creation is today denied by many and God's Sabbath (the sign of creatorship) has been set aside in the practice of mankind in general, it is vital that all men everywhere be called to worship the true God and, in doing so, to accept the sign of His creative power, which is the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. A call to true worship and commandment keeping would demand a teaching of all God's commandments.

2 - WHAT MESSAGE IS GIVEN BY THE SECOND ANGEL?

Revelation 14:8—"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

1. This is mystic Babylon, who persecuted the saints (*Revelation 17:5-6*).

Babylon is called both a "great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" and also a woman, "mother of harlots" (*Revelation 14:8; 17:5, 18*). Mystic Babylon is the papacy, "drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." In the creed of Pope Pius IV we read: "I acknowledge the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church for the mother and mistress of all churches" (*article 10*).

2. Rome's false doctrines largely came from ancient Babylon.

The Church of Rome is called Babylon because its religion is a revival of the religion of ancient Babylon. A careful examination of the ritual of ancient Babylon will reveal that the papacy is largely an adaptation of this ancient pagan system. It is not difficult to trace the connection between the two in the political and religious history of Rome.

3. Babylon is the same power as the little horn of Daniel 7:25.

Like the little horn, she persecutes the saints and rules over the kings of the earth.

4. She is the same as the leopard beast of Revelation 13.

This beast is the same as the little horn of Daniel 7:25.

5. All nations are made drunk with her wine.

Mystic Babylon holds a golden cup (*Revelation 17:4*) in her hand. Ancient Babylon was likened to a golden cup (*Jeremiah 51:7*). "In 1825, on the occasion of the jubilee, Pope Leo XII struck a medal, bearing on the

one side his own image and, on the other, that of the Church of Rome, symbolized as a 'woman,' holding in her left hand a cross and, in her right hand, a cup with the legend around her, 'Sedet super universum,' 'The whole world is her seat' " (*Alexander Hislop, p. 6*).

Multitudes have been drinking the wine of her false doctrines. When professed Protestant churches repudiate the fundamental principle of Protestantism by setting aside the authority of God's Word and accepting tradition and man-made laws, they adopt the principles of modern Babylon and may be regarded as the daughters of Babylon, deliberately choosing to drink of her cup.

6. Practically all the world will worship her.

The world stands in awe and wonderment at the amazing revival of her power. This has been especially true since the creation of Vatican City in 1929. Said the pope, "This moment, so historic, so important, that stands between the past and the future; which closes the past and opens the future" (*Address, June 27, 1929; America, January 4, 1930*).

7. She is scheduled for a final fall.

Though she says, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow, yet God says, "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day . . . for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her" (*Revelation 18:7-8*). Even the powers of the earth finally shall forsake her, for she is "fallen" (*Revelation 17:16*).

3 - WHAT WARNING IS SOUNDED BY THE THIRD ANGEL?

Revelation 14:9-10—"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

1. It warns against the worship of the beast.

The first angel's message is a call to "worship Him that made heaven and earth," that is, the Creator. The third angel's message warns against the worship of the beast. There must be, and is, an essential difference. If we accept the teachings and commandments of the great apostasy above God's Word and law, we worship the beast.

2. It warns against worship of the image of the beast.

If we yield to the pressure of apostate Protestantism as it joins hands with civil power to enforce the mark of the beast, we cannot be judged as true worshipers of the Creator.

3. It warns against receiving the mark of the beast.

In the last hours of the crisis, the papal mark of Sundaykeeping will be enforced by civil law. God's warning is raised against this Mark; and, as He calls men to worship the Creator, the Sabbath-Sunday issue will be clearly drawn.

4. It warns of God's wrath upon those who do not heed His warning (*Revelation 14:9-10; 15:1; 16*).

Between the wrath of man and the wrath of God all must choose. Between obedience to man and obedience to God the decision must be made. Seven fearful plagues are reserved against the awful day of reckoning.

**4 - HOW MAY WE IDENTIFY
GOD'S REMNANT CHURCH?**

1. It will preach a worldwide Judgment-hour message (*Revelation 14:6-7*).

Heaven's great investigative judgment began in 1844; and, at that time, God had a people ready to preach that message. Their burden was to reach the whole world, and that work is going forward with lightning speed. This message is being proclaimed in more than seven hundred languages and dialects, and is being printed in more than two hundred languages.

2. It will deliver the message of mystic Babylon's fall (*Revelation 14:8*).

3. It will give the warning against the beast's image and mark (*Revelation 14:9-10*).

This unwavering warning has been given from the rise of this movement. Religionists offer first one, then another, explanation of the mark of the beast. But God's remnant people bear the same consistent message through the years.

It is too late now for a people to rise up to begin the preaching of these three angels' messages. When the time came, in 1844, the people of prophecy arose, bearing the messages of warning.

4. It urges the worship of the Creator above the beast or image (*Revelation 14:7*).

God foreknew the peculiar times to which His people would come. Not only has the Sabbath sign of the Creator been set aside centuries before, but in these closing days the theory of evolution is to become widespread, denying creation as a series of specific acts of God in six days' time. The observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is therefore, in a special sense, the sign of those who believe in, serve, and worship the Creator.

5. It keeps the commandments of God (*Revelation 14:12*).

The only way the keeping of God's commandments could help to identify God's people would be for the world and religion, in general, to be

living contrary to His commandments. Any particular commandment on which there would be a decided difference would tend to mark them as commandment-keeping people. So, in answer to prophecy, such a people arose in 1844 and 1845 keeping all God's Ten Commandments, including the Sabbath commandment (designating the seventh day).

6. It keeps and exalts the faith of Jesus (*Revelation 14:12*).

God knew that modernism would sweep through Christendom. When men deny creation, they naturally deny the fall of man; and so the law of God is also set aside. If man was not created and had no fall, he would need no atoning blood of Jesus. God's message today is calling men to recognize creation, the law of God, the Sabbath, and the cross of Christ. God's remnant people proclaim these great doctrines and cling by faith to Christ, the Creator; Christ, the Lawgiver; and Christ, the Redeemer of Calvary.

7. It believes and holds to the Spirit of Prophecy.

Revelation 12:17—"The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus."

Revelation 19:10—"The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy."

This is a church of fulfilling prophecy and believing in God's special direction of His people through a latter-day manifestation of the gift of prophecy and the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. This is a special feature of this movement. (Write to the publisher for more information about the Spirit of Prophecy.)

8. It will endure reproach, scorn, and persecution (*Revelation 12:11*).

He who keeps God's commandments will meet ridicule at times, and Satan will make war with him; but a new book of Acts is being written as angels record the faithfulness of God's people, as they endure whatever comes to them anywhere in the world. A great test awaits them, but also a great reward.

9. It heeds God's voice to come out of Babylon.

Revelation 18:1, 2, 4—"I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with His glory. And He cried mightily with a strong voice, saying Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils . . . And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Out of the modern Babylon of apostasy—both in Rome and the apostate

churches of Protestantism—out of confusion, false doctrines, and worldliness, God is calling His people. Thousands of them are coming from every part of the world. They come because God is calling them, and His “sheep hear His voice.” They separate from the ways of the world (*1 John 2:15-17*), lay aside its pride and vanity (*1 Timothy 2:9-10; 1 Peter 3:3-4*), give up its evil ways (*2 Corinthians 7:1*), and turn to Jesus for salvation. Then by His grace they “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (*Revelation 14:12*). The true church, therefore, as you can see, must come out and be separate.

10. It will work and wait for Christ’s return.

While preaching God’s message the world over, this church will continue to look for the coming of Jesus (*Revelation 14:12-15*).

There is only one worldwide group of people that even professes to meet the above ten specifications of the prophecy of Revelation. It is the Seventh-day Adventist people. This group did not arise from a split in some denomination. It arose from a widespread movement over the world that centered in the second advent of Christ. An Adventist is one who believes in the personal, literal coming of Jesus. A Seventh-day Adventist is one who keeps the seventh-day Sabbath and believes that, in fulfillment of prophecy, this worldwide movement has come to gather a people who keep (1) “the commandments of God” and (2) “the faith of Jesus,” and who (3) “have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

This is God’s true church, according to the prophecies of the Bible; but the majority of His true followers, still in the churches of Babylon, are living according to all the truth they have. Will you yourself not answer the call, “Come out of her, My people?” Make your own decision; and, by your example, help to gather others into the fold of Christ?

“Daily Victory in Christ” is a thrilling study in how to live closer to God every day.

Brief Review Questions —

The first angel calls men to worship who?

The second angel calls them out of what?

The third angel calls them to obey what (Rev 14:12)?

The Remnant

1 - WHAT IS THE FIRST ANGEL'S MESSAGE?

Revelation 14:6-7—"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 nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His _____ is come: and _____ Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

1. It brings the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.
2. It calls men to "fear God."
3. It calls men to "give glory" to God.
4. It announces the hour of God's judgment.
5. It calls men to worship the Creator.

2 - WHAT MESSAGE IS GIVEN BY THE SECOND ANGEL?

Revelation 14:8—"And there followed another angel, saying, _____ is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

1. This is mystic Babylon, who persecuted the saints (*Revelation 17:5-6*).
2. Rome's false doctrines largely came from ancient Babylon.
3. Babylon is the same power as the little horn of Daniel 7:25.
4. She is the same as the leopard beast of Revelation 13.
5. All nations are made drunk with her wine.
6. Practically all the world will worship her.
7. She is scheduled for a final fall.

3 - WHAT WARNING IS SOUNDED BY THE THIRD ANGEL?

Revelation 14:9-10—"And the _____ angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is

poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

1. It warns against the worship of the beast.
2. It warns against worship of the image of the beast.
3. It warns against receiving the mark of the beast.
4. It warns of God's wrath upon those who do not heed His warning (*Revelation 14:9-10; 15:1; 16*).

**4 - HOW MAY WE IDENTIFY
GOD'S REMNANT CHURCH?**

1. It will preach a worldwide Judgment-hour message (*Revelation 14:6-7*).

2. It will deliver the message of mystic Babylon's fall (*Revelation 14:8*).

3. It will give the warning against the beast's image and mark (*Revelation 14:9-10*).

4. It urges the worship of the Creator above the beast or image (*Revelation 14:7*).

5. It keeps the commandments of God (*Revelation 14:12*).

6. It keeps and exalts the faith of Jesus (*Revelation 14:12*).

7. It believes and holds to the Spirit of Prophecy.

Revelation 12:17—"The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the _____ of her seed, which keep the _____ of God, and have the testimony of Jesus."

