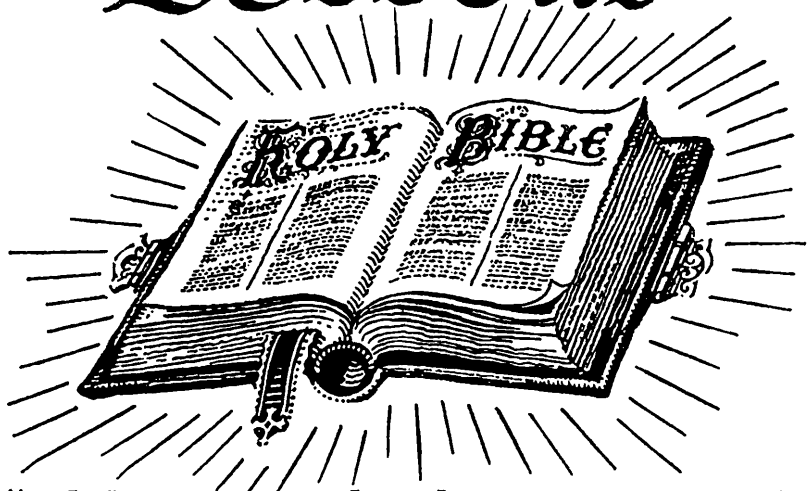


1853

Bible Lessons



"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,
we are CHANGED" II Cor. 3:18

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

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Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

Vol. 6

January, February, March, 1974

No. 1

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THEME FOR FIRST QUARTER, 1974

Our theme for this quarter will be the prophecy of Christ before the foundation of the world and in the beginning of the lives of fallen men. Our theme for the year will be about Christ and the church which He built. Jesus is the chief corner stone of that church.

The laws that Christ taught and the law of the New Testament were written in the heart of man at his creation, but they were taken out of his heart through his sin and fall. Through the coming of Christ, and through obedience to the New Testament teachings, they are restored. God spoke to the people of old through prophets, and Peter tells us that they received glimpses of the Messiah's coming at different times. "Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:11. We want to study about this wonderful revelation of Christ and His coming which was gradually revealed to those of old. We will also verify this by using New Testament scriptures.

—The writers

—o—

January 6, 1974

REDEMPTION PROMISED

1 Peter 1:19, 20; 2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:4-6; Eph. 4:24;

Genesis 3:9-12, 14, 15, 24

1 Peter 1:19 But [redeemed] with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

2 Timothy 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Ephesians 1:4 According as he [God] hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Ephesians 4:24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Genesis 3:9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

14 And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

Memory Verse: Wherefore, as 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.

Central Thought: Because God knew that Eve would bring forth, in pain, a race of lustful, dying men, God gave her a promise—the promise of His son, Jesus Christ, who should one day be born of a virgin, and who would give to all people power to overcome the enemy and the destroyer of the race.

Word Definitions: Foreordained means “chosen or appointed before hand.” Her seed means, “descendant or posterity.”

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have chosen lesson scriptures which make us to know that God knew that mankind would fall in sin and that they would need a Saviour to redeem them from sin. Our scriptures in Genesis tell us of that fall and also the promise of a Saviour

through the seed of the woman, which was Jesus Christ, who was born of a virgin. Jesus' Father was God.

QUESTIONS:

1. Did Jesus exist before the foundation of the world?
2. Tell about the only commandment that God gave to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, and who caused them to break that commandment.
3. What happened to them when they broke the commandment of God and also to all of their posterity?
4. Who was promised to "bruise" the serpent's head (Satan) and give mankind power over sin?
5. Is it a sin to yield today to the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life?
6. Which is sin: to yield, or to be enticed?
7. Are we to love the Giver (God) more than the gifts?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

God is an absolute, spiritual Being and is filled with infinite wisdom, righteousness, power and love. In the beginning, God created the universe and pronounced it good. The world that God created was a place of beauty, and riches, and was great in every sense of the word. It was designed for the dwelling-place of man with the animals, vegetation, etc.

In God's wonderful Being, there is a love relationship through which He made all things. God wanted that love to be returned. God created man out of the dust of the earth and breathed into him the breath of life. Man was His crowning creation. Man was not a mere animal, but a living soul. He had within him a will and spiritual capacity for believing and communing with God. He was created pure and holy and in harmony with God. He shared with God a mutual love and had perfect freedom in His presence.

God placed man in the world of beauty and gave him dominion over it. The animals, vegetation, etc., were for his use or service. God has also placed in His living creatures the power to reproduce after their kind. All of this was brought to pass through God's Word, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. (John 1:1-4; Genesis 1:1, 2).

All things were made for man, but he, himself, was made for God. Man was to have joyous fellowship with God and be in His service. He was to use the things God had made for him with thanksgiving unto God. Man was not to make the good gifts God had provided for him his supreme joy. He was not to draw from them alone his happiness or make them his delight. He was to have his delight in God. God wanted man to love Him with all his heart, mind and soul. Not to do this would be sin. To supplant the things of this world in his af-

fections and please himself instead of God would be sin. God forbade Adam and Eve, on the pain of death, to seek their own satisfaction, pleasure, or knowledge in the garden. God wanted them to seek it directly from God who created all things. But we find that they disobeyed God's command.

Satan, through the serpent, persuaded Adam and Eve to disobey and therefore they sinned. They pleased the physical desires within them. Satan pointed out the attractiveness of the world. Satan also promised them wisdom that would rival the wisdom of God. Man was seduced to subject his soul to the desires of his body, and to barter his love and the truth of God for the pleasures of the world and the lies of Satan. His body became the seat of lust, so that he tried to cover it from God's view.

God pitied man in his fall and promised that through the seed of the woman He would send a Saviour. Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, therefore fulfilling the first prophecy given in the Bible of a Saviour to come and save mankind from sin.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Throughout the sacred Scriptures we are informed of the great plan and purpose God had in His mind before He created the world and mankind. One glimpse is seen in the prayer Jesus prayed to the Father in John 17 when he said in verse 24: "That they [His disciples] may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." There is great food for the soul in this thought, but we must not get too imaginative about it. But we find the host of redeemed in Revelation 5:11 casting their crowns before the throne, saying, "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." This is a key to understanding the purpose and plan of God in His great work. It is all for His pleasure.

Psalms 135:6 declared that, "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in the earth," etc. It was His great pleasure to create the world and man to live thereon. Loving us before the foundation of the world, and having provided for us means and a way to be in the bosom of His great care, we are found to be His peculiar treasure. His joy and rejoicing is in the fellowship being fulfilled just as He planned and purposed.

Oh, what a great reward awaits the man or woman who seeks His holy fellowship! Solomon speaks of the cry of wisdom to the sons of men. She pleads for man to give ear to her

voice and receive her instruction and knowledge. Great blessings are promised, and she declares that she was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. "I was there," she said, "when he prepared the heavens, and when he set a compass upon the face of the deep." "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." It is wise and most profitable for man to fear and honour His Maker, and to have respect for His wonderful purpose!

We know many people scoff at the idea of God and a holy, predestined plan, but to us who have fled the vanity of men and the corruption of the world, it is the very joy of our hearts to acknowledge such to be true. And we gladly submit to His holy purpose ever praying that we will be accounted worthy to have a part in His eternal plan.

—L. Busbee

ANOTHER YEAR IS DAWNING

Another year is dawning! Dear Master, let it be,
In working or in waiting, another year with thee.
Another year in leaning upon thy loving breast,
Of ever-deepening trustfulness, of quiet, happy rest.

Another year of mercies, of faithfulness and grace;
Another year of gladness in the shining of thy face;
Another year of progress, another year of praise;
Another year of proving Thy presence, "All the days."

Another year of service, of witness for thy love;
Another year of training for holier works above.
Another year is dawning! Dear Master, let it be,
On earth or else in heaven, another year for thee.

—Frances Ridley Havergal



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January 13, 1974

PROPHECIES POINTING TO CHRIST

**Gen. 12:1-4; Gen. 17:19; Gen. 21:3; Gen. 26:2a, 4b, 5;
Gen. 28:1, 7, 10-12, 13a, 14b; Gal. 3:8, 9, 16**

Gen. 12:1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

4 So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him: and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

Genesis 17:19 And God said [to Abraham], Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

Genesis 21:3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

Gen. 26:2a And the Lord appeared [after Abraham's death] unto him [Isaac], and said,

4b In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

Genesis 28:1 And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

7 And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padanaram;

10 And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran.

11 And he lighted in a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

13a And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said,

14b In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Gal. 3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

Memory Verse: And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. 3:29.

Central Thought: Faith came by Christ; therefore the blessing promised is obtained in Christ by the Jew as well as the Gentile. All of the families of the earth who have been made "a new creature in Christ," through repentance and faith receive Abraham's blessing.

Word Definition: "Blessed," in reference to what God will do, means "to bestow plenty of temporal good things upon a person . . . and spiritual blessings." —Cruden's Con.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we are continuing with the thought of the prophecies of Christ in the Old Testament. We want to remember that through the Bible the prophecies of Christ link like a chain. We want to add link after link to the chain of this truth given to the prophets of old. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all heard the voice of God and our lesson points out God's promises. Christ is the Center and Heart of the Bible.

The promise given to Abraham was both temporal and spiritual.

Two thousand years after the promise given in the Garden of Eden to Eve and Adam, it was given to Abraham. This also came to pass 400 years after the Flood, when the world was full of idolatry and wickedness. Only a few still held to the belief in a true God. Adam knew Methuselah. Methuselah knew Noah. Abraham knew Shem therefore, Abraham

could have learned about the account of Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden, and the Flood from Shem.

Rebekah was Isaac's first cousin. Abraham wanted to keep his posterity free from idolatry. "Isaac was born when Abraham was 100, and Sarah, 90. Isaac was 37 when his mother died, 40 when he married, 60 when Jacob was born, 75 when Abraham died, 137(?) when Jacob fled, 157(?) when Jacob returned, 167 when Joseph was sold. He died at 180, the year that Joseph became ruler of Egypt." —Halley's Bible Handbook

Our lesson in Galatians teaches us that the gospel, or, good news preached through Abraham declared that through faith in Christ, who was to come through Abraham's posterity, all the nations would be blessed.