Revelation 19:10—"The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy."

8. It will endure reproach, scorn, and persecution (*Revelation 12:11*).

9. It heeds God's voice to come out of Babylon.

Revelation 18:1, 2, 4—"I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with His glory. And He cried mightily with a strong voice, saying Babylon the great is _____, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils . . . And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues."

10. It will work and wait for Christ's return.

What the Bible says about – Daily Victory in Christ

SCRIPTURE READING: HEBREWS 11

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (*John 14:6*). And the apostle John wrote, "He that hath the Son hath life" (*1 John 5:12*). Paul wrote, "For to me to live is Christ" (*Philippians 1:21*). "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (*Galatians 2:20*). "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (*Philippians 4:13*).

The active exercise of living faith in Christ is the one great essential to obtaining and maintaining an experience in the Lord that will bring increasing satisfaction in this life and ultimate deliverance from this world when Christ comes. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him" (*Hebrews 11:6*). "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (*1 John 5:4*). "God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (*Romans 12:3*). Faith is a gift of God to every man—rich and poor, high and low, free and bond, wise and simple. It is man's duty to nourish and exercise this faith. Though it be as small as a grain of mustard seed, it can grow and be used to move mountains of evil and build temples of righteousness.

However, it is not merely faith, but primarily the object of true faith that counts most. Faith in God, in Christ, in the promises of the Holy Scriptures, and in all God's plans and agencies for the accomplishment of His purposes is what we need. It is what we must have if we are to be victorious. Let us now see how faith makes us righteous and holy in God's sight.

I - HOW MAY A SINNER BECOME RIGHTEOUS?

Romans 5:1—"Being justified [forgiven and made righteous] by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Acts 13:38-39—"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

If you will read the story of the pharisee and the publican in Luke 18:9-14, you will note that the publican sought forgiveness of sin. "God be

merciful to me a sinner," he cried. Jesus adds this comment, "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified." In other words, the "forgiveness" that the publican sought, Jesus called "justification." This includes also the merciful gift of righteousness, which God counts to the credit of the repentant sinner for the simple reason that he has no acceptable righteousness of his own! The great store of righteousness upon which God draws, when imputing (counting) this undeserved credit, is the righteous life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A man may have been unjust, but by faith he may be counted as just. When an unjust man is thus accounted as a just man, he is "justified." He is forgiven all past sins. God gives him credit as a righteous person (through Christ). Then he has peace. He is counted as though he had never sinned at all.

This justification comes by faith in the blood of a righteous Christ.

Romans 3:24-25—"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

1 John 1:9—"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The cleansing from unrighteousness is through the blood of Christ. The sinner is condemned to eternal death for the violation of God's eternal law. The substitute death of another sinner would not atone. No angel of glory could die to save man. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression.

So Jesus came, lived a sinless life, and "died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (*1 Corinthians 15:3*); and it is He "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [satisfaction] through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (*Romans 3:25*). Thus do we exercise faith in the blood of a righteous Christ whose righteous life answers for our unrighteous and unjust past. "To declare, I say, at this time, His righteousness: that He [God] might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (*Romans 3:26*).

John 6:37—"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

Any man, who will, may come to Christ. Whosoever will, may come. And no sincere seeker will be turned away.

Matthew 11:28—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

At conversion, Christ satisfies the claims of the sacred, unchangeable law by counting His righteousness to the sinner's credit. The past is forgiven, not because the sinner has obeyed God's law, but in spite of the

fact that he has not obeyed. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (*Romans 3:28*)

The gracious gift of forgiveness God offers free. It is ours to exercise faith to the point of taking the gift. "Lay hold on eternal life" (*1 Timothy 6:12*). This is a definite spiritual action and transaction. We give God our sins and He gives us forgiveness. It is by faith that the just shall live (*Romans 1:17*).

"Do we then make void the law through faith?" This is a very good question. Paul answers, "God forbid; yea, we establish the law" (*Romans 3:31*). We are forgiven that we might from henceforth be obedient children, walking blameless in all the commandments of the Lord. This life of victory begins by faith in Christ's righteousness. It continues by faith in Christ's righteousness. It ends by faith in Christ's righteousness. It is Christ—Christ—Christ—first, last, and always. He alone is the Saviour—in the beginning, through life, and at death. And faith in Him is the connecting link.

2 - WHAT NEW RELATIONSHIP DOES THE CHRISTIAN ENJOY?

Without reservation the follower of Christ will say to Christ, as Thomas did, "My Lord and my God" (*John 20:28*). Jesus has a perfect righteousness to be honored. He said, "Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am" (*John 13:13*). As our Lord and Master, Jesus bids us follow Him.

Matthew 4:19-20—"He saith unto them, Follow Me . . . And they straightway . . . followed Him."

Luke 14:33—"Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple."

Too many hear the good news of escape from hell and of a way to heaven, and "with joy" receive it. They want to escape trial and suffering; they have visions of beautiful mansions on high that they will occupy by and by. But they are not concerned with relating themselves to Christ as followers and disciples. They are not prepared to acknowledge Jesus as "my Lord and my God." Jesus gave up heaven, came down here, and risked eternal loss that we might gain heaven. He who would accept this sacrifice intelligently and wholeheartedly will give up this world in order to follow the Saviour (*Philippians 2:5*). This means sacrifice. But think—think of the promise:

Matthew 19:29—"Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

For all that we give up, God will return a hundredfold. He takes away, but only to give more and better in return.

Matthew 7:24-25—"Whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock."

If we hear and obey, we shall be built upon the solid rock, Christ Jesus, not otherwise. Between these two extremes lie all the shades and colors of professed Christianity.

3 - WHAT IS THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER?

After the transaction has been made in which faith claims forgiveness for past sins, and after the soul by faith makes a complete surrender of all to Christ as Lord and Saviour, to do God's will and obey all His commandments, the next step is to have faith in Christ as a living Saviour with power to deliver you and, yes, to keep you from the power of sin. To learn this is to discover the secret of spiritual power. It is not enough to believe in the death of Christ. It is not enough to surrender to Christ. We must believe that Christ is a risen, all-powerful Saviour, who can and will bring victory over sin into the life through His indwelling Spirit. All of this is made possible through His resurrection victory. Paul said, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection" (*Philippians 3:10*). Here are promises of power made by the risen Saviour.

Matthew 28:18, 20—"Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth . . . And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Luke 24:49—"Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

Acts 1:8—"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

Hebrews 7:25—"He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Hebrews 12:1-2—"Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."

This power, as in the case of all other blessings, comes through active faith. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (*1 John 5:4*). A living faith means a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power. And by all means, hold on! "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you

will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (*Philippians 1:6*). In this way, dear friend, we enter upon the life of victory. In this way we receive spiritual power for an abiding life of conquest in the Saviour!

4 - HOW DOES THE BIBLE HELP OUR FAITH?

There is yet something important we must mention to help you. Faith, to be strong, must be fed. The Word of God is the food of faith. The Bible is heaven's pantry; on the shelves are stored, in unlimited quantity and almost infinite variety, the foods that nourish Christian faith and experience, and abundant delicacies to delight the soul of the Christian (*Jeremiah 15:16*). "Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb" (*Psalms 19:10*).

But it is so easy to keep on trying to live while neglecting to feed upon this heavenly food. Often the cares and pleasures of this life consume our time and energies to the neglect of God's Word. Sometimes, even in the work of God, it is possible to grow nervous and anxious, to work in haste, if not in fury, to do God's service while at the same time neglecting to nourish the soul and the spirit with daily, regular feeding on God's Word. The importance of daily Bible reading may be seen by the following:

1. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

Romans 10:17—"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

2. The Christian feeds upon, and lives by, the Word of God.

Matthew 4:4—"He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

3. His Word is a heavenly light.

Psalms 119:105—"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

4. It is powerful to resist evil.

Hebrews 4:12—"The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword."

5. His Word is the sword of the Spirit.

Ephesians 6:17—"Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

In the wilderness of temptation, Jesus wielded the "sword of the Spirit" with swift and telling strokes—"It is written . . . It is written." "It is written" (*Matthew 4:4, 7, 10*). "Then the devil leaveth Him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him" (*Matthew 4:11*). Oh friend, know this Book. Know it well. Use it in temptation to conquer the world and sin. Use it when overwhelmed with sorrow and fear and worry. Use

it when doubt and unbelief assail you. Every promise has power; every command, wisdom; every warning, deep meaning. Become known as a Bible-believing, Bible-practicing Christian.

5 - WHY IS PRAYER SO ESSENTIAL TO VICTORY?

“Ask, and it shall be given you,” said Jesus. “Every one that asketh receiveth” (*Matthew 7:7-8*). So it is clear that God has made prayer the means for receiving spiritual blessings that we would not otherwise receive unless we asked. We may well-remember three things.

1. **James 1:6**—“Let him ask in faith.”
2. **1 John 3:22**—“Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments.”
3. **Proverbs 28:9**—“He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.”

The promise is made that “they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength” (*Isaiah 40:31*). “He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (*Hebrews 7:25*). So ask, friend, and receive. Pray morning, noon, and night as David and Daniel did, and learn the sweetness of communion with God in the secret place of power. Oh, yes, and don’t forget to always pray in Jesus’ name.

6 - WHY IS EVERY CHRISTIAN CALLED TO BE A WITNESS?

Christian service is necessary for soul prosperity. “Take My yoke upon you,” said Jesus (*Matthew 11:29*). All life is action. We cannot be ever receiving and never giving. By faith we receive forgiveness and appropriate power. We feed on the Word of God and pray for this and that, but we must surrender, not only to do the will of God as between ourselves and Him, but to do His will toward others. Every soul is born into God’s kingdom as a missionary. Every Christian should be a soul winner. Moody said that if a man will read the Word of God fifteen minutes a day, pray sincerely fifteen minutes a day, and spend fifteen minutes a day talking definitely to help some soul to Christ, or heavenward, he will enjoy a good experience. Not only the ministers but the laymen should work to make others Christians. Think about the following texts:

Mark 16:15—“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel.”

God needs you to help spread abroad the story of the saving gospel and the speedy return of Jesus. If you love Him, the saving truth cannot be sealed up in your heart. It will overflow in blessing to others.

James 1:27—“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their

affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

Only “faith which worketh by love” (*Galatians 5:6*) will purify the soul and keep the channel of blessing open. The true Christian will have a special care for the widows, the fatherless, and the poor (*Matthew 25:34-40*).

Matthew 25:21—“Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”

These words of commendation are spoken to servants—faithful servants—who have worked for Christ. These soul-winning Christians are the ones whom He will take to heaven with Him when He comes again. They have exercised the faculties of the soul and become strong even as the muscles of the body become strong by exertion.

7 - WHY IS ACTIVE CHURCH FELLOWSHIP IMPORTANT?

He who by choice and without a justifiable reason habitually absents himself from church services and fellowship will not maintain a warm, glowing Christian experience. As a coal drawn from the fire onto the hearth soon loses its heat and glow, so the Christian who loses heart contact with other Christians is likely to lose his warmth of experience and find his ardor and zeal growing cold. When one is regular in church attendance, the fact that he may regard some of the members as hypocrites will not discourage him. He will do his best to elevate the percentage of true saints by being loyal himself. Jesus said:

“Where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I” (*Matthew 18:20*). “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together” (*Hebrews 10:25*), said the writer of Hebrews.

In these Bible lessons, we have prayerfully presented to you the Christ of the church, who alone can save; the hope of the church, which is the second advent of Jesus our Lord; the foundation of the church, which is the Word of the living God. If you will build upon that Word, your temple of faith will endure forever. If you build upon the shifting sands of human tradition and desire, your house of faith will go down in ruin. You are the builder, and you must decide on the foundation as well as on the house itself. God bless you now and be with you always.

Brief Review Questions —

Does God, in the Bible, promise daily victory over temptation and sin?

Through the enabling grace of Christ, will God help us obey His Ten Commandment law?

VICTORY IN CHRIST**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL—**

"It is not the will of God that His people should be weighed down with care. But our Lord does not deceive us. He does not say to us, 'Do not fear; there are no dangers in your path.' He knows there are trials and dangers, and He deals with us plainly. He does not propose to take His people out of a world of sin and evil, but He points them to a never-failing refuge. His prayer for His disciples was, 'I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.' 'In the world," He says, 'ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world' (John 17:15, 16:33).

"In His Sermon on the Mount, Christ taught His disciples precious lessons in regard to the necessity of trusting in God. These lessons were designed to encourage the children of God through all ages, and they have come down to our time full of instruction and comfort. The Saviour pointed His followers to the birds of the air as they warbled their carols of praise, unencumbered with thoughts of care, for 'they sow not, neither do they reap.' And yet the great Father provides for their needs. The Saviour asks, 'Are ye not much better than they' (Matthew 6:26)? The great Provider for man and beast opens His hand and supplies all His creatures. The birds of the air are not beneath His notice. He does not drop the food into their bills, but He makes provision for their needs . . . Will not the Author of our being, the Preserver of our life, the One who formed us in His own divine image, provide for our necessities if we but trust in Him?

"Christ pointed His disciples to the flowers of the field, growing in rich profusion and glowing in the simple beauty which the heavenly Father had given them, as an expression of His love to man. He said, 'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.' The beauty and simplicity of these natural flowers far outrival the splendor of Solomon . . . Jesus asks, 'If God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith' (Matthew 6: 28, 30)? . . . This lesson of Christ's is a rebuke to the anxious thought, the perplexity and doubt, of the faithless heart.

"The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient. Jesus says, 'My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.' 'These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.' John 14:27; 15:11.

"Happiness that is sprung from selfish motives, outside of the path of duty, is ill-balanced, fitful, and transitory; it passes away, and the soul is filled with loneliness and sorrow; but there is joy and satisfaction in the service of God; the Christian is not left to walk in uncertain paths; he is not left to vain regrets and disappointments. If we do not have the pleasures of this life we may still be joyful in looking to the life beyond.

“But even here Christians may have the joy of communion with Christ; they may have the light of His love, the perpetual comfort of His presence. Every step in life may bring us closer to Jesus, may give us a deeper experience of His love, and may bring us one step nearer to the blessed home of peace. Then let us not cast away our confidence, but have firm assurance, firmer than ever before. ‘Hitherto hath the Lord helped us,’ and He will help us to the end (1 Samuel 7:12). Let us look to the monumental pillars, reminders of what the Lord has done to comfort us and to save us from the hand of the destroyer. Let us keep fresh in our memory all the tender mercies that God has shown us,—the tears He has wiped away, the pains He has soothed, the anxieties removed, the fears dispelled, the wants supplied, the blessings bestowed,—thus strengthening ourselves for all that is before us through the remainder of our pilgrimage.

“We cannot but look forward to new perplexities in the coming conflict, but we may look on what is past as well as on what is to come, and say, ‘Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.’ ‘As thy days, so shall thy strength be.’ Deuteronomy 33:25. The trial will not exceed the strength that shall be given us to bear it. Then let us take up our work just where we find it, believing that whatever may come, strength proportionate to the trial will be given.

“And by and by the gates of heaven will be thrown open to admit God’s children, and from the lips of the King of glory the benediction will fall on their ears like richest music, ‘Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’ (Matthew 25:34).

“Then the redeemed will be welcomed to the home that Jesus is preparing for them. There their companions will not be the vile of earth, liars, idolaters, the impure, and unbelieving; but they will associate with those who have overcome Satan and through divine grace have formed perfect characters. Every sinful tendency, every imperfection, that afflicts them here has been removed by the blood of Christ, and the excellence and brightness of His glory, far exceeding the brightness of the sun, is imparted to them. And the moral beauty, the perfection of His character, shines through them, in worth far exceeding this outward splendor. They are without fault before the great white throne, sharing the dignity and the privileges of the angels.

“In view of the glorious inheritance that may be his, ‘what shall a man give in exchange for his soul’ (Matthew 16:26)? He may be poor, yet he possesses in himself a wealth and dignity that the world could never bestow. The soul redeemed and cleansed from sin, with all its noble powers dedicated to the service of God, is of surpassing worth; and there is joy in heaven in the presence of God and the holy angels over one soul redeemed, a joy that is expressed in songs of holy triumph.”

—*Steps to Christ, 122-126*

Victory in Christ

I - HOW MAY A SINNER BECOME RIGHTEOUS?

Romans 5:1—"Being justified [forgiven and made righteous] by faith, we have _____ with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Acts 13:38-39—"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Romans 3:24-25—"Being justified freely by His _____ through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

1 John 1:9—"If we _____ our sins, He is faithful and just to _____ us our sins, and to _____ us from all unrighteousness."

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2 - WHAT NEW RELATIONSHIP DOES THE CHRISTIAN ENJOY?

Matthew 4:19-20—"He saith unto them, Follow Me . . . And they straightway . . . followed Him."

Luke 14:33—"Whosoever he be of you that _____ not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple."

Matthew 19:29—"Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an _____, and shall inherit everlasting life."

Matthew 7:24-25—"Whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and _____ them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a _____."

3 - WHAT IS THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER?

Matthew 28:18, 20—"Jesus came and spake unto them, saying,

All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth . . . And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

Luke 24:49—“Behold, I send the _____ of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”

Hebrews 7:25—“He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

Hebrews 12:1-2—“Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with _____ the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.”

4 - HOW DOES THE BIBLE HELP OUR FAITH?

1. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

Romans 10:17—“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the _____ of God.”

2. The Christian feeds upon, and lives by, the Word of God.

Matthew 4:4—“He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” **3. His Word is a heavenly light. Psalm**

119:105—“Thy Word is a _____ unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” **4. It is powerful to resist evil. Hebrews 4:12**—

“The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.” **5. His Word is the sword of the Spirit.**

Ephesians 6:17—“Take the helmet of salvation and the _____ of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”

5 - WHY IS PRAYER SO ESSENTIAL TO VICTORY?

1. James 1:6—“Let him ask in faith.” **2. 1 John 3:22**—“Whatsoever we ask, we _____ of Him, because we keep His commandments.” **3. Proverbs 28:9**—“He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.”

6 - WHY IS EVERY CHRISTIAN CALLED TO BE A WITNESS?

Mark 16:15—“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel.”

James 1:27—“Pure _____ and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

HOW TO MARK YOUR BIBLE

Taking the time to mark key verses in your Bible will help fix them in your mind. Done a little at a time, it is actually a very encouraging and enjoyable project.

LESSON CODES—If you wish to mark the verses found in the lessons in a chain, so you can go from one verse to another in your Bible, then you will need a code for each lesson. *Such a code is found at the far right of the chart on page 359.* Here is an example of how it could be used to mark the first two texts in Lesson One:

MARKING PATTERN—Next to the first text in Lesson One, for example, you would write this: (“N” stands for “next text.”)

Luke 24:44-45 B-1

N: 2 Pet 3:15-16

Alongside the next verse, you would write this:

2 Pet 3:15-16 B-2

N: 2 Tim 3:16

FIRST TEXT LIST—You will want to keep a sheet in the back of your Bible, which lists the first text in each lesson study. *A copy of this will be found on the chart on page 359.*

COLOR MARKING SYSTEM—You may find it helpful to use several colors when marking verses. In this way, you may be able to more quickly locate and use them later. Sometimes you may want to mark the entire verse, and sometimes only key words or phrases.

Use only the finest of marking materials, preferably top-grade pencils. Colored pens, with the exception of black, eventually blur as oils, from the fingers, accumulate in the paper. If it is still manufactured, the Eagle Verithin line of colored pencils is very suitable.

For the color black, a fairly soft lead pencil will be found to be superior to ink. This is because it never prints through to the other side, and you can mark light, medium, or dark with it; something you cannot do with a black pen.

It is best to use a ruler when you underline. A thin, six-inch ruler can serve both as a bookmark and as a readily available marking ruler.