QUESTIONS:

1. What promises did God give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?
2. God promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that He would give them the land of Canaan (Genesis 17:18). What spiritual application can we give this promise? Rom. 4:13-16.
3. God promised to make of Abraham a great nation. What spiritual nation is of Abraham? (Gal. 3:29).
4. How were the families of the earth to be blessed through Abraham?
5. Did Christ break down the middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile? (Eph. 2:11-15).
6. Under the New Testament dispensation, are all peoples the same according to God's dealings with them?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The Old Testament prophets received only a glimpse of what God was going to do for the world through Christ. All that they knew, which is recorded in our lessons, was that God would give a great spiritual blessing to all the families of the earth through their seed. They did not experience salvation, nor could they live without sin. They were forgiven only as they offered sacrifices and prayed to God which was a show of faith in the promises of God which would be fulfilled later. Just believing in God was accounted unto them as righteousness. Today, we are blessed with the reality of what they looked forward to but never received in their lifetime.

God gave to the old patriarchs three promises. First, that they would have a numerous seed. Second, that they would have the land of Canaan for an inheritance, and the third was a promise to them that through their seed all the nations would be blessed. The first two of these promises have a two-fold fulfillment. One was a literal fulfillment under the Old Testament and a spiritual fulfillment under the New Testament. God

did raise up to Abraham a huge nation, through Isaac's son, Jacob, who had twelve sons. After leaving Egypt, the twelve tribes of Israel were the conquerors of the land of Canaan. But we also find that under the gospel, in the New Testament, God has raised up unto him a more numerous seed, unto whom He has given the spiritual land of Canaan for an inheritance. Under the Old Testament, the literal seed of Abraham had a special favor of God, but when Jesus came He brought them all down to the level with the rest of humanity, when He, by His death, abolished the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. The seed in the promise is Christ. Only those who are "born again" are true seed of Abraham and "heirs according to the promise." The Jews are not a favored people of God since Christ came, as some want to claim today. Even if they go back to their country, they will still be on the level with the rest of humanity according to the promises.

Abraham never owned any land in Canaan, but his family or, the Jews, inherited it. (Acts 7:5; Heb. 11:39). This proves that the true Canaan referred to in the promise is of a spiritual nature. The third promise in which all the nations would be blessed is the promise of Christ to come, which came to pass.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Is it not wonderful that we in this present age can be blessed and inspired by learning of Abraham and his great triumph of faith and obedience to God? As we are benefited and inspired to a life of faith in Christ for salvation and all things that pertain unto life and godliness, we are thus become the children of Abraham. For the scripture declares that his faith was not counted for righteousness for his sake alone, but for us also, if we will believe in Him that raised up Jesus from the dead. The faith that carried Abraham through the trials of his day is the same faith that enables us to lay hold of the risen life of Christ today.

It was in this way that all nations were to be blessed in him and in his seed. Abraham set the pattern for faith and confidence in God. Hebrews 11:17-19, says: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." When Abraham and Isaac went back down the Mount after the sacrifice of the ram that had been offered in the stead of Isaac, it was as if Abraham had received Isaac back from the dead. As far as Abraham was concerned, Isaac was going to die that day, but he had

counted God true to His promise anyway, even if He had to raise Isaac back from the ashes. That is true faith, and this is the faith we have toward God in the matter of Christ being raised from the dead. Yes, we confess that Jesus was nailed to the cross of Calvary and put to death. We acknowledge that He was buried, also. But we are just as confident and more so that He has risen from the dead, and ascended up far above all heavens that He might fill all things.

And not only so, but we also believe that we, ourselves, shall triumph over the power of death and the grave just as Christ by the power of God has risen. We shall share in the glory of His resurrection. This is the faith of the Christian. We see it patterned in Abraham who considered not the deadness of Sarah's womb, or his own body a hundred years old. He is the Father of our faith, and with great joy we believe as he did, finding in Christ that city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. —L. Busbee

REFUSED TO WORSHIP IDOLS

With the departure of Abram from Ur of the Chaldees, Hebrew history opens, and a new era of heavenly inspiration begins. This introduction is set forth in beautiful words in a prayer offered by his descendants in the days of Nehemiah: "Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham: and foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him." Nehemiah 9:7, 8.

The Chaldeans, we know, were idol-worshippers. How Abraham, under polytheistic surroundings and influences, came to be a faithful man, with a knowledge of the one true God, the sacred narrative does not inform us; but a venerable tradition represents him as turning from their custom-sanctioned, idolatrous worship to a simpler and purer faith. "The mythical story of his conversion is not without beauty and instructiveness. It represents Terah, his father, as a maker of wooden idols; and shows how the son's antagonism to the corruption of religion, which the business symbolized, developed and culminated. Being left one day in charge of the stock in trade, Abraham was profoundly impressed at the folly and superstition of a woman, who devoutly brought food to satisfy the hunger of things, which though they had mouths, could not eat, and which were as unable to appreciate gifts as they were to appropriate them. But his indignation grew fiercer, and his views of duty clearer, when an aged man entered his tent and desired to purchase of his wares.

"How old art thou?"

"Threescore years."

" 'What, threescore years!' answered Abraham, 'and thou wouldst worship a thing that my father's slaves made in a few hours? Strange that a man of sixty would bow his gray head to a creature such as that.'

Unable longer to restrain his scorn, and reason asserting its sovereignty over conflicting doubts, after the departure of his would-be customer, he broke all the idols to pieces except one. The largest one he spared, and placed in its hands the hammer which had served him in his iconoclasm. When Terah returned, he was filled with horror and consternation at the work of destruction which he beheld, and angrily demanded the name of the irreverent wretch who had dared to raise his impious arm against the gods.

" 'Why,' quietly replied the then youthful patriarch, 'during thine absence a woman brought them food, and the younger and smaller ones immediately began to eat. The older and stronger god, enraged at their unmannerly boldness, took the hammer which you see in his hands, and crushed them all before him.'

" 'Dost thou deride thine aged father?' cried Terah. 'Do I not know that they can neither move nor eat?'

" 'And yet thou worshippest them,' exclaimed Abraham; 'and thou wouldst have me worship them as well?'

" 'This rebuke was too much for the outraged parent, and, consequently, according to the legend, he sent the wayward youth to the king for admonition and correction. When Nimrod heard the account of his infidelity and impiety, instead of condemning him hastily and harshly, he sought to win him to some form of faith.

" 'If thou canst not adore the idols fashioned by thy father,' said the accomodating monarch, 'then pray to fire.'

" 'Why not to water, which will quench the fire?'

" 'Be it so; pray to water.'

" 'But why not to the clouds, which hold the water?'

" 'Well, then, pray to the clouds.'

" 'Why not to the winds which drive the clouds before them.'

" 'Certainly, please yourself; pray to the winds.'

" 'Be not angry, O king,' finally replied Abraham. 'I cannot pray to the fire, or the water, or the clouds, or the winds, but to the Creator who made them: Him will I worship.' Neither would he be persuaded to adore the sun, moon, and stars, for he discerned that they were not stationary, and he said, as he contemplated the heavens, 'I like not things that set; these glittering orbs are not gods, as they are subject to law: I will worship Him [the true God] only Whose law they obey.' " (Isms

Old and New—Lorimer) —from, "Evolution of Christianity" by F. G. Smith.

Joshua 24:2, says that Abraham's father was an idol worshipper. We do not know if Abraham was or not, but we do know that when he received the call to leave that idolatrous country, he obeyed and God blessed him and made his family great and a blessing to the world through the birth of Jesus Christ.

—M. Miles

January 20, 1974

MORE LINKS IN THE CHAIN

John 8:56-58; Gen. 49:1, 10; Ruth 1:7, 16-19; Ruth 4:13-17

John 8:56 [Jesus said to the Pharisees] Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Genesis 49:1 And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.

10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Ruth 1:7 Wherefore she [Naomi] went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

16 And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.

18 When she saw that she steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

19 So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?

Ruth 4:13. So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: ... [and] the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son.

14 And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.

15 And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

16 And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.

17 And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Memory Verse: God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. Hebrews 1:1, 2a.

Central Thought: For a special reason, God has preserved for us the account of the lineage of Jesus and the dealings with each one down through thousands of years. We marvel at the devotion of Ruth to the God of Naomi, and her great reward.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our first verses are the words of Jesus and they give us a wonderful insight into the existence of Jesus with Abraham in heaven and a verification of the prophecy of Abraham concerning Jesus.

Our lesson in Genesis verifies the fact that through Judah's family the Messiah, Jesus Christ, would be born. Naomi and Boaz were of the family of Judah. Ruth was a Moabite. The Moabites were descendants of Lot. (Gen. 19:37.) Lot, of course, was a nephew of Abraham. Boaz was the son of Rahab, the Jericho Canaanitish harlot. (Hom. Com. See also Matt. 1:5; and Hebrews 11:31.) We notice that Boaz was half Jew and Canaanite. Would this not give us a little indication that with-

in the chosen nation there was Gentile blood, and that would make the Messiah a Saviour of all nations?

Naomi, and her husband Elimelech, went down from Bethlehem to live in Moab, taking with them their two sons. Elimelech died, and the sons married women of Moab. In about ten years, the two sons died. Naomi decided to go back to her home in Bethlehem. Ruth refused to leave her, but Orpah returned to Moab. So Naomi took her daughter-in-law, Ruth, with her to Bethlehem. There she married Boaz, who was a kinsman of Naomi's husband. Ruth became the great grandmother of David. Jesus Christ was born in the family of David.

Bethlehem was the birthplace of David. Jesus was born 1100 years after Ruth and Boaz were married.

It is supposed that the book of Ruth was written in the time of David and before the birth of Solomon.

In Moab, they worshiped a god named Chemosh, to whom they offered children sacrifices. It was an horrible idolatrous worship.