Here is one suggestive arrangement of doctrines, using six colors and black, as you mark these 31 Bible lessons in your Bible:

Prophecy - Red

- 3 - Daniel 2 D2
- 5 - Second Coming SC
- 6 - Signs of the End SE
- 7 - Millennium M
- 8 - Heaven H
- 9 - Daniel 8 and 9 D8 & 9
- 14 - Daniel 7 D7
- 25 - Revelation 12 R12
- 26 - Revelation 13 R13
- 30 - Revelation 14 R14

Christian experience - Blue

- 4 - Plan of Salvation PS
- 2 - Jesus J
- 20 - Prayer P
- 24 - Living in Christ CL1
- 31 - Victory in Christ CL2

Obedience - Green

- 1 - Bible B
- 11 - Law L
- 12 - Law and Grace LG
- 13 - Sabbath S
- 15 - Change of the Sabbath CS
- 16 - Sabbath in New Testament SNT
- 17 - Sabbath Questions SQ

Sanctuary - Orange

- 10 - Sanctuary and Judgment HS

Death - Brown

- 18 - Unpardonable Sin US
- 19 - Sin and Satan SS
- 21 - State of the Dead SD
- 22 - Punishment of the Wicked PW

Concluding doctrines - Violet

- 23 - Health H
- 27 - Baptism and Ordinances B&O
- 29 - Tithes and Offerings T&O
- 30 - Spirit of Prophecy SP

Miscellaneous - Black

Some topics could be marked by one or the other of two different colors. One example would be Daniel 8:14; some could be red

or orange.

As you study deeper in the Bible, you will find many passages not mentioned in this 31-lesson set. For example, there is much in the books of Hebrews, Exodus, Leviticus, and even Revelation about the Sanctuary.

Feel free to consider other ways to mark your Bible. The present writer has for years used underlining to emphasize various verses or parts of verses. He has lightly colored through the print itself of verses especially important to him. And (holding the pencil on the side and shading lightly) he has lightly penciled through those verses or key words which introduce new sections. Carefully done, this can help you outline the major sections in your Bible.

Drawing a vertical line alongside one or more verses helps connect them together and indicate their importance. You may wish to do this on the side next to the center margin (where the marginal notes and references are found).

WHICH TYPE OF PAPER?—Which would be better: a wide-margin India-paper Bible or a Bible paper that has a narrower margin? That may seem like an odd question, yet there is more difference than might at first appear.

An “India-paper” Bible is very thin, much more attractive appearing and, of course, more expensive. Unfortunately, because the paper is so thin, months later the ink markings may eventually pass on through to the other side. Some colored pencils will also (but never pencil). This can ruin a well-marked Bible. It has happened to the present writer. In addition, because the paper tends to stick together more, it is harder to turn quickly to one Bible verse and then another. This makes the giving of sermons or Bible studies more difficult.

In contrast, less expensive Bibles with what is called “Bible paper” may be a little thicker but you can more easily mark them with ink and colored pencils, and you can much more quickly turn to passages you are looking for.

The present writer would far rather have a Bible-paper Bible, with its smaller margins, than to have an India-paper, even though it may have wide-margins.

“In comparison with the worth of one soul, the whole world sinks into insignificance.”—5 Testimonies, 614.

“The worth of a soul cannot be fully estimated by finite minds . . . [In heaven] no one will then regret his self-denying efforts and persevering labors . . . for souls that might have been lost had he neglected his duty or become weary in well-doing.”—5 Testimonies, 620.

Xerox this page and paste it into the back of your Bible. You will then be able to quickly go to the beginning of your Bible chains.

LESSON FIRST TEXTS AND CODES

LESSON TOPIC	FIRST TEXT	CODE
1 - God's Special Book (Bible)	Luke 24:44-45	B-1
2 - Ten Facts about Jesus	John 3:16	J-1
3 - Daniel Two	Isaiah 46:9-10	D2-1
4 - The Plan of Salvation	I John 3:4	PS-1
5 - Christ's Second Coming	John 14:2-3	SC-1
6 - Signs of the End	Luke 21:25-27	SE-1
7 - The Millennium	1 Thess 4:15-16	M-1
8 - Bible Views of Heaven	Genesis 2:7	Hv-1
9 - Daniel Eight and Nine	Daniel 8:20	D8-9-1
10 - The Sanctuary in Heaven	Hebrews 9:22	HS-1
11 - The Eternal Law of God	Psalms 103:19	L-1
12 - Law and Grace	Colossians 2:14	LG-1
13 - Sabbath	Exodus 31:16-17	S-1
14 - The Prophecy of Daniel Seven	Daniel 7:2	D7-1
15 - Change of the Sabbath	Isaiah 8:20	CS-1
16 - Sunday in the New Testament	Matthew 28:1	SNT-1
17 - Questions Answered	Jeremiah 6:16	SQ-1
18 - Unpardonable Sin	Matthew 28:19	US-1
19 - Sin and Satan	1 John 3:4	SS-1
20 - Prayer	Psalms 31:9	P-1
21 - State of Dead	1 Timothy 1:17	SD-1
22 - End of the Wicked	Job 30:23	PW-1
23 - The Bible and Better Health	Ezekiel 33:11	H-1
24 - Christian Living-1	John 14:16-17	CL1-1
25 - Revelation 12	Revelation 12:1	R12-1
26 - Revelation 13	Revelation 13:1	R13-1
27 - Baptism and Ordinances	Matthew 3:13	B&O-1
28 - The Spirit of Prophecy	Ephesians 4:11-13	SP-1
29 - Taking God as a Partner	Psalms 24:1	T&O-1
30 - Revelation 14	Revelation 14:6-7	R14-1
31 - Christian Living-2	Romans 5:1	CL2-1

FOR FURTHER STUDY

The following brief study guide will help the careful teacher and student to dig still deeper into the Biblical truths dealt with in these lessons. (BR = *Bible Readings*. The paging is that of the lowest-cost edition, which is published by Harvestime Books.)

- 1 - God's Special Book **9** (*p. 9 in this book*)
 Bible: BR 10-22 (*pp. 10-22 in Bible Readings*)
- 2 - Ten Facts about Jesus **21**
 Jesus: BR 20-22, 38-45, 104-115
- 3 - Daniel Two **33**
 Daniel 2: BR 129-138
- 4 - The Plan of Salvation **43**
 Redemption Plan: BR 30-38, 45-48, 50-63, 67-95
- 5 - Christ's Second Coming **53**
 Second Advent: BR 227-238
- 6 - Signs of the End **63**
 Signs: BR 210-227
- 7 - The Millennium **75**
 Millennium: BR 238-245
- 8 - Bible Views of Heaven **87**
 Heaven: BR 583-596
- 9 - Daniel Eight and Nine **97**
 Daniel 8: BR 152-164
- 10 - The Sanctuary in Heaven **107**
 Sanctuary: BR 165-174
 Judgment: BR 174-179
- 11 - The Eternal Law of God **121**
 Law: BR 253-285, 293-298
- 12 - Obedience through Christ **133**
 Ceremonial Law: BR 306-309
 Law and Grace: BR 287-293

- 13 - Your Special Day with God **143**
Sabbath: BR 300-315
- 14 - The Prophecy of Daniel Seven **155**
Daniel 7: BR 142-152
- 15 - How Sundaykeeping Began **165**
History of Change: BR 323-327, 339-343
- 16 - Sunday in the New Testament **185**
Sunday in NT: BR 315-320
Sabbath in NT: BR 320-323
- 17 - Questions Answered **201**
What Was Abolished? BR 285-287
- 18 - Can We Go Too Far in Sin? **215**
Holy Spirit: BR 117-119, 124-127
- 19 - Sin and Satan **225**
Sin: BR 26-29
Satan: BR 382-385
Good and Bad Angels: BR 414-421
- 20 - The Pathway to God's Throne **235**
Prayer: BR 475-482
- 21 - The Other Side of Death **245**
State of Dead: BR 390-395
- 22 - Eternal Life in Christ **255**
End of Wicked: BR 395-400
- 23 - The Bible and Better Health **265**
Health: BR 570-572
Temperance: BR 574-581
Healing: 502-504
- 24 - Living in Christ **275**
Holy Spirit: BR 117-119
Christian Living: BR 428-473
- 25 - Satan's War against the Church **285**
Revelation 12: BR 192-193

- 26 - The Mark of the Beast **295**
Revelation 13: BR 192-200
Mark of the Beast: BR 327-331
Revelation 14 (Seal): BR 331-336
- 27 - Following in Jesus' Steps **307**
Baptism: BR 63-67
Ordinances: 486-492
- 28 - The Gift of Prophecy **317**
Spirit of Prophecy: BR 119-124
- 29 - Taking God as a Partner **327**
Tithe: BR 505-507
Offerings: BR 505-512
- 30 - The Remnant **337**
Revelation 14: BR 179-192
Persecution: 355-380
- 31 - Victory in Christ **345**
Christian Living-2: BR 50-88

“Jesus did not consider heaven a place to be desired while we were lost. He left the heavenly courts for a life of reproach and insult, and a death of shame. He who was rich in heaven's priceless treasure became poor, that through His poverty we might be rich. We are to follow in the path He trod. He who becomes a child of God should henceforth look upon himself as a link in the chain let down to save the world, one with Christ in His plan of mercy, going forth with Him to seek and save the lost.” —*MH*, 105

“The work for souls is the most delicate work in all the world. It calls for skill and knowledge. It calls for a very sensitive touch, love and understanding. We are told again and again that “the highest of all sciences is the science of soul saving. The greatest work to which human beings can aspire is the work of winning men from sin to holiness.” —*Ministry of Healing*, 398

“The conversion of souls to God is the greatest, the noblest work in which human beings can have a part.”—*7 Testimonies*, 52

“All worldly enterprises are of trifling importance compared with the work of saving souls. Earthly things are not enduring, although they cost so much. But one soul saved will shine in the kingdom of heaven throughout eternal ages.” —*2 Testimonies*, 336

HOW TO LOCATE BIBLE STUDY INTERESTS

People want help. They want to understand the Word of God. They want God! They want forgiveness of sin. They want help in living better, clean lives.

Many are waiting for you to come to their door and offer to give them Bible studies.

The question is how to find them.

There are many ways to locate Bible study interests. Here is one method which has proven successful:

Take a clip board and write on it several questions:

Name

Address

etc.

Do not expect to ever come to the end of asking those questions. You will either be stopped or a Bible study will result. Now, let us see how it works:

A key factor in your success will be the amount you have pled with God, beforehand, for souls. Have you prayed so much that it is changing your own life? Have you agonized enough that you are weighted with a strong burden for souls? When you are sufficiently armed with the presence of the Holy Spirit, you start off. No longer do you care about yourself. Your sole concern is for the people; they must be reached for Christ!

As you drive, pray for guidance as to where to begin. Parking the car, you walk over to a home and knock on the door. Hold the clipboard cradled in one arm, prepared to be written on. The other hand has a pencil or pen ready for writing responses.