You will note that we have skipped the types and shadows of Christ in the giving of the law to Moses as we studied them last quarter.

—M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Jesus say about Himself and Abraham? What prophecy did Jacob give concerning Jesus, who was to come through the tribe of Judah? (The Jews were called Jews because they lived in the land of Judah.) 3. Give some of the background of the life of Ruth and Naomi, and, what lessons do we learn from their troubles? 4. What determination did Ruth have to turn away from idolatry and turn to God? 5. Compare this to our need to not turn back to the "beggarly elements of this world." 6. What reward was given to Ruth, and who came to the world (according to the promise given to Abraham), through David, her great-grandson?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

There are many lessons to learn from the book of Ruth. Famine drove Elimelech, Naomi, and their two sons down to Moab, away from Judah. But trouble awaited them there. It has been told that an Indian chief fled before a prairie fire and when he crossed the river, he stuck his tent pole in the ground and said, "Alabama" which means "here we can rest." Of course, he wasn't a prophet. Hostile tribes overpowered them and they found only graves where they had sought a home. Just so, the move of Elimelech brought sorrow. The righteous will have sorrows in this life as this is not their home. The

first chapter brings this out, but the three last chapters prove that the Lord delivered them out of them all. Thank God! Naomi had her sorrows, but her joy came when she held in her arms the baby, Obed, who was to be in the lineage of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world.

We have a beautiful story of a daughter-in-law's true love. No doubt, she loved dearly the son of Naomi. Because she loved him, she appreciated the mother who had borne him and taken care of him. He was brought up to be the kind of man who brought her joy, and she loved his mother. We should never try to turn our companion against his or her parents and cause the parents distress. A couple should together love each other's parents and see to their needs in their old age.

Ruth was greatly rewarded for her love for Naomi, her people, and her God. The life of her mother-in-law proved to her that the God whom she served was better than the idolatrous worship of her people. She refused to be turned away from what she knew to be right. She had it settled. When Naomi saw that she was "steadfastly minded," she took her with her. This is an illustration of the entire surrender of ourselves to God. We must turn away from everything not of God, and with a fixed purpose of heart and mind yield to God. The Apostle Paul said of Christ and the way of salvation, "This one thing I do." (Phil. 3:7-13). If we know Christ, we want Him and love Him. We must have Him. Life depends upon His love and our communion with Him. We will with "a full purpose of heart cleave unto the Lord." We might be like Ruth and not know what is ahead for us, but as we cling to the Lord, He has a blessing out there for us. We must learn the power of determination. As it has been said "resolution shuts and bolts the door to temptation."

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is something that Boaz spoke to Ruth at their first meeting that is so good for us today. Hearing of her leaving her parents and the land of her nativity and coming unto a people that she had not previously known, he said to her: "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." God's great wings were stretched out over Israel, His chosen people. Through all their wanderings, and their days and years of toil and adversity, His great wings were stretched out over them. And when Ruth came to be a part of Naomi's life, she came beneath the shadow of those wonderful wings.

Think of Naomi's bitter cup in giving up her husband and two sons. She felt that the Almighty had dealt very bitterly

with her. But was she aware of those great over-spreading wings? No doubt she realized it more after she beheld how the Lord worked in her behalf. Think of the famine that had driven them to Moab. It was all part of God's plan. God's great wings of protection were over Israel all the while. Through this people, in the fulness of time, the Messiah was to be brought forth to the world. Ruth had probably not even dreamed of such a wonderful thing before she met Naomi.

And then I think of what a wonderful treasure it is to us when we leave all to serve the Lord. Yes, we give up a lot of things of this old world, but consider what we gain! We gain a shelter and refuge under the shadow of His wings. In His care and blessing wonderful, wonderful experiences and everlasting treasures are ours. Is it not worth giving up everything else to obtain this? —L. Busbee

"GET ME THAT BOOK!"

James R. Loy, a government surveyor in India, brought home one of the most stirring true stories in Christian literature. In a far off desert oasis in the Northwest, he found a people who had never once heard the message of Christ's love, and because he was a government worker, it was easy for him one evening to gather a respectful audience which sat in the moonlight and heard him tell the "greatest story ever told."

Here is his recount of that experience:

"I talked to the folk that night, speaking their language. At the close of the earnest address, an old man came forward. He was the son of a king. He leaned on his staff, looked into my face and said: 'You are a very young man. How do you know the things you have been saying are true?'"

"I answered that I knew them not because of any wisdom of my own, but that the Great Father had written them in a Book and had given them to men of old time who struggled with the same questions that bothered him and his people.

"Do you mean there is a book with all these things you told us—about a love that is good, and all the rest of it?"

"I assured him that there is such a Book, God's Book, and the answers are in it.

"Young man, is that book in my language?"

"Yes, I have it here in my tent," I told him.

"I shall never forget the look on his face as he straightened himself and thundered: 'Get me that Book'"

"Forty brown hands were stretched out eagerly when I returned from my tent with two copies of God's Word in their tongue.

"Sir," he said, 'how long has this Book been in the world?' I told him it had been many hundreds of years. 'Did your peo-

ple have it?' he asked. 'Yes,' I confessed, 'we did.' 'And I am an old man,' he said. 'All my friends have died hopeless. I am nearly gone, too. All this time the Book was here and nobody brought it to me. Why didn't someone bring this Book here long ago?'

"That old man's question rings in my ears constantly. I pass it on to you. I pass it on to Christendom. Why has not that book even yet, been put into every language in the world and given to every hungry soul? More than 19 centuries after Jesus said, 'to every creature' two thirds of the human family still do not have its message!"

There are many good ministers who deserve help from all of us, but no method of spreading the Gospel has yet been found that gets as much results for each dollar spent, as is obtained through volunteer workers using grants of good Gospel tracts. Oh, let us have the greatest year of seed-sowing ever known!

—o—

January 27, 1974

KINGDOM ESTABLISHED FOREVER

1 Sam. 16:6, 7, 10-13a; 2 Sam. 5:1-4; 2 Sam. 7:12, 16;

Luke 1:31-33

1 Samuel 16:6 And it came to pass, when they [the sons of Jesse] were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely, the Lord's anointed is before him.

7 But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.

10 Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The Lord hath not chosen these.

11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

13a Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.

2 Sam. 5:1 Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh.

2 Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.

3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord: and they anointed David king over Israel.

4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.

2 Sam. 7:12 [Nathan, the prophet, said to King David] And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

Luke 1:31 And, behold, thou shalt . . . bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Memory Verse: But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Hebrews 1:8.

Central Thought: David's kingdom through Christ was established. Christ's personal kingdom will last as long as the sun shines or the moon gives her light. Throughout all generations shall the throne of the Redeemer stand. As long as there are men on earth, Christ shall have a throne among them until the kingdom is delivered unto the Father. 1 Corinthians 15:24.

Word Definition: "Ruddy: red, or auburn-haired. This was regarded as a mark of beauty in a country where the hair was

generally black. Josephus refers the expression to his tawny complexion." —Hom. Com.

LESSON BACKGROUND

God told Samuel to quit mourning over King Saul, who had disobeyed God's commandments and from whom His Spirit had withdrawn, and to go to Bethlehem and there in Jesse's house God had provided a king from among his sons. Samuel arose and took his horn of oil and came to Jesse's house. (Jesse was the grandson of Ruth and Boaz.) Samuel went and called the elders and the house of Jesse to come and sacrifice unto the Lord. While at the feast, he asked for the sons of Jesse to pass before him. We find all had come but David who was sent for later.

Saul found out later that God had chosen David to be king in his stead and for ten years or more, he hunted him to kill him. God, in miraculous ways, protected him. David did not just pass from shepherd life to the throne of Jerusalem. His military genius was developed by his experiences with Saul. His dealings with his thirty men and others in the hold, and with his enemies prepared him for his future work. Struggles with adversity make one strong. The great oak tree has resisted many storms. One of the greatest misfortunes that can befall youth is to have no difficulties to contend with. It is keeping right attitudes through great struggles against wrong that forms a good character. Thus David held his care for Saul, who was one time the Lord's anointed. He refused to do him harm. He waited for God's time to put him on the throne.

—M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. Are we to judge a person by his outward appearances? Why do you think David was chosen instead of his brothers?
3. Does it mean when it says that "the Spirit of the Lord came upon David" that he was sanctified?
4. Relate some incidents that happened in David's life that caused him to become prepared to reign on the throne.
5. What prophecy did Nathan the prophet give that points to the kingdom of Jesus Christ?
6. How was David's kingdom established forever?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

No doubt as David sat in his house of cedar, his mind went back to the time when he was a shepherd boy. Now he was an old man and time had brought many experiences to him. Doubtless, he was more gifted than most of the men of his day, yet he was keenly aware of who had bestowed upon him those gifts.

He was ever giving praises to His Lord and God. The praises seemed to roll from the depths of His being. He was like the fountain-head of a great river which, as fast as it is fed by the mountain snows, sends forth its waters and becomes a great channel of blessing to all around. In the Psalms of David, we find revealed the divine purpose of his election. Through the inspiration of the Spirit, David made many prophetic utterances of the coming Messiah.

David had a great inspiration come to him: a vision of building a house for the Lord God to dwell in instead of a tent. Being a man of action, he wanted to get started and he called the prophet, Nathan, to counsel him concerning his vision. The Lord spoke to Nathan and made him know that since David had been a man of war his son would build the house. But more than the earthly house that was to be builded was a dim outline given to Nathan, by prophetic vision, of a kingdom far more glorious than that which David wanted to build. David was a great king among the kings of the earth, but today we know about that Kingdom established forever through Jesus Christ, the Son of God and descendant of David. Christ's glory, the excellence of His character, and the transcendent glory of His person caused the name of David to become nothing in comparison to Christ and His kingdom. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:21b. "He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 2:33. What a glorious kingdom we are in and which is in us today! Through Christ we are His subjects and His throne is our heart.