When someone opens it, you may say something like this:

“Our church is making a survey of the folk in our community. May I ask you a few questions?”

At this juncture, the hours of prayer will have produced in you a person who looks sincere and trustworthy, the kind of good person they wish they had for a friend. Note that you did not try to enter the building. This greatly helped set the householder at ease.

You may receive a negative response (“Not interested”; “No, not today”).

If the reply is negative, you go to the next home. As you go, your thoughts are not of yourself, for you are praying for those

God is leading you to. *You are concerned about other people!* This is a strong key to the indominatable spirit which God can use, because the heart is surrendered to Him, working with Him, and thinking like Him.

It really does not matter how many doors you knock on before you find someone to talk to. You are getting good outdoor exercise and you are working with the angels. What a pleasant experience to have!

Before long, you will encounter someone willing to speak with you at the door.

As they open the door, you are relaxed with your hand holding a pen, with the cradled, angled clipboard in your other hand.

“Our church is making a survey of the folk in our community. May I ask you a few questions?”

You are standing there pleasant, relaxed, easy going, warm, and sunny dispositioned—the kind of person people like to be around.

“Yes.”

Looking down at your clipboard, you prepare to write as you say in a gentle, friendly way, “Your name?”

“Mrs. Mary Jones.”

“Address”

“1234 5th Street.”

“What church do you prefer?”

“Oh, uh, Christian; uh, Baptist.”

“How often do you attend?”

“Not very often.”

“Do you have a Bible?”

“I think so.”

Notice the direction these questions are taking you. Also notice that they are all about religious things. This would be understandable; since, at the outset, you said you were doing a survey for your church.

There are several different things you could have said, but each question will be leading in the same direction.

A key factor here is that, as long as you can keep this conversation in progress, and in a pleasant manner, you are moving closer to an appointment to give Bible studies to this person.

Your humble, kindly, sincere bearing shines through all that you do, and it moves on the hearts of those whom you converse

with. If you are walking with Jesus, it shows, and the kind of people who would want Bible studies, will like to talk with you.

They sense that you have a genuine concern for souls. And, deep down, they know they have a soul which needs help.

At this juncture in the conversation, you can lead the conversation along several different spiritual routes. But we will continue with a suggested one:

“Do you have a Bible?”

“I think so.”

“Do you read in it very often?”

“Not too often.”

“Would you like to understand it better?”

“Yes, I really would.”

At this point, you pause and say something like this,

“You know, crime and immorality are increasing so rapidly, aren’t they?”

“Yes, they sure are.”

“Conditions in the world are steadily worsening. Surely, it cannot be long before Christ returns.”

“Did you know that, in the Bible, Christ predicted the kind of conditions we now have?”

“No, I didn’t.”

If the person seems to be continuing in agreement and thoughtful interest, you will continue right on, in your conversation with him. Remember, as long as you can keep it in progress, the closer you are nearing to an appointment for Bible studies.

“Here, if you don’t mind, let me show you.”

Taking out a small Bible from your suit pocket or purse, you prepare to open it. At this point, the person may invite you into the home, or you may delicately ask if you can come in. If not, you can continue the conversation right there at the door. Do know that, by this time, a trustful friendship is developing and it likely that you may be invited in. Your attitude, bearing, and prayers throughout the conversation up to this point greatly help.

Right here, you might ask, “Can you find your Bible, and I will show you?”

This will tend to lead into an invitation to come inside—if the person knows where that Bible is. So you may not want to ask that. Either way, still at the door or now inside, you may continue:

“Over here, in the book of Matthew. It is one of the four books which tells about the life of Jesus. Here in Matthew 24, Jesus predicted the future.”

Begin reading Matthew 24:1 and go a number of verses into it, pausing to comment on it. There are many brief spiritual comments you can make which will reach that person's heart. But guard yourself, that you do not become too wordy. Or, to say it differently, speak slowly from the heart and make every word count. You are not there to spout off your great knowledge. You are there to reach a soul in its need.

From the very beginning of the conversation at the door, you have been both speaking and praying (yes, both can be done at the same time. It is done by being in a prayerful attitude while you are speaking, and praying to God—as Nehemiah did—during every pause).

You may get up to verse 13 or, perhaps, a little beyond. But at some point, you pause, as though you are thinking, and then say,

“Would you like me to come back and study the Bible again next week?”

“Yes, I would.”

“All right, should we make it this same time?”

“That would be fine.”

—Then be sure you come back next week at that time!

Some of these Bible study appointments will unravel rather quickly, for Satan will catch away their thoughts to other imagined duties and activities. But some of the appointments will continue on, week after week. *If at all possible*, if you are a man and the Bible study interest is a woman, bring a woman with you to the studies; ideally, your wife, possibly one of your children.

Sometimes, within the first three or four studies, you may be able to deftly switch the studies from yourself to a friend, who will conduct them thereafter. But it must be a person who is also warm and sincere, someone which the Bible study interest can identify with.

As you continue to go from door to door, you will learn to rather quickly recognize the type of people who are likely to become good Bible study contacts.

It is very important that you pray for people, both before and after you have met and spoken with them. There is great power in this ongoing spirit of prayerful intercession for souls.

God will work through you to reach many souls, and you will rejoice in heaven as you see the harvest which has resulted.

HOW TO PREPARE A LESSON

During the week preceding the presentation of a study, you will have opportunity to study somewhat into the subject. For this purpose, you may find the Study Guides on page 360-362 to be helpful.

At the very least, you will want to carefully read over the lesson in advance. As you do so, underline key points on your copy. Then go through it a second time, making more forceful underlinings to certain items.

In this way, you will not only become quite familiar with the lesson content, but, during the study presentation, those markings will help you focus on the special Bible passages and key comments you want to give special attention to.

Each time you later give that lesson again, go over it in advance—just as you did the first time.

Always, always—be in a spirit of prayer as you prepare a lesson and as you give it. And always pray for those folk afterward! Your dedication and concern is crucial to the deeper movings of the Holy Spirit.

You will, of course, want to have additional copies of the lesson with you to give to the person(s) you have just given the study to. In this way they can review it. By giving the Bible study interest a copy of the lesson, you have also given him a copy of the *Supplementary Materials* for that lesson. Week after week, these *Supplementary Materials* will help him more and more fully appreciate and value the remarkable Bible commentary to be found in the Spirit of Prophecy.

You would do well to encourage him to use the two-page lessons, at the end of each of the larger ones, as the basis for obtaining a better grasp of the message. The incentive to start his own Bible marking program is always encouraging.

He will be pleased with the *Certificate of Scholarship*, he will receive when the lessons are completed. Hopefully, you have been able to provide him with one or more free books as you proceeded with the lessons. They were listed on page 8, but are reprinted below:

Lesson 1 - *Steps to Christ or Shelter in the Storm*

Lesson 5 - *Desire of Ages*

Lesson 9 - *Patriarchs and Prophets*

Lesson 13 - *Beyond Pitcairn*

Lesson 17 - *Great Controversy*

Lesson 23 - *Ministry of Healing*

Lesson 28 - *Prophet of the End*

Lesson 31 - *Bible Readings*

WHEN GIVING BIBLE STUDIES

When giving Bible studies, here are several points which will help you carry them on more efficiently:

Same time. It is well to give the Bible study at the same time each week. This establishes a pattern of regularity.

Be prepared. Be acquainted with the lesson. At the very least, try to have read it over ahead of time.

Dress appropriately. You may not need to arrive in go-to-meeting clothes, but your clothes should be neat and clean.

Be on time. If you said you would be there at a certain time, you should either be there then, call ahead, or have a good excuse.

Be courteous. Do not interrupt and do not argue.

Be a good friend. Be warm, relaxed, kindly, and helpful.

Help them get to church or other group meetings. Do not wait until the lesson series is finished to begin doing that! This is where many make a major mistake. They need to identify with your local congregation, as well as with you.

Caution. A man should avoid giving Bible studies to a woman alone and vice versa, especially if either one is married.

Humbleness. Do not be afraid to say, "I do not know the answer to that." They will respect you for not pretending to know everything. Then add, "We will have to study into that." Then go home and study out the answer. Counsel with a pastor or friend.

Premature questions. When they prematurely ask about a subject you will come to later (mark of the beast, Sabbath, tithing, diet, etc.), say, "That is a good question. We will study that later on."

Shepherd them. Continue to shepherd them, even after they start coming to church or group meetings, at least until they become integrated into the group and are making additional warm friendships.

Keep studying. As you have opportunity, continue to study more deeply into these Biblical teachings. An excellent opportunity is yours when you know you have to give another lesson study the next week. That gives you several days to do additional background study on the subject.

Most important of all: Pray, pray, pray. These are precious souls who need Jesus and the special truths for this time in history. Satan will try to interfere and prevent the studies from being successfully completed. Pray and work and pray.

REACHING THE HEART AND OBTAINING DECISIONS

You will find here an invaluable collection of helpful suggestions. This is one of the most important sections in this entire book.

GRADUALLY LEAD THEM TO CHRIST AND THE MESSAGE

Five factors are involved in making a decision. What the soul needs to do, in coming to Christ and making a firm decision to remain with Him:

- A complete surrender to Christ.
- Change of life's habits and practices.
- The keeping of all God's commandments.
- Dedication of whole life and service to God.
- Tests: husband or family opposition, the embarrassment to friends, former church association strained, forsaken by some old associates and separating from others, employment difficulties.

Labor under a deep conviction that you must keep pressing on in your efforts to win souls. Teach a Christ-centered message (Zech 12:10; John 12:32).

Teach the whole message, not just part of it. Teach the message with conviction of heart (Isa 58:1; 1 Cor 14:8; 2 Cor 5:11).

"Every discourse should be given under a sense of the awful judgments soon to fall on the world."—*3 Testimony Treasures, 220.*

Bible teaching should not be bombastic, but positive and urgent. There need be no "maybe" or "ifs" about it. God has given us a certain message for the world.