In times before David, the promise of the coming Messiah was faintly given, but it seems that through David, greater revelations were given. The Temple that was built in all of its grandeur under Solomon was only a type of that more glorious, spiritual fabric which is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord." Eph. 2:20-22. —M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"From the sheepfolds, from following the ewes great with young" comes forth to our view a man after God's own heart. David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel, the Anointed of the God of Jacob by his courage and love for God and His holy nation, wielded great influence and authority that has left its mark not only on history, but upon the souls of men everywhere. While Saul was failing of the grace of God and sorrow was beginning to be felt in Israel because of his rejection, this young

man was making his start in life. The youngest of eight sons of Jesse, the grandson of Boaz and Ruth, David began his life's work as a shepherd. It was here amid the beauties of the fields and the woods along with lessons of faithfulness, courage, and the responsibility of his flock that he learned life's most vital lesson: faith and dependence upon God. And it was doubtless that here, while singing and playing upon the harp, his soul was inspired with psalms and hymns that lifted his soul up above the drudgery and loneliness of his shepherd life.

David was fully prepared for the service of God when he stepped into the arena of life, into Saul's court, and there to confront the giant who had all Israel pressed in fear. The battles he fought at home with the care of the sheep gave him experience to meet this and faith triumphed then as well as all along life's journey. David as King was the greatest of his time, and by many authorities is considered to have been the greatest king the world has ever known. He was not a perfect man, however, for he like other men sinned, and suffered for it. But one mark of his excellence was that when he was convinced of wrong-doing, he was humble to repent and obtain forgiveness. His farewell words to Solomon, his son who succeeded him, perhaps embody the chief characteristics of his own life: "Be thou therefore strong and show thyself a man." If the reader would behold an exciting drama in real life, colorful, and challenging, and full of things to be admired and patterned after in the realm of faith and courage, take the precious Holy Bible and read of David from beginning to the end.

—L. Busbee

GOD'S MERCY SHOWN

I was out for a good time, and thinking only of the excitement of the races. Men were shouting and cheering their favorite horses, when all at once I felt a tug at my coat sleeve. I turned and saw a young man. He stepped close and whispered one word, "Eternity," at the same time slipping a little tract into my hand. What a strange thing to say! I decided I would forget all about it.

I tried to enjoy what was going on, but could hear again and again that solemn word, "Eternity." Only a month before my best friend had died very suddenly, and I could not help thinking of him as being in eternity. I knew that if he had been still alive he would have been with me at the race-course. But he was in eternity.

I hurried home and read the gospel tract that had been given me, and there I found that God loved me and wished to forgive me. I opened my Bible, which had not been used for

a long time, and that very night I came to the Lord Jesus as a poor foolish sinful young man and accepted Him as my Saviour.

Stop now and ask yourself this question, "Where will I spend eternity?"

"By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place [in heaven], having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Hebrews 9:12). That "they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." (Hebrews 9:15).

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment." (Matthew 25:41, 46).

—o—

PSALM 2

The inspired Psalmist speaks:

1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying,

The rebellious people speak:

3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

The inspired Psalmist answers:

4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

God speaks:

6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

Christ declares what God has said unto Him:

7 I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

God, still speaking to Christ:

9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

The Psalmist's counsel for the souls of men:

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all them that put their trust in him.

February 3, 1974

CHRIST TRIUMPHANT OVER OPPOSITION

Acts 4:1-3, 18, 23-27; Rev. 2:26, 27; John 16:33;

Rev. 12:10, 11

Acts 4:1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,

2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.

18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is;

25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together.

(Read Psalms 2:1-6.)

Revelation 2:26 And he [Christ speaking to His followers] that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

(Read Psa. 2:9.)

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Revelation 12:10 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.

11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death.

Memory Verse: 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. Rev. 3:21.

Central Thought Regardless of the opposition that Satan and evil men my hurl against Christ and His truth, the King of kings is triumphant.

Word Definitions: These three words: Gentiles, Nations, and Heathen, all refer to the same Hebrew word which means, "a mass or troop of people." Christ means, "the Anointed One." Derision: "a scorning, mocking, or making fun."

LESSON BACKGROUND

It is generally understood that David, the King of Israel, composed this second Psalm after he had taken Jerusalem from the Jebusites and made it the capitol of his kingdom. (2 Samuel 5:7-9). Upon hearing this, the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim, which was near to Jerusalem. Josephus tells us that other war-like nations around about joined themselves to the Philistines in an effort to keep David from being established in his kingdom. But David after consulting the Lord gave them battle and totally overthrew the entire host of enemies. David composed this Psalm in triumph for his victory, but the Holy Spirit inspired his heart with prophecy, and showed that his victory was a type of a greater victory that was to be accomplished in Christ, the Saviour, the Son of God. And thus it was fulfilled that amid the persecution of Christ's disciples

this Psalm was referred to as spoken of God by the mouth of David concerning Christ and His Church. The kingdom of David has faded from view, but the triumph of Christ in His glorious resurrection yet lives to cause us who believe in Him to triumph in like manner.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why are people not willing for Christ to reign over them? 2. What do you think the bands and cords of the Lord refer to? 3. Is it possible, and does it pay for a man to fight against God? 4. Is the Lord moved or affected by all organized rebellion against His power? 5. Do you think that this kind of opposition is going on today against the Lord? 6. Just why did the heathen rage against the Lord?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Lift up your heart to God in prayer for inspiration and illumination of His Spirit from our lesson taken from the Second Psalm, for it contains great and glorious spiritual truths that melt the heart with love as well as challenge it. Behold the host of darkened souls of long ago gathered together against Christ to crucify Him. See how even today upon the breadth of the earth there still rages the same rebellious spirit in the hearts of men. "We will not have this man reign over us!" Mankind ignorantly supposes that true happiness comes with giving a loose rein to their lusts and desires, and following their own thoughts and fleshly inclinations. They count the cross and self-denial as their enemy. Oh, how sad it is that they can be so deceived and in the dark concerning the wisdom from above.

But now look at Christ. Behold His grand and glorious triumph over their massive rebellion. Feel the weight of the words: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." He sits in the heavens and laughs all their wicked strivings to scorn. Christ is triumphant. He quotes from this in the Revelation and assures us that we, too, will share in His triumph over the nations, both now and in the time to come. We do not reign over them with a literal rod of iron, nor shall we literally dash them to pieces. The Christian triumph is a spiritual overcoming in the heart, conquering pride, and bitterness, lust, and greed. The battleground is within the man's soul, and victory is given, because Christ overcame Satan and cast him down. Salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ is ours today. Take courage in the midst of the powers of Satan, for Christ has fought and won for us the victory.

—L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The priests, captain of the temple, and the Sadducees were religious people. Jesus faced their opposition just as we face the opposition today of those who claim to have the true interpretation of God's Word. False prophets are the hardest against God's true children. In the dark ages of the church, the rule of Catholicism killed thousands of those who loved God and refused to come under its rule. Today, people will fight as they call it to defend their church. Truly, it is their church because it is not God's. How are we to act when we face this opposition? If we fight back and argue, fuss, and try to defend what we know to be right, will we not put ourselves on the same level with those whom we are facing? God will take care of His church and truth. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Praise God, the church is, and will be, triumphant! When Jesus comes in the clouds, there will be a church and the Bride of Christ will arise to meet Him. We want to watch our attitudes and guard our hearts so we can be among that number.

The heathen will rage and the people will imagine vain things. Yes, we face that also. The rulers are trying to stamp out the truth. We know that many false teachers are going forth in the name of Christ. But the heathen are trying to stamp them out. False teachers are but a cushion between the true church and the heathen or rulers of darkness. When they are put down, the true church of God will feel more than ever the force of the enemy. We will not bow down and join the National Council of Churches, or the World Council of Churches. We will not join their ministerial alliances and that makes us separate. More and more we are being put on the spot. Are we going to stand true or give in? Thank God, there will be those who will be true. We can overcome the devil and the powers of this world "by the blood of the Lamb and the word" of our testimony.

—M. Miles

RELIGION IS NOT A TITLE TO HEAVEN

A man, who was suddenly laid aside by sickness from an active business life and from a place of prominence in the church of which he was an esteemed member and an official, had leisure given to him to think. Never before, in the days of health and religious effort, had he considered his own personal condition in the sight of God, or where he would go when his earthly life was finished.

One afternoon, a friend called to see him, and in the course of their conversation he said to the sick merchant, "I have more than once been at the very gate of death, and I cannot describe

what peace I enjoyed at the prospect of meeting God, simply trusting in the precious blood of Jesus Christ as my only title."

The sick man raised himself on his elbow and said, "I have been thinking much about the same matter lately. I feel I have not been sufficiently zealous in religion to enable me to say I can look into the future as you do. I would give all I possess if I could."

"Religion is not a title to heaven," replied the Christian visitor. "Religion never gave anybody peace with God, or a title to His presence. The blood of Jesus Christ alone can do that."

The sick man seemed bewildered. He had been accustomed to think that religion was the very best thing in the world, and that when people spoke of "conversion," "salvation," or "cleansing in the blood of Christ," they simply expressed in their own way, and according to their own peculiar creed, the same thing as he called "religion." His friend saw his perplexity, and said, "May I read to you something from the Scriptures?" to which he received a glad consent. He then read:

"And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying . . . Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel. . . . They shall take every man a lamb . . . and . . . kill it. . . . And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. . . . For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." (Exodus 12:1, 2, 6, 12, 13.)

Commenting briefly on the verses, he said, "It was the blood shed and sprinkled, the blood trusted, and it alone, that gave safety to all within the house that night. All under the shelter of the blood were safe; all outside it, no matter what their character, were doomed to judgment."

Sitting up, the sick man reached out his hand, and grasping the hand of his visitor said slowly, with much feeling, "It's all in the blood. I clearly see that my only title to salvation is in the blood of Christ."

There are many who think that religion is a savior. Many are trusting their own righteousness and good works to take them or to help them into heaven, whereas God declares that the precious blood of Christ (trusted in by the sinner) is the only shelter from the coming judgment.

"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." "Without shedding of blood is no remission [forgiveness]."
—Sel.

February 10, 1974

CHRIST, THE FIRST BEGOTTEN OF THE DEAD

Acts 13:21-23, 29, 30, 32, 33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5; Rom. 1:1-4

Acts 13:21 And afterward they [Israel] desired a king; and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.

22 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will.

23 Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus.

29 And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.

30 But God raised him from the dead.

32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

(Read Psalm 2:7.)

Hebrews 1:5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

Hebrews 5:5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be a high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee.

Romans 1:1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy Scriptures,)

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

Memory Verse: But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 1 Cor. 15:20.

Central Thought: By His resurrection, Christ is made the Son of God with power to save all that believe in Him to life everlasting.

Word Definitions: Begotten: "To bring forth or bear young." Declare: "To score with a mark as a tally or record, to celebrate." (Heb.)

LESSON BACKGROUND

The whole human race needed a re-generation, or a new birth. This new life could come only by means of resurrection power through the avenue of the life and death of a holy and sinless Person. Every Christian doctrine of the New Testament centralizes around the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. In this second Psalm for this lesson, we emphasize verse 7 in which is found the decree of Christ being begotten of God as His Son. This statement is purely prophetic. It refers to nothing else but the resurrection of Christ.

When David arose from exile and obscurity to be the king of Israel, he reigned in Hebron for seven years. But it was not until he had dislodged the Jebusites from Jerusalem and wrought victory over the gathering forces that he was placed in a position to wield power and authority that he needed as king over God's people. And it was not until Christ was resurrected from the dead that He could be evidently set forth before the nations as the Conqueror of Death and Hell, the First Begotten of the dead, the Prince of the kings of the earth.

—L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. According to the flesh, Christ was made of the seed of whom? 2. Christ is declared to be the Son of God with power, according to what? By what? 3. Could you explain why Christ was declared to be the Son of God at His resurrection even though He was already the Son of God from the womb of Mary? 4. How many times is the saying "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" quoted in our lesson? Take careful note of how it is applied each time it is quoted.

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The key that unlocks this entire lesson and also opens up to us great channels of eternal truth lies in the New Testament application of this phrase from the second Psalm: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." John, in Revelation 1:5, called Jesus the first begotten of the dead. And we see the eternal, unchanging Sonship of Christ and His followers brought about through the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Paul in his message brought glad tidings, how that the promise which was made of old to the fathers by God had been fulfilled in that He (God) had raised up Jesus again (from the dead). Speaking this, he referred directly to the prophecy in the second Psalm. Then in Heb. 1:5, while speaking of the difference of Christ's glory as compared to that of angels, Paul referred to it and asked to which of the angels was this said. In Hebrews 5:5, he quotes it again concerning the high priesthood of Christ being instituted of God.

The eternal Sonship of Christ to God! Oh, what a glorious position of honor! And we who receive Him as Lord and Saviour and faithfully follow Him shall be granted that same glorious power to become the sons of God. Christ has been declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. He declares the decree! The Lord God said unto Him, "Thou art my Son"! Oh, can we not see Him with the eye of true faith and Holy Spirit revelation seated at the Father's right hand, ruling in the midst of His enemies? What a pleasure it is to know, and love, and obey Him! Can it really be true that we have the privilege to serve Him? Yes, thank God, we are delivered from the powers of darkness and this present evil world and translated into the Kingdom of His dear Son. Oh, what grace and high promotion that in Jesus I should be, raised from sin to such royal honor!

Think of the meaning of that word "declare": "To score with a mark as a tally or a record." When an athlete sets a world record, it is tallied, and recorded, and declared to the world. No one can successfully dispute it and he or she wins all the honors and benefits therefrom. So is Christ, triumphant over sin and death, declared to be the Son of God with power to save and deliver all who come unto God by Him. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"God hath fulfilled . . . the promise." (verses 32, 33). God has never made a promise that He has not fulfilled. What a glorious truth! We need that truth in these days of trouble and turmoil. We need an anchor for our souls and minds. What greater thing could be given us than for the God of all creation

to give us a promise? We know that it will come to pass. We have proof again and again of God fulfilling His promises. He declared that He would send His only begotten Son and that He would be the first begotten of the dead. He would be the first to arise in newness of the resurrected state. This all came to pass.

One person was needing some encouragement and he opened his Bible. His eyes fell on the words, "And it came to pass." This just lifted him up. What he was praying for, he knew then it would come to pass. Again and again God made promises, and again and again, we read where they did come to pass. Be encouraged dear fellow-traveler to that Home prepared for the faithful few, God will bring it to pass.

The resurrection of the dead is a glorious truth. It's something that causes us to know that even though we put our saved loved ones in the grave, they will arise again some day. Those who are saved will come forth and their bodies will be changed into an immortal body. At death, the soul leaves the body and goes to Paradise to await the resurrection day. We remember that Jesus told the thief that believed on Him that day, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43. This is Hades, or the abode of separated spirits. Some want to teach that Jesus, during this time, went to hell and preached the gospel to the anti-diluvian people. This is false teaching. The word "hell" in Acts 2:25, and Psalm 16:10, means Hades. "Hades was a general term among the Greek writers, by which they expressed this state: and this Hades was tartarus to the wicked, and elysium to the good. . . . The Hebrew is sheol and implying the grave; the state of separate souls, or, the unseen world of spirits, whether of torment, Luke 16:23, or in general, Rev. 1:18; 6:18; 20:13, 14. . . . Hell comes from the Anglo-Saxon, helan, to cover or hide." (Clarke's Com.) When Jesus comes, the world will be destroyed, the dead will arise, and then the Judgment. Rev. 20:14 tells us that after every man is judged according to his works, "death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." —M. Miles

WHERE IS MY WANDERING BOY?

A young engineer, a son of godly parents, who lived in the western part of Kentucky, strayed away from the right path. Bad companions led him to do that which was evil.

On one occasion, he stayed away from home three whole days. No one knew where he was, except a saloon keeper who had been "noble-minded" (?) enough to keep him in his saloon, after he had gotten him so intoxicated that he became absolutely unconscious. The grief of the parents can easily be imag-

ined. "Where is my Harry? Where is my Harry?" cried the despairing mother, time and again.

Inquiries were made at the police station and finally there came a man on Sunday morning and notified the parents that the young man lay drunk in the saloon, but that he would be sobered up the next day.

His mother had a beautiful voice, and sang solos quite often. On this particular Sunday she had been asked to sing the heart-touching song, "Where Is My Wandering Boy?" and she promised to do so in spite of the great sorrow that rested so heavily upon her on account of her own son.

Along in the afternoon on Sunday, Harry began to "come to himself" where he lay in the saloon. He was told that his mother knew where he was. This helped to make him sober. When the bells began to ring in chapel towers for the evening service, Harry unexpectedly decided to go to the chapel where his parents attended. He still had his working clothes on, and looked bad after the night's spree. He sat down in a corner of the chapel, not far from the pulpit. He did not know, of course, that his mother was going to sing.

The chapel soon filled with people, the minister prayed, and preached his sermon, after which followed the solo number. And now, as never before, the mother sang with a clear, but sad voice, from her despairing soul, the words:

"Oh, where is my boy tonight? Oh, where is my boy tonight?"

What was it that gave her strength to sing thus, a song in which every word must have felt like a stab of a dagger? That heart-touching song made a most profound impression upon the whole congregation, but there was a heart which came as near bursting as her own. She did not know he was there. When she had sung the last verse:

"Go for my wandering boy tonight,

Go search for him where you will,"

a young man hastened forward in the chapel and rushed with outstretched arms to the singer on the platform. Sobbing, he cried out, "Here I am, mother." The mother rushed to him and threw her arms around him. A general emotion stirred the whole audience. The situation was soon understood, and then followed a hymn of praise.

Hundreds of voices took part in this song as it rang with power through the church. Another lost son had returned to the home of his Father.

—Sel.

February 17, 1974

THE GOSPEL TO ALL THE WORLD

**Psa. 2:8; Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:46, 47;
Acts 1:8; Psa. 68:11; Psa. 126:6; Isaiah 52:7; Rom. 10:18**

Psalms 2:8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

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:

20 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.

Mark 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Luke 24:46 And he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Acts 1:8 But 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 Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Psalms 68:11 The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.

Psalms 126:6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Romans 10:18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes

verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Memory Verse: So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Romans 10:17.

Central Thought: As we tell the gospel story, through obedience to Christ, the Holy Spirit will work with those truths and deal with hearts.

Word Definition: Heathen: "originally, a member of any people not worshipping the God of Israel. . . [or] a person regarded as irreligious, pagan." —Web. Dic.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our scriptures are taken from the New Testament to verify the fact that Jesus sent forth the disciples and also all "born again" believers to bring in all who will come and be saved. We notice in the 8th verse of the second Psalm, which we are studying in these few lessons, that not only did Christ come to save us, but he wants to save others, and that our responsibility to others is to rescue them from sin. We are to "ask" for their souls and Christ will intercede to the Father for them. The eighth verse is a prophecy of Christ's mission, our duty, and reward for obeying by bringing souls to God.

QUESTIONS:

1. What are we to ask for?
2. To whom are we to tell the gospel story?
3. Who will give us power to be a help to souls?
4. What kind of people does the gospel worker face?
5. How can we go or help spread the gospel?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Dense darkness covers the minds of the people who have never heard the gospel story. The forces of the devil are working through witchcraft, superstition and fear to hold them in the grasp of ignorance. But Jesus died on the cross for those poor, blinded souls. It is their privilege to hear the gospel. We are to "ask" for their souls and then we are to "go" and bring them in. Through faith in Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit anointing, we receive power to go forth, and through prayer and teaching, souls will be brought to God. All heaven will be behind us. Christ has "all power" over all persons, all evil spirits, all movements, and is able to bend them, deliver them, and set them free from the devil. Christ, working through His children, will deal with every soul. The power of the love of

Christ for all mankind will touch the hearts of the people. They will be given a chance to yield to the Spirit of God.