"God will move upon men in humble positions to declare the message of present truth . . . The truth is as a fire in their bones, filling them with a burning desire to enlighten those who sit in darkness."—*7 Testimonies, 26-27.*

- "Go ye." Matt 28:19.
- Our hearts burn within. Ps 39:3; Job 32:18; Micah 3:8.
- "Woe is unto me if I preach not." 1 Cor 9:16.
- "I could not stay (keep quiet)." Jer 20:7-9.
- "I am debtor." Rom 1:14.
- I "cannot but speak." (Balaam) Num 22:18, 38; Christ, Deut 18:18; (Micaiah) 2 Chron 18:13; Peter, Acts 4:20.
- "Before whom I stand." 1 Kings 17:1.
- "Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah. Jonah 1:1.
- "Whether they will hear or whether they will forbear." Eze. 2:5.
- "The hand of the Lord was strong upon me." Eze 3:14.

Move forward, step by step. Before you come to the testing truths (law, Sabbath, and beyond), gain progressive acknowledgment and assent to the truth of the earlier Bible truths. 1 John 1:7.

Every discourse should be directed to the end of decision. Do not wait until the testing truths to seek for decisions, but begin calling for assent, or acknowledgment at the very first meeting.

Never present the truth with the attitude of "take it or leave it." Con-

sider each truth that is presented as a step leading upward to the beautiful temple of truth.

The appeal at the close of each study should naturally develop out of the subject presented. For example, at the close of the study on the "State of the Dead" an appeal like this could be made:

"This is a subject which has been misunderstood all through the ages. I am so glad the Bible makes it so plain, as we have seen in this study. Our loved ones and all who have died in the past are asleep in the grave, awaiting the resurrection morning. How much better God's plan is than the false theories of man! Was the subject made clear to you tonight?" (Then ask for a show of hands. Do you have any questions?)

A definite surrender to Christ must precede the presentation of the testing truths. Dwell on practical godliness. Little is accomplished in teaching doctrine to a spiritually dead person. Christian life demands a new birth experience. Help the individual to know the meaning of conversion. Not all conversions are alike, but all conversions lead to obedience. Conversion means not only separating from the world, but full dedication to God.

Do not hesitate to ask the individual whether he has accepted Jesus as his own personal Saviour. If he is a backslider, read Jer 3:12, 13, 22; 29:11-13; Luke 15:22. If he is weighed down with some past sin, read Isaiah 43:25; Micah 7:7, 8, 18, 19; 1 John 1:9.

It is of paramount importance that we teach the simple steps to Christ (read *Steps to Christ*) before we press home the importance of obeying the fourth commandment of the Decalogue. When one understands the real meaning of the cross of Christ, he will respond to the Saviour's invitation: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments."

Here are the ABCs in becoming a Christian, in the words of the Bible:
• "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."
• "Behold the Lamb of God."
• "Come unto me."

Here is how to live the Christian life:

• Read the Scriptures for strength: John 5:39; 2 Tim 2:15.
• Commune with God in prayer: 1 Thess 5:17.
• Obey His will: 1 John 3:22.

Read the promises of God's Word to them. Use the sword of the Spirit (Heb 4:12) in pointing them to Christ who never fails. Help them to believe that God's promises are just as sure today as when they were first given.

Use a "Thus Saith the Lord" in meeting excuses.

Inquire as to problems standing in the way of obedience to God's Word. Answer their questions, read the promises of God's Word. Assure them that, although the battle must be fought and the will surrendered, victory is certain.

Use the following texts to give a brief Bible study on the filthy tobacco habit: 1 Cor 3:16, 17; 2 Cor 6:17, 18; 7:1; Deut 29:18-20 (see margin); Rev 21:27.

Recognize the right moment to press for a decision. "Today, if you will hear His voice." Heb 4:7.

“Many are convicted of sin, and feel their need of a sin-pardoning Saviour . . . if words are not spoken at the right moment, calling for decision from the weight of evidence already presented, the convicted ones pass on without identifying themselves with Christ, the golden opportunity passes, and they have not yielded, and they go farther and farther away from the truth.”—*Evangelism*, 283.

How can we know when the right moment has come? The Holy Spirit will impress your praying heart that the time has come to press for a decision. Be alert to the soul signals that will help you to realize that the right moment has come to make that decision. These signals are found in expressions such as these:

- “Would I have to quit shows?”
- “I wish my husband were more agreeable to becoming an Adventist.”
- “I can’t seem to give up smoking.”
- “I wonder if I would lose my job if I asked for Sabbaths off.”

Ask for a favorable decision. If we expect decisions for God, we must ask for them. Few people volunteer to become one with our people. Can you recall anyone coming and requesting baptism before you made an appeal?

How to ask. Use the “which” method to get a better percentage of favorable answers and never a flat refusal. Give a choice between something and something, never between something and nothing. Expect an answer to be in the affirmative.

What to ask.

- “We are planning a baptism on June 1 and another on July 15. Some are preferring to be baptized on June 1 while others are choosing July 15. On which of these two dates would you prefer to follow your Saviour’s example—June 1 or July 15?”

- “You and the children have studied all the major doctrines of the Bible. God has given you hearts eager for salvation. The baptism will be on September 12. It will be a beautiful act for you and your precious children to stand in the water together and be baptized as a family. Surely God will be pleased for the family to be baptized together. Would you prefer to lead the way into the water and the children follow or would you like to have the children go first?”

What should you do if you do not receive a favorable response?

Take advantage of unfavorable responses by leaving the listener approachable (*Evangelism*, 283, 300). When people do not respond favorably we should try to find out why. A simple question will bring out the reason for unfavorable replies: “*What do you have in mind?*” Memorize and use that question. It is very effective in getting to the bottom of the trouble. You are in a position to be of further help to the person by meeting his excuses with Bible promises and by citing your own experience in accepting the message.

Make direct, personal appeals.

“The secret of our success and power as a people advocating advanced truth will be found in making direct, personal appeals to those who are

interested, having unwavering reliance upon the Most High.”—*Review, August 30, 1892.*

“Many are in the valley of decision, where special, close, and pointed appeals are necessary to move them to lay down the weapons of their warfare, and take their position on the Lord’s side.”—*1 Testimonies, 646.*

How can one put this counsel of special, close, pointed appeals into practice? The three questions that one tactfully, yet pointedly, asks when one comes to the time of final decisions are:

- “I am quite sure you believe that what you have been taught is the truth of God?”

- “I notice how interested you have been, and one of these days you plan to accept the truth. Is that not right? You are planning some day to follow the footsteps of the Saviour?”

- “I know that you will rejoice, as others have, as they have followed Jesus all of the way. Great joy will come to you when you keep the commandments of God. You have some problems that you will have to face, but what great joy will come to your heart when you decide for Jesus. You tell me you know the truth, and you also said that you are going to accept it some day. Tell me, when are you going to follow Jesus fully? Let us kneel here together and ask God for grace to do it now.”

Pray convicted soul over the line to a decision. Matt. 7:7, 8. Victories are won and decisions are made for eternity on one’s knees.

What if the person says, “But I have never prayed.”

Then you suggest that he say this prayer after you. “O God, I know this is the truth. I know what I must do. Lord, give me the grace to do it right now. I thank you for answering my prayers, for Jesus’ sake.” As you rise from your knees say, “I thank God that you have made this great decision.”

Help to a Right Decision on uniting with the remnant. Mark 16:16.

He may be under conviction, but he is unwilling to obey on some point; so he says: “I will live the truth without joining!”

In answering, note these points:

- In the days of Noah, only those who entered the ark were saved. Assent to the teaching of Noah, if not accompanied by obedience in a very definite way, did not save men or women from the deluge.

- The Third Angel’s Message constitutes a definite call out of a definite place (see 2 Cor 6:17, 18; Rev 18:1-4).

- All who are saved when Jesus comes will be numbered with the remnant (Rev 12:17) who “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Rev 14:12.

- Baptism is the ordinance uniting the individual member to Christ’s body. Gal. 3:27.

Bring them to the group meetings. Hold a Sabbath vespers meeting with the new believers. Instruction on proper Sabbath observance has been given, but hearing and doing are different. Show them how to make the Sabbath the happiest day of all the week. Usher in their first Sabbath. Accompany them to the meeting hall and introduce them to members of like interest and occupation.

Counsel with the pastor and persevere. On his visit to the home with you he may use some appeal to help the person decide to obey. Call on the believers to pray. Do not let go of the arm of God too soon. Have faith in the convicting and converting power of the Holy Spirit. Take hold of God's arm, hold on, and never let go.

HOW TO MAKE APPEALS

Four things keep people from making their decision for Christ and His Word: negligence, the habit of postponing duties, indecision, and cherished sin. Present their need of a Saviour who forgives sins. Convince them of the program of God as outlined in His Word. When they listen to us we have secured their attention and the atmosphere necessary to prepare them for the decision.

What is needed to help them make prompt decisions?

- Present the message as a life or death issue. Matt 19:17; John 3:36.
- Picture the love of God and the sacrifice of Christ for the individual.
- Show the danger in delay (the door of probation may soon close). Matt 25:10; 2 Cor 6:2; Rev 22:11.
- Emphasize the importance of the individual's decision to assure salvation.
- Stress the influence of a decision on loved ones and friends. Rom 14:7, 12.
- Impress the thought that there are only two classes at the end of the world—the saved and the unsaved. Matt 7:14; 12:30; John 10:2. It matters not where a person is on the social strata. He can be saved and he can be lost. Jesus showed Nicodemus that “life at its best is not good enough.” In this case, His dealing was with a man at the top of the social scale. The woman of Samaria was a sinner at the bottom of the social scale. Matt 19:16, 17.
- Point out that Christ is our example. 1 Peter 2:21. What He did we are to do. What He taught we are to obey.
- In love pointedly inquire, “Where are you planning to spend eternity?” Prov 27:1.
- Point out that life is short at best,—it has already been partly lived. Every person is also partly dead. Men are impressed with the mortality tables of life insurance companies. The life span with its few remaining years has a very sobering effect upon their thinking. They realize that life is drawing to a close, and they cannot be sure of the hereafter except by belonging to Christ.
- Bring to the individual's mind the thought, “If God cared for you when you were disobedient, will He forsake you now that you decide to obey Him?”
- You want to live with Christ's approval. Heb 5:9; James 4:17.
- His approval is not given to those that know to do well and doeth it not. It is given only to those that obey.
- Relate your own experience in accepting truth. God leads and blesses even though tests come. Did you lose your job? Did your family disown

you? Did your friends turn against you? Did your former associates in the church ridicule you? What has God done for you since you made your decision? Your testimony to God's guidance and help will do much to help others to step over the line.