There is one element which modifies the dense darkness that is upon the soul of the heathen. That is the unwritten law of Heaven in the hearts of men. The Apostle Paul refers to the heathen or the Gentiles, who did not know the law, as having a "law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean-while accusing or else excusing one another; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." Romans 2:14-16. This is a help in our telling the heathen about the gospel. So when you talk to anyone about God, there is a sense within them that will respond if the person will give heed to it.

When we think of heathenism, we are overwhelmed and appalled. The extent of the need and the territory is vast. We think of those who have wonderful minds, but are enslaved by heathenism and idolatry. The wretchedness and misery of the heathen touches our hearts. How we long to tell them about Jesus, the One who can save them to the uttermost. We can send the gospel by the preached word by supporting those who can go, by publishing the gospel and sending it forth, by praying, and by working around our own doorstep. Much is to be done for Christ. We want to get a vision and then work for God so we can stand before Him with some sheaves in that last day.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Romans 10:18 of our lesson is a quotation from Psalm 19. Paul applied this to the hearing of the gospel by men and women. "Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." The very fact that Paul used a sentence from this 19th Psalm to declare that the gospel is being heard makes us to realize that this Psalm, also, is prophetic.

Besides the messengers of the gospel that are sent forth by the Holy Spirit, we see the universal gospel expounded throughout the earth and declared by the majesty of the firmament above us. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." How true this is! From day to day, and from night to night, the mighty hosts of the sky and the creation of God below bespeak His wonderful image of love and grace. And their sound goes out to all lands. No tongue or speech is excluded from their doctrine. In these heavenly hosts hath God placed a tabernacle or dwelling for the sun, which comes forth each day with new mercies and brilliant

beauty like a bridegroom coming forth for his bride, and rejoicing in his circuit like a strong man who runs a race.

But God knows and we know that this universal gospel preached by His handiwork of nature is not sufficient to reach the hearts of men. Men and women who are raised up from sin and darkness and are sitting in heavenly places with Christ become the avenue through which the glory of God is declared. And their sound is to go out to all lands also. In the hearts and lives of the saints, God places a tabernacle for Christ, the Sun of righteousness, to shine forth as the morning. The sound of the gospel is heard wherever a child of God finds the salvation of Christ. It continues to echo, and will continue to echo unto the end of time.

Thus we see the nature of the prophecy of the Psalms. They were written to be fulfilled in this New Testament age concerning Christ and His universal mission of the salvation of men. His law is perfect, converting souls, and His testimonies are sure, making wise the simple. His statutes are right, rejoicing the heart, and His commandments are pure, enlightening the eyes. Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound.

—L. Busbee

TRIED AS BY FIRE

A boy came into the hall, and walking straight up to the missionary in India he bowed and asked if he could buy a New Testament. As he looked poor, and was evidently so keen, the book was given to him, but still he hung about until all the women had gone. Seeing he had something special to say, the missionary took him over to the Mission House.

"I am of Kshatna (kingly) caste," he said. "My parents are dead and my married sister and her husband give me a roof. But before my mother died last year, she heard 'the happy message' from a Bible woman, and as I used to listen with both ears, so I, too, have grown to love 'the Friend of little children.' My heart eats joy because I have heard about Him, but, alas! now that my mother is dead there is much trouble for me. I began to teach my sister, and when my brother-in-law discovered me doing so, he snatched away my New Testament and burned it."

"Have you no other relatives, or must you go on living with them?" asked Miss Evans.

"I have none who want me," said Toda, "therefore, I must stay with my sister as long as I can bear it. Truly, I should be filled with joy to go to a Christian school, but my brother-in-law would never allow me to. He is a strict Hindu. Oh! if only I were free how thankfully I would work at any task to pay

for my schooling. I want to know how to use my tongue and speak to others of the good Savior."

"Well, Toda, we must pray and God may graciously make a way of escape for you, but just go on trying to be faithful to Christ at present, till we see how things turn out."

Toda smiled, and later left with his precious New Testament, but he begged that no one might visit his sister for fear of what his brother-in-law might do to her. The boy had really come to the Christian's compound at very great risk, and he went back by all sorts of strange ways through the town, terrified that someone might see him and report the fact to his brother-in-law. As he entered the dark Indian house, his sister lying listlessly on the bed called him:

"Toda! Toda! where hast thou been, lazy one? I have been waiting for thee to cook the rice, for fever is burning up my body."

Poor Sulva! She had only a very weak faith in God, and since her marriage everything was so hard, but she wanted Toda to go to the Christian people. Some days passed and then a chance remark from a neighbor set the fires of persecution alight for herself and Toda.

"That young brother of thy house will destroy thy caste. Why dost thou permit him to visit the low-caste Jesus people?"

"If he has gone there he shall never do so again," said the man angrily, as he strode home. He seized Toda who was helping his sister, and demanded: "When did you go to the Jesus church people?"

Sulva looked at the boy beseechingly, to try to get him to deny the charge, but with a swift cry to God for help Toda answered truthfully.

"I-yah, i-yah, so I did not burn thy tongue sufficiently last time. Well, I will teach thee thy lesson now, and unless thou dost curse the Foreign God I will make thee heed my words."

"Burn me or kill me, but I shall never give up my faith in Jesus my Savior," said the boy quietly but firmly. "He bore greatest suffering for me and I am ready to bear something for Him."

Next morning Toda crept round to the mission in a sorry plight; he was terribly burned all over, and his tongue was like a piece of raw beef. Though in great pain he managed to tell them that his sister had enabled him to escape and begged them to send him far away to some mission school where his brother-in-law could not find him.

In less than an hour, the missionary was escorting what looked like a very sick old Indian woman in the mission bullock

cart to a small cross-country depot where she and her charge just caught a train to a far distant town where Toda could be received into a mission school.

Poor boy, he was so bruised and sore he could not lie down for days, and though he was burning with fever, there was a look of great joy and gratitude on his face. It was a relief when they reached their destination at last, for his brother-in-law, as soon as he had discovered his flight, had every local railway depot watched at once.

By God's mercy Toda was safe beyond his brother-in-law's reach, and today he is learning how to use his scarred tongue for future testimony for his Savior. He has indeed been "tried by fire," and by God's grace, like the three youths of old in the book of Daniel, he has been enabled to stand the test.

—Amelia Stott

February 24, 1974

EMBRACING THE SON

Acts 8:27-39

(Read Psalm 2:10, 11, 12)

Acts 8:27 And he [Philip] arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias [Isaiah] the prophet.

29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readeest?

31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

32 The place of the Scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

Memory Verse: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Romans 10:10.

Central Thought: Since Christ has risen from the dead and triumphed over all things as the eternal Son of God, we are to embrace Him, obey Him, and trust Him with reverence and godly fear.

Word Definition: Kiss: "embrace and worship purely."

LESSON BACKGROUND

The last three verses of the second Psalm contain an urgent appeal to the souls of men. Seeing that Christ is triumphant over sin, death, and the grave, and will triumph over all opposition of men and devils, men are urged to embrace and serve this conquering King of Glory. We are to fear Him as well as love Him, too. We have selected the account of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch through the preaching and personal visitation of Philip as a worthy representation of how the gospel should be accepted and obeyed.

Picture yourself in a nation that is being conquered by a mighty monarch who promises and assures blessings and prosperity for all who submit to his rule willingly, and who also promises swift destruction for all who rebel against him. Would it not be wise to make peace with such an one, and declare support and trust beneath his dominion? This is exactly the

way it is with Christ. He has conquered all things and now has all authority and power in Heaven and in earth subdued to Him. How wise we ought to be to embrace and worship Him.
—L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What had the eunuch come to Jerusalem for? 2. What was he reading as he rode in his chariot? 3. What did he think of what he was reading? 4. How did Philip happen to be there at that time? 5. What was the condition that Philip required of him before he could be baptized? 6. By what mode do you think the eunuch was baptized—by immersion or sprinkling? 7. How did the eunuch go on his way?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The man in our lesson was a searcher for truth and light. Under the influence of the fame of Israel and Israel's God, he had come the long journey from Ethiopia, which lay to the south of Egypt. He was returning, but was yet not satisfied. He had the book of Esaias (Isaiah), the prophet, in hand and was reading it earnestly. This was the setting of Philip's approach to him, being directed by the Holy Spirit. God beheld this earnest seeker for truth, and had moved on Philip's heart to join with him so as to preach the gospel to him. Philip heard him reading and knew that he was reading from the prophet. The man was on the inquiry, and invited Philip to come up and sit in the chariot with him. And it was there that Philip preached unto him Jesus.

Oh, that more people's hearts would be prepared to receive the gospel message as this man did that day! Jesus said, "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." It is to the hungry and thirsting heart that the grace of God comes. It passes the proud and arrogant and self-sufficient. Here was a man who had a high position with the Queen of Ethiopia, but yet his need of God was keenly felt in his own heart.

Philip was ready with the gospel. We are to be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, that is, we are to be in readiness at all times to tell the wonderful works of God to hungry, seeking hearts. When the soul who needs the message meets the one who has the message, oh, what a glorious meeting takes place.

This man from afar was eager to fulfill all the Word of God. Doubtless, Philip included the commandment of baptism, and explained what it all meant. And here he is willing and anxious to carry out all that Christ enjoined upon him. Instead

of having to be forced, the man was greatly desirous of proceeding. "If thou believest with all thine heart." Yes, that is the requirement of today if we would be a partaker of the divine benefits and hope. And can you not see the glory that fell around that place, a glory that caught away Philip from the eunuch's sight and caused him to go on his way rejoicing?