- Press home that it takes courage to be a Christian (Dan 3:16-18). The disciples of Christ found that witnessing for Him was no easy thing. Success in God's work does not bring relief from suffering: Peter was thrown in prison, Stephen was stoned to death, and great persecution arose against the Jerusalem church with scattering of the members throughout Judea. How was the opposition, danger and death met (Acts 4:13-20)?

Will we choose truth or tradition? Choose you this day—the commandments of men or of God (Joshua 24:15; Matt 12:30). Note these two statements from Roman Catholic sources:

“Practically everything that Protestants regard as essential or important they have received from the Catholic Church. They accepted Sunday rather than Saturday as the day for public worship after the Catholic Church made the change. They accepted the Bible from the Catholic Church as genuine, as authentic, as inspired, solely on the authority of the Catholic Church. They observe Christmas on the day assigned to it by the Catholic Church. They accept the date for Easter observance from the Church.

“They observe Advent and Lent, both institutions of the Catholic Church. Their prayerbooks and liturgy follow the order of the Catholic Church's ecclesiastical year, and they use many prayers and Bible readings which were in common use by Catholics throughout the world before new religions were formed.

“But the Protestant mind does not seem to realize that in accepting the Bible, in observing the Sunday, in keeping Christmas and Easter, they are accepting the authority of the spokesman for the Church, the Pope.”—*Our Sunday Visitor, February 5, 1950.*

“There is no place in the New Testament where it is distinctly stated that Christ changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday. Yet all Protestants, except the Seventh-day Adventists, observe the Sunday. The Catholic Church, made that change because it was necessary to emphasize the fact that the Old Testament had come to an end; and the further fact that our Divine Saviour chose Sunday for His Resurrection, and for the sending of the Holy Ghost into the Church as its life principle. Protestants follow Tradition in observing the Sunday.”—*Our Sunday Visitor, 1, June 11, 1950.*

Vividly portray the triumph of truth. How often we hear remarks about the smallness and insignificance of our church. Impress upon the hearts of the interested that when one decides for Bible truth he is arrayed on the side of Christ, His disciples, the prophets, and heaven's hosts. Ofttimes the side of Christ has been the side of the minority, as during the Flood when only eight were saved (Gen 7).

Picture the glories of heaven and the final scenes on the sea of glass when Christ will present crowns of victory and the great hosts of the saved

will sing the victory song of Moses and the Lamb. Eternal life is the reward for their decision and for allowing Christ to live out His life in them.

Additional principles when appealing for decisions.

Make each Bible study contribute toward the final decision by planning a series of progressive appeals.

Lead the people to decide for Christ before presenting the Sabbath truth. "By accepting the cooperation of man in the great plan of redemption, He has placed a signal honor upon him."—*4 Testimonies*, 464.

First lead them to Christ. "Christ crucified—talk it, pray it, sing it, and it will break and win hearts."—*6 Testimonies*, 67.

Seek to bring people to a decision as soon as possible after they are under conviction. This can best be done by personal work. "When persons who are under conviction are not brought to a decision at the earliest period possible, there is danger that the conviction will gradually wear away."—*Letter 31*, 1892.

How to get responses from your audience.

- Word the first appeals, so all can respond. Appeals should grow stronger as the series progresses.

- Appeal to the people to raise their hands for prayer at the close of the meeting.

- Ask for a show of hands on some point of truth in the sermon.

- Avoid embarrassing or offensive questions.

- Near the close of the series, the use of special appeal sermons (such as "The Unpardonable Sin," "The Last Warning Message," "How to Escape the Seven Last Plagues," etc.) is helpful.

Four life-revolutionizing decisions must be made by your hearers before they become one with God's remnant people. They must decide:

- To accept Christ as their personal Saviour, yielding full obedience to His sovereign will.

- To observe all the commandments of God.

- To abstain from alcoholic drinks, tobacco, and harmful beverages.

- To come all the way out of Babylon and unite with the remnant church of Christ in response to God's last gathering call.

The following preparatory decisions will enable the hearer better to take the final steps; therefore seek to:

- Arouse a desire to be saved on the part of your hearers. When the desire becomes strong enough, the will will act.

- Seek to create a willingness to forsake everything and follow Christ.

- Establish the conviction that, to be saved, one must be willing to walk in obedience to every Bible truth.

- Seek to convince your hearers that a true Christian will walk in the light as fast as it is revealed to him and will desire to obey God above anything else, whatever the cost.

- In the closing meetings, place your hearers under the conviction that they are being given the opportunity to unite with God's remnant church. Pray that the divine Spirit will convict souls.

HOW TO MEET EXCUSES

We must be prepared to meet a person's objection or excuse with a "Thus saith the Lord." Here is a partial list of texts for meeting certain common excuses:

- "I can't leave my church." Rev 18:4; John 10:26, 27; 12:42, 43; Matt 7:22, 23.

- "I can't make a living if I keep the Sabbath." Matt 6:33; Ps 37:3; Isa 65:13, 14.

- "I will lose my job if I keep the Sabbath." Matt 16:25, 26; 1 Tim 4:8.

- "It is inconvenient to keep the seventh day and follow this doctrine." Matt 16:24; 10:38.

- "I am too great a sinner." 1 Tim 1:15; Heb 7:25; Isa 1:18.

- "I am afraid I can't hold out." Jude 24.

- "I can't live up to the truth." 1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 12:8, 9; John 1:12.

- "I am not good enough." 2 Cor 8:12.

- "People would talk about me." John 17:14; Luke 6:22, 23, 26; Prov 29:25.

- "My friends would ridicule me." John 15:19; Mark 8:34; James 4:4.

- "My husband, wife, father, mother, brothers, and sisters will oppose me." Matt 10:36, 37; Luke 14:26, 27.

- "My preacher and my friends advise me against this." 1 Kings 13:1-26; Acts 4:19; 5:29.

- "It will cause trouble and division in my home if I take my stand for this teaching." Luke 12:49-53; 1 Kings 18:17, 18.

- "There is one thing (movies, ring, tobacco, etc.) which I cannot give up." Matt 19:16-22; 6:24; Luke 14:33; Matt 13:45, 46.

- "No, not now." Prov 27:1; 2 Cor 6:2; Heb 3:13; Isa 55:6; Gen 6:3.

- "I am waiting for my husband (or wife or a friend), so we can accept it together." Eze 14:20; 18:20; Rom 14:12.

- "I will wait until I have the right kind of feeling." Isa 48:18; 1 John 2:3.

- "Too late, I have waited too long." Eze 33:19; John 6:37; Rom 10:13.

- "I tried once, I am afraid to try again." Dan 3:17; Rom 4:21; 2 Tim 1:12; Jude 24.

- "How may I know that my sins are forgiven?" 1 John 1:9; Prov 28:13.

- "Some things are not yet clear." John 13:7; Acts 1:7.

- "I am not so bad." John 3:18; Rom 3:23.

- "God is love; He will save me anyway." Luke 13:3; 2 Peter 2:4.

- "There are too many hypocrites in the church." Matt 7:1; Rom 14:12.

- "The step will cost me too much." Luke 18:29, 30; 1 Peter 2:24.

- "My job may be at stake." Isa 51:7; Job 13:14, 15; Ps 119:72, 127.

- "I cannot leave my friends and relatives." Ex 23:3; Prov 13:20.

- "I believe it is not necessary to unite with a church." Acts 2:47.

- "I am too old to change my ways of life." Gen 6:3.

- "I will wait until the Spirit of God convinces me." Matt 25:1-13.

—Note: The above list could be glued to the back sheet of the Bible.

Here is another one you may want to put in your Bible:

“God is able.”

- Able to save—James 4:12.
- Able to save from the furnace heat—Daniel 3:13-18.
- Able to save from the lion’s mouth—Daniel 6:18-24.
- Able to save from all uncleanness—Ezekiel 36:29.
- Able to save from our sins—Matthew 1:21.
- Able to save from death—Hebrews 7:25.
- Able to succour the tempted—Hebrews 2:18.
- Able to make us stand—Romans 14:4.
- Able to build us up—Acts 20:32.
- Able to keep us from evil—2 Thessalonians 3:3.
- Able to keep us from falling—Jude 24.
- Able to keep that which we commit to Him—2 Timothy 1:12.
- Able to perform His promises—Romans 4:21.
- Able to do more than we ask—Ephesians 3:20.
- Able to make all grace abound—2 Corinthians 9:8.
- Able to subdue all things to Himself—Philippians 3:21.
- Able to raise us from the dead—Hebrews 11:19.
- Able to present us faultless—Jude 24.

ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Answering your own questions. This is what you do when you give a Bible study, such as found in this book, *Family Bible Studies*. You ask a question, and then look up the text and read it. The art of effective questioning is worthy of consideration. It is an important part in the correct method of giving a Bible study. The questions stir up interest and stimulate thinking. Every question should be clear and simple so the listener will be curious to know the answer.

The advantage of the question and answer method is that it enables the instructor to formulate questions in such a way as to cause the texts to give a very decided and clear answer. This is “opening” the Word of God, allowing the Bible to explain itself without human comment or interpretation. People who have never found a satisfactory manner of studying the Bible, and think it impossible or hard to be understood, are amazed to find that the Bible is its own interpreter and that it talks in such a plain language that even a child can comprehend.

When you answer your own questions, always use few words. Be brief in all you present to your hearers. The power is in the Word of God. Use just enough words to make the principles of truth shine out clearly; then let the convicting power of the Holy Spirit do the rest.

Answering their questions. It is very helpful when the Bible study student asks questions. You can ascertain his thinking by the questions he asks. By thus knowing what is in his mind you can adjust your course to meet his need (*Gospel Workers, 190-191*).

Premature questions should not be answered immediately. Simply say, “That is a vital subject and it makes me happy to know that you are

thinking along these lines. We will devote a whole study period to it.”

When a question on a later subject is asked one can smiling say, “Now that question leads to a Bible study or theme of tremendous interest; and we must study it sometime in the near future, but for tonight we must stay by our planned topic.”

Some may want to know about the mark of the beast. Explain that this is a topic that is associated with the beast and his image. It is therefore necessary to first have studies on “Who is the beast?” and “What constitutes the image?” When these two questions have been answered it will be quite simple to understand what the mark of the beast is. Tell the student you will be looking forward to going over these studies with him. It is most essential for subjects to be given in their proper order, so as to really understand the relation of the whole chain of Bible truth. For instance, if you were to give the millennium before the second coming the pupil would be unable to grasp the import of it all and its proper place, and confusion would result.