—L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It is important to be at the right place at the right time. In our own understanding or wisdom we know neither the right place nor the right time to be there. Philip had been in a great revival, but the Holy Spirit bade him go to the desert. He went. If he had questioned the Lord and wanted to know why go there, we know that he would have missed helping the man who was searching for truth, as he rolled along over the desert road. No doubt the eunuch had heard about Jesus and His resurrection while at the feast in Jerusalem. Probably he had possessed a book of Isaiah many years, but now he was trying to find out if the prophecies ascertained such an event as the coming of Jesus and His mission. His search for truth touched heaven. God was touched and He touched the heart of Philip. Philip was an obedient servant of His and he immediately obeyed the command. When the eunuch was at the part of the narrative where he felt the need of an interpreter, Philip was there right at the moment. The Lord had the eunuch reading aloud and that furnished Philip with an opportunity and an excuse for asking the question, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" If the eunuch had resented Philip's inquiry, there would have been no conversation and therefore no conversion. The eunuch was anxious to understand. This desire and eagerness brought the great blessing of salvation to him. Understanding is important. Mere reading or hearing without understanding will not bring salvation. And when a person understands, he must have faith. Faith in the Scriptures involves more than just an intellectual assent. One must have a complete, heartfelt reliance on Him of whom the testimony speaks. One must give himself to the Lord and seek Him for what He has to offer.

When the eunuch was converted he was baptized. Notice it says that Philip and the eunuch both went down into the water. There wasn't a mere sprinkling like some teach today. The eunuch wanted to obey all that Jesus had taught. Truly, that was embracing the Son. He surely put his trust in the Lord and was blessed.

—M. Miles

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities for little kindnesses come our way more often than we think, and they are usually of the kind which are almost unnoticed because of their smallness; but, oh, the joy which one such little kindness may bring to some lonely heart!

There are many lonely souls in this world of ours, waiting for some one to write or speak, and bring them the message of salvation. It may be "one by one" work, but how well worth while it will seem when the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant" is heard! Opportunity! Oh, that the word might be written, nay, engraved on our hearts throughout the coming year, so that we shall be eager to seize even the smallest which comes our way! God wants you and me to crowd into our lives unselfish actions, loving and tender deeds, sweet and holy thoughts. Let us make up our minds to let the law of kindness govern us.

A little girl approached the lifeless form of her grandfather, and looking at the still face, she whispered: "Dear Grandpa, you know I was always good to you while you were alive." Looking back over our lives, can we each one say the same thing as we think of those among whom we live in our own homes? Statistics show that of the persons killed by falls, more than half fall in their own homes. A home should be the safest place in the world, but it would seem to be an especially dangerous place. This is surely because at home we are off our guard, we are not watching for stumbling-blocks. Is not all this true also of spiritual disasters? Our homes are the most frequent witnesses of bad temper, of selfishness, of cruelty, of neglect, of poor faith. How many and how terrible are the spiritual falls in our own homes, and how many opportunities for doing good come, and are allowed to take their wings and fly away before we even see them! Oh, how we need to be on the alert for opportunities to be kind and loving in our own homes!

If we are to be great saints, it must be now, just where we are placed. If ever we are to achieve aught for Christ, worthwhile when viewed from the eternal shore, it must be in the place where He has placed us. If ever we are to pluck brands from a world on fire, it must be at the very instant the opportunity occurs.

Mary did not wait until the Lord was dead before she broke the alabaster box of precious ointment, and what joy and comfort her action brought to the One who was pouring out His life for others! What a glorious thought it is that when we take an opportunity for doing an unselfish action, it is unto Him! If we give only a cup of cold water to a thirsty child in His

name, and for love of Him, He assures us it will be accepted as being done unto Himself. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good."

"There are moments quickly passing, opportunities which rise, Nevermore to cross our pathway as we journey to the skies; Opportunities, God-given, with these precious moments flow, Oh, if we are watching, waiting, we shall seize them as we go.

"There are moments quickly passing, soon our little day is done, Soon beyond the far horizon fast will fade the setting sun; Let us use these golden moments which the Lord to us doth give, Till at length with Him in Heaven we the life of lives shall live."

March 3, 1974

MAN OF SORROWS

Isa. 53:1-3; Mark 9:12b; John 1:11; Isa. 53:4, 5a, 6, 7;
Luke 22:44; Matt. 27:26; John 19:28, 30; Acts 4:12;
Isa. 53:10a, 11a

Isaiah 53:1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him: he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Mark 9:12b [Jesus said] It is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.

John 1:11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

Isaiah 53:4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5a But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Luke 22:44 [Jesus in Gethsemane] And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Matthew 27:26 Then [Pilate] released . . . Barrabas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

John 19:28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Isaiah 53:10a Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.

11a He [God] shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied . . . for he shall bear their iniquities.

Memory Verse: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9.

Central Thought: The sufferings of the incarnate Son of God constituted the price which He voluntarily paid for human redemption. This price was required by "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," and is the atonement due for the accumulated sins of a guilty world.

Word Definitions: Comeliness means, "of pleasing appearance; attractive; seemly; proper; suitable." Sorrow means "mental suffering caused by loss, disappointment, etc.; sadness; brief; mourning." Crucify means "to execute by suspending from a cross with the hands and feet nailed or bound to it; to torment; torture."

LESSON BACKGROUND

We are continuing our study of the prophecies of Christ and their fulfillment. Isaiah is called the messianic prophet. He is also called the New Testament gospel prophet. The New Testament says that Isaiah, "saw his glory and spake of him." John 12:41.

Isaiah lived in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, who were kings of the southern kingdom, Judah, at the time when the northern kingdom, Israel, was destroyed by the Assyrians.

A tradition, in the Talmud, states that Isaiah resisted Manasseh's idolatrous decrees, and was fastened between two planks, and was "sawn asunder," thus suffering a most horrible death. This is thought to be referred to in Hebrews 11:37.

The latest archaeological discovery of the Book of Isaiah has been identified to be written 2000 years ago, 100 years older than any known manuscript in existence of any Old Testament book. —See Halley's Bible Handbook.

Notice that we have the prophecy in our printed Bible lesson and then the fulfillment of it in the New Testament which was about 700 years before Christ came. Surely, the Bible is an inspired book from God. No other book in the world is like it. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. Try to explain some of the depths of the sorrows of Jesus. 2. What does it mean that Jesus had no comeliness that we would desire Him? What is comeliness? 3. Why did God permit Jesus to be bruised, and to what extent did He have to go before God was satisfied? 4. What does this bruising that God let His Son undergo make us know about God? 5. Discuss a sheep or animal and their helplessness before man and compare it with Jesus and His final death.

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

No one who will think solemnly over the history of our blessed Lord's sufferings, as shown to us in the Scriptures, will be without a feeling of deep, humble gratitude and a love that will cause one to bow in humble submission to Him. His great love for us, when we were His enemies, breaks one's rebellious heart. When we see Him as truly a "man of sorrows," it causes us to become broken and of a contrite spirit. Sin had to be punished. Jesus took our punishment and let us go free. What a wonderful Saviour!

Man's sorrows are generally shortened by his ignorance or short-sightedness. When someone speaks hatefully to us, we

hear only their words and see their expression, but when Jesus was here, He was divine. He knew even their wicked thoughts and the intents of their hearts. He knew the depths of their sins and foresaw how they would crucify Him and the intense suffering it would bring. All of this was ever before Him.

Even though He was divine, He was human, too. He felt pain as any other human. It is human for us to shun suffering and desire to live and shun death. But in Christ we find that He, with His divine authority, kept back whole legions of angels, lest they interrupt His work. He faced suffering, knowing that through His suffering you and I could be saved from eternal damnation. He lay down His life freely that He might take it again. He was as a lamb led to his shearers. He was as defenseless and as innocent as a lamb. He humbled Himself even to the state of the brute creation, as the Psalm says, "I am a worm, and no man; a very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people." We can think of our feelings when we see a brute animal being mistreated or become a victim of torture. Then we know our feelings when a child or baby is beaten by an enraged parent or someone else. We feel sickened at the sight or thought of such cruelties. Why? Because they are innocent and unable to defend themselves. But in Christ's sufferings it touches us to know that not only was He guiltless and defenseless, but He had come among His persecutors in love and was rejected of them.

God saw the travail of Christ's soul and was satisfied. Jesus could face being horribly treated because He knew He was innocent. But He also had to know that God had turned His face away from Him because God could not look upon sin and Jesus was bearing the sins of the whole world. God was satisfied because through Christ's suffering a people would be saved. Jesus also was exalted as King of kings and Lord of lords.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Although the Old Testament prophecies foretold Christ as being a "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" it seemed quite difficult for Israel to accept that sort of aspect of the awaited Messiah. And even when Jesus began to inform His own followers that He was destined to suffer at the hands of the people in Jerusalem, He was rebuked of them. They were unable to associate suffering, reproach, and humiliation with the Kingdom of God. Why was this? And why is it hard for people today to be willing to suffer the thorns in the narrow way? It is because the heart of man is so prone to look only at the natural, fleshly side of things. This is something we

must all watch very carefully and keep well in our minds that Christ is calling us to suffer with Him if we indeed would reign with Him. It was easy to follow Jesus while He was healing the sick, and raising the dead, and casting out demons, and walking on the waters. But how easily His own disciples turned and fled when they beheld Him enter into the perils of suffering.

Two different places the Bible speaks of Christ being made perfect through suffering. Christ Himself had to suffer for His own profit and good. The sufferings He passed through were the means of qualifying Him as the Redeemer of souls. Such was the utterance of Christ as He talked with the two men on the road to Emmaus. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" And we must all confess that the richest and most lasting good to our souls comes not when all is rosy and lovely. It comes when the adversities strike and the heart is made to know what it is to be broken and crushed. Yes, the Shepherd was smitten, and the sheep were scattered abroad, but it was only that they would be gathered again once more into one fold. So often, sufferings come at the hand of sinners and wicked people, as it was so in the case of Christ, but for the child of God that is exercised thereby come much good and spiritual blessings. There is one thing for sure about the sufferings of this present life, and that is that it is all temporary, for our sufferings will soon be over, and we shall rest in glory. But what an awful, awful thought to think of shunning the sufferings of the Lord here, and then to have to suffer for all eternity in hell! Reader, where do you want to suffer—here, or there?