Your attitude is important. • Never act disturbed over any question asked. • Welcome all questions on any Biblical theme. • Assure an answer at the earliest possible date.

When questions somewhat related to the topic are asked. When the hour for the Bible study comes, you must be prepared with your subject well in mind—a part of you, not just a theory, but a living reality, vital, all important. Tactfully allow no questions or interruptions to sidetrack you from the general theme of the planned study.

But be prepared to answer any questions on the subject presented. This will increase the student’s confidence in your ability as a teacher, and he will more readily accept the doctrines that you advocate.

It is proper to have notes in your Bible just in case you need them, but do not become embarrassed if you have to turn to them. One can say, “There is a text on this question so important that I jotted it down lest I forget.”

Irrelevant questions. Allow nothing that would cause a breach in the continuity of the subject.

- Respectfully defer such questions until the close of the study.
- Set aside a short period of time at the close of the meeting. This will guard against any interruptions and will safeguard the feelings of the questioner who has been requested to wait for an answer until the end of the study.

Sincere questions. Always answer sincere questions. Christ always answered a sincere questioner. Outstanding highlights of the Saviour’s message were introduced when He was asked questions. “Good Master, what shall I do that I might inherit eternal life?” In response, Jesus clarified the true relationship of Christian living to God’s law. The long array of signs of Christ’s second coming was given in reply to a question by the disciples. The Master used every question propounded to Him as a key to open the mind of His listeners to new vistas of truth.

Controversial questions. We should avoid or postpone controversial

questions. The Bible has very definite counsel on how to instruct new believers. The lay instructor must ever recognize that he is a "teacher of babes" (Romans 2:20). The great apostle Paul states his evangelistic method, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able" (1 Corinthians 3:2). At the heavenly appointed time, solid food or meat may be given without fearing the consequences.

Christ, the greatest of all teachers, left "many things" unsaid and unrevealed to His hearers because, as He said, they were not able to bear them (John 16:12).

The teacher of the three angels' messages must ever be on the alert as to when his hearers are able to "bear" what is being taught. The Holy Spirit will give wisdom, as all heaven is interested in the salvation of every soul.

What should be done when controversial questions are asked in the early part of the series?

- **Silently pray.** Ask God to take control so that nothing may be said that will offend or confuse the mind of the listener. The greatest self-possession and wisdom should be exercised.

- **A postponement is in order.** "We will discuss this matter later, but not today, as we should consider another vital topic first. I will appreciate your deferring this, as I would like to hold to a sequence of subjects. This is a method I have found to be most helpful. I trust you don't mind deferring this topic to a later date." When tactfully broached, the student is usually willing to cooperate.

- **Briefly answer.** but only touching on a few high points. Occasionally a person insists on having the answer immediately. Avoid as far as possible any lengthy discussion on the disputed point. Read a verse or two from the Bible. While being firm, yet be kind in all you say. Never act disturbed over any question that may be asked.

- **Bypass disturbing subjects.** If some student in the cottage meeting becomes disturbed over some phase of truth you are advocating from the Scriptures, do not continue the discussion. Drop that subject for the present, for one less controversial. Later on in the series you can come back to the same topic, approaching it from a different angle. Often hostility has ceased; and the mind, once beclouded, is now clear and receptive,

HOW TO MEET OPPOSITION

In the experience of every Bible worker there comes a time when opposition from one source or another must be met. Possibly the pastor of the one who is having the studies, or some other influential friend of the family, unexpectedly appears at the time appointed for the study; and, while he may courteously consent to be present and take part in the Bible study, it will no doubt mean that perplexing questions will be presented and various remarks made which will tend to discredit the truth the worker is teaching.

Under such circumstances the worker does not need to manifest fear; for he is standing on the firm basis of the sure Word of God, and should

speak forth the truth in love. Recall the words of the Saviour to His disciples, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." "Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist" (Matthew 10:16; Luke 21:14, 15).

—Excellent counsel on this matter is given in *9 Testimonies*, 147-148. The entire passage is good, but we did not have space to quote it here.

What to do when opposition arises.

- Exalt Christ. AA 31; 6T 67; GW 405.

"You will not try to reveal your smartness as theologians. You will be careful not to arouse a combative spirit or excite prejudice by introducing controverted points of doctrine." "We need far less controversy and far more presentation of Christ. Our Redeemer is the center of all our faith and hope."—*Manual for Canvassers*, 34, 37.

- Present truth logically and plainly. Be on the positive and affirmative side. People usually oppose what they do not understand. ChS 62; Ev 302-303.

- Be tactful and friendly: 1T 113; 9T 189. Claim the promise: Matt. 10:16; Luke 21:14-15.

- Do not condemn religious beliefs of others: Mark 9:39; 2 Timothy 2:24, 25; 9T 244. Find some good things to say about other churches.

Do not speak disparaging of other churches. Remember, we are not to tear down someone's shack of unbelief until we have built a palace of truth for him to move into.

- Consider opposers as being honest. Treat them with respect. 6T 121-122; Ev 305-306.

Demonstrate a kindly Christian spirit—not a hostile attitude.

- Sidestep arguments: ChS 126; 9T 147-148.

Recall Philip's proclamation when Nathanael unbelievably responded, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" There was no argument to prove his claim, but simply, "Come and see." This should ever be the attitude of the Christian worker.

Use these two effective questions:

"You may be right, but have you considered it in the light of this text?"

"I see your point of view, and I am trying to agree with you; but before I do there is a question or two that I would like for you to answer. Will you please explain this text?"

"Men are in peril. Multitudes are perishing. But how few of the professed followers of Christ are burdened for these souls. The destiny of a world hangs in the balance; but this hardly moves even those who claim to believe the most far-reaching truth ever given to mortals . . . There is a stupor, a paralysis, upon the people of God, which prevents them from understanding the duty of the hour . . . The coldness of their zeal and febleness of their efforts in God's service, mark them as unfaithful."

—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 303

“We are to be laborers together with the heavenly angels in presenting Jesus to the world. With almost impatient eagerness the angels wait for our co-operation; for man must be the channel to communicate with man. And when we give ourselves to Christ in wholehearted devotion, angels rejoice that they may speak through our voices to reveal God’s love.”

—*Desire of Ages*, 297

“Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that everyone shall be working for Him according to his ability.”—*Acts of the Apostles*, 111

“It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:12, margin).”

—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 69

“All who engage in ministry are God’s helping hand. They are coworkers with the angels; rather, they are the human agencies through whom the angels accomplish their mission. Angels speak through their voices, and work by their hands. And the human workers, co-operating with heavenly agencies, have the benefit of their education and experience.”

—*Education*, 271

“Workers for Christ are never to think, much less to speak, of failure in their work. The Lord Jesus is our efficiency in all things; His Spirit is to be our inspiration; and as we place ourselves in His hands, to be channels of light, our means of doing good will never be exhausted. We may draw upon His fulness, and receive of that grace which has no limit.”

—*Gospel Workers*, 19

“When we give ourselves wholly to God, and in our work follow His directions, He makes Himself responsible for its accomplishment. He would not have us conjecture as to the success of our honest endeavors. Not once should we even think of failure. We are to co-operate with One who knows no failure.”

—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 363

“When God opens the way for the accomplishment of a certain work and gives assurance of success, the chosen instrumentality must do all in his power to bring about the promised result. In proportion to the enthusiasm and perseverance with which the work is carried forward will be the success given.”

—*Prophets and Kings*, 263

“The Lord is disappointed when His people place a low estimate upon themselves. He desires His chosen heritage to value themselves according to the price He has placed upon them . . . He has a use for them, and He is well pleased when they make the very highest demands upon Him, that they may glorify His name. They may expect large things if they have faith in His promises.”

—*The Desire of Ages*, 668

“It is not the capabilities you now possess, or ever will have, that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you . . . He can give tact and skill. Put your talents into the work, ask God for wisdom, and it will be given to you.”

—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 146

“Success depends not so much on talent as on energy and willingness . . . the conscientious performance of daily duties . . . the unaffected, sincere interest in the welfare of others.”

—*Prophets and Kings*, 219

“God will do the work if we will furnish Him the instruments.”

—9 Testimonies, p. 107

“God will accept the wholehearted service, and will Himself make up the deficiencies.”

—*Ministry of Healing*, 150

“If you are truly consecrated, God will, through your instrumentality, bring into the truth others whom He can use as channels to convey light to many that are groping in darkness.”

—7 Testimonies, 63

“The truth is soon to triumph gloriously, and all who now choose to be laborers together with God will triumph with it.”

—9 Testimonies, 135

“When we labor diligently for the salvation of our fellow men, God will prosper our very effort.”

—9 Testimonies, 86

“To every one who offers himself to the Lord for service, withholding nothing, is given power for the attainment of measureless results.”

—7 Testimonies, 30

“The Lord has a place for every one in His great plan. Talents that are not needed are not bestowed. Supposing that the talent is small. God has a place for it, and that one talent, if faithfully used, will do the very work God designs that it should do.”

—9 Testimonies, 37

“The humblest workers, in co-operation with Christ, may touch chords whose vibrations shall ring to the ends of the earth and make melody throughout eternal ages.”

—*Ministry of Healing*, 159

“Remember that the Lord Jesus is the Master Worker. He waters the seed sown. He puts into your minds words that will reach hearts.”

—9 Testimonies, 41

“Consecrate yourselves wholly to the work of God. He is your strength, and He will be at your right hand, helping you to carry on His merciful designs.”

—9 Testimonies, 41

“The heavenly intelligences will work with the human agent who seeks with determined faith that perfection of character which will reach out to perfection in action. To every one engaged in this work Christ says, I am at your right hand to help you.”

—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 332

“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.”

—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 333

“In this work all the angels of heaven are ready to co-operate. All the resources of heaven are at the command of those who are seeking to save the lost. Angels will help you to reach the most careless and the most hardened. And when one is brought back to God, all heaven is made glad; seraphs and cherubs touch their golden harps, and sing praises to God and to the Lamb.”

—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 197

“It is not a vain thing to serve God. There is a priceless reward for those who devote their life to His service.”

—4 Testimonies, 107

“Our reward for working with Christ in this world is the greater power and wider privilege of working with Him in the world to come.”

—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 361

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