—L. Busbee

GOD VALUES YOUR SOUL

When the precious Son of God was dying upon the cross, the Father looked down upon the scene from heaven and saw the innocent blood of His dear Son flowing freely. Finally, the anguish, pain and suffering ceased, and it was finished. The Father was satisfied with the sacrifice that He had made for our sins, and the death sentence was canceled to all who will believe and receive His blood as an atonement for their sins.

If souls could realize the extreme suffering and abuse that Jesus, an innocent man, underwent to purchase their salvation, they would have to be hard-hearted indeed to reject such a Saviour and turn from their only hope of eternal life.

To give you some idea of what it means to be crucified, I shall quote from Farrar's "Life of Christ":

"It was unanimously considered the most horrible form of death. Among the Romans, the degradation was also a part of the infliction, and the punishment if applied to free men was

used only in the case of the vilest criminals. The one to be crucified was stripped naked of all his clothes, and then followed the most awful moment of all. He was laid down upon the implement of torture. His arms were stretched along the cross-beams, and at the center of the open palms the points of a huge, iron nail was placed, which, by the blow of a mallet, was driven home into the wood. Then through either foot separately, or possibly through both feet together, as they were placed one over the other, another huge nail tore its way through the quivering flesh. Whether the sufferer was also bound to the cross we do not know; but, to prevent the hands and feet being torn away by the weight of the body, which could 'rest upon nothing but four great wounds,' there was, about the center of the cross, a wooden projection strong enough to support, at least a human body, which soon became a weight of agony. Then the 'accursed tree' with its living human burden was slowly heaved up and the end fixed firmly in a hole in the ground.

"The feet were but a little raised above the earth. The victim was in full reach of every hand that might choose to strike. A death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death can have of the horrible and ghastly—dizziness, cramping, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, traumatic fever, tetanus, publicity of shame, long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of untended wounds, all intensified just up to the point at which they can be endured at all, but all stopping just short of the point which would give to the sufferer the relief of unconsciousness. The unnatural position made every movement painful; the lacerated veins and crushed tendons throbbed with incessant anguish; the wounds, inflamed by exposure, gradually gangrened; the arteries, especially of the head and stomach, became swollen and oppressed with surcharged blood; and, while each variety of misery went on gradually increasing, there was added to them the intolerable pang of a burning and a raging thirst. Such was the death to which Christ was doomed."

My dear sinner friend, this is a description of the humiliation and intense suffering that Jesus went through because He loved your soul and wanted you to be free from sin and have eternal life. Jesus is a friend of the sinner. What more could you ask a friend to do to prove to you that he loved you? God valued your soul so highly that He gave His Son as a price for your soul, and Jesus loved you so much that He willingly suffered for your redemption. God is not sending souls to hell, but has made a way for you to escape that awful place, and now, He begs you to plead guilty of sin and ask forgiveness and accept the Blood as an atonement, and have peace with God

through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Choose life, for eternal life is in the blood. —Fred Pruitt

March 10, 1974

THE DAY OF THE LORD

Isa. 61:1-3; Isa. 29:18, 19; Luke 4:16-21; Matt. 11:2-5;
John 5:36b

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

Isaiah 29:18 And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

19 The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

Luke 4:16 And he [Jesus] 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.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the

minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Matthew 11:2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go, and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

John 5:36b The same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

Memory Verse: Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. Hebrews 3:7, 8a.

Central Thought: The prophet was given a glimpse of the ushering in of the great gospel day which we today are enjoying. This day was decreed by God, the Father.

Word Definitions: Jubilee means "a ram's horn [trumpet] In Jewish history, a celebration every fifty years in which all bondmen were freed, mortgaged lands restored to the owners, etc. —Web. Dic. "In that day" refers to the gospel day in which we now live since Jesus came and ascended.

LESSON BACKGROUND

There is no other book like the Bible and the depths of its glories are precious. The child of God gets lost in meditation, seeking out its treasures. How marvelous it is to see how God planned and unfolded His ushering in of the gospel day. On Mount Sinai, God spoke to Moses and gave him many commands. One thing He told him was the following: "And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall

return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you; ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field." Leviticus 25:8-12.

The prophet Isaiah was referring to this time when he said, "the acceptable year of the Lord," yet prophetically it was speaking of the day of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to set free those who were under bondage to Satan.

Notice that the day of jubilee, when the trumpet was to blow, was in the day of atonement. While this law served important political and religious purposes among the Jews, it was typical of the Christian dispensation, as our lesson points out when Jesus said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Jesus brought in the jubilee.

History tells us that Christ died at the commencement of the last Jubilee that has ever been observed. (Hom. Com.) Today, we are in the gospel jubilee. Praise the Lord! Someday we will hear the final trumpet sound and we will be in the final jubilee which will last forever. Our souls will bask in the sunlight of heaven and we will enjoy the glories prepared for the faithful few.

John the Baptist had been put in jail by Herod for telling him that the woman he had married was not his lawful wife. She told her daughter to ask for John's head when the daughter was given the privilege of making any request of Herod that she desired.

—M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. What day was Isaiah and Jesus speaking about when they said that this was "the acceptable year of the Lord"?
2. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament was written in Greek. Could this be the reason for the differences in the scriptures in Isaiah and the ones in Luke which Jesus read?
3. What kind of broken hearts does Jesus heal?
4. Did healings end with the ascension of Jesus?
5. Discuss the Jubilee.

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Let us rejoice in this gospel day. We are the most blessed of all peoples on the earth. We have access to the throne of God through Jesus Christ. We can come with confidence and with faith and let our requests be made known. Our Jesus proved His great love to us when He came, as it was prophesied by Isaiah, and brought liberty to those who were held under bond-

age of sin and those who were brokenhearted by natural causes. Praise God for the master heart-Healer. This world seems to echo and re-echo with the groans of suffering. We cannot even conceive the depths of the widespread misery that exists. Surely, if ever there was a time when the world needed Jesus, it is now. He could prove His power to comfort those who suffer if they would only let Him. Let no one say, "No one knows what I feel." Jesus knows the very degree that you suffer. Jesus can comfort. In our experience, we find no helper in sorrow like our Lord. Those who face death and have served Him faithfully find that He is a true comforter and will help them calmly face it. Those who are burdened down under the load of sin can find salvation in Christ. He will come and forgive that sin and clean the heart and make the one who repents pure and clean. What a glorious experience!

We are thankful also that Jesus came not only to make the heart clean and pure, but we find that it was prophesied that He would heal the body of diseases. We read that while here He did heal. This did not end when He went back to heaven, but as we are still in that gospel day, He is healing today. Praise God for His healing power! Healing comes by faith. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." So we need to read and heed God's Word. We need to know that Jesus healed when He was here on earth and that He is the same today. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. . . . Without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Heb. 11:1, 6. So the Word of God makes us know that when we have diligently sought Him, and even if we do not see the results, according to His word we can thank Him for the healing. By faith we are healed and not by feelings. Praise the Lord, He has healed me many, many times.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

As Jesus stood up that day at Nazareth to read from Isaiah the prophet, many eyes were fastened on Him. Most of those people were no doubt familiar with this passage, but were wholly unprepared for these words to be fulfilled in their ears that day. It was because very few of those people at Nazareth classed themselves in the category mentioned in the verses He read: the meek, brokenhearted, captive, bound, mourning, ashes, heaviness, etc. It was to this type of people Jesus was aiming His gospel and these people at Nazareth counted not themselves in that sort of rank.

It is the same today. The majority of people in this world fail to sense their need, and woe be to such hearts. Instead of receiving the message with joy and gladness, the people of Nazareth would have pushed Him headlong over the cliff. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Jesus is a Rock upon which to build to some, and a stone of stumbling to others. That is the way it was back then, and so it is now.

Jesus went on that day after reading the scripture and referred them to two different cases of history. One was concerning the famine in Israel in the time of Elijah. There were many widows in Israel at that time, He brought out, but to none of them was the prophet sent, but to a widow way up on the coast. This widow was in need, as she and her son were preparing to eat their last meal on earth. What about the many widows that were in Israel? Their hearts were not prepared to seek the Lord. Then He mentioned in the time of Elisha of the many lepers in Israel, and how that none of them were cleansed except Naaman, the Syrian. What does that mean? It means the cold, hard fact that very few people are able to grasp the extent of their need. Of all the lepers that were in Israel, here was a foreigner coming on the merit of the word of a child to receive healing, and did he not have to humble himself way down to get it? You can be sure he did. And so it was then, and so it is now. It is not that God is not able or willing; it is rather that the hearts of the children of men are not prepared to receive of His healing and blessing.

—L. Busbee

GOD STILL HEALS TODAY

To all the dear saints, greetings in the precious name of Jesus, who has done so much for us and is still blessing His trusting children upon the earth today. Oh, how we do thank Him for the great and wonderful provisions He has made for our souls just to know and have the experience of living in the fullness of His grace through the power of the Holy Ghost.

I want to write my testimony of the miraculous healing the Lord recently did on my body. On the night of March 3, 1973, I found a knot on my body about the size of a small egg. It brought quite a concern and burden to my heart. I didn't tell anyone until about four or five days later, at which time it had grown quite a bit.

The Lord inspired my faith with this scripture, "Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Matt. 7:7. I did just that. I had the saints here at Shawnee, Okla. to anoint and pray for me. The

next morning the growth was much larger. It was about the size of a medium-sized orange. Soon, two more knots appeared. I told the Lord that this growth was gaining momentum, but immediately I said, Lord, by your help my faith is gaining momentum, too! I went into earnest prayer and fasting, seeking the Lord to help my faith. I had a great battle with Satan through suffering, but I was determined to gain the victory. Toward evening, the Lord gave me a visitation of His Spirit, flooding my soul with a chorus of a song which says, "Strengthened by the mighty power of heaven, we shall conquer, we shall conquer, till the raging foe afar is driven, press the battle on." I said, "Lord, what is this mighty power from heaven?" Just at that moment I said, "God, it is You! I've been strengthened by God in heaven!" My soul was overjoyed, and my faith had gained momentum so that it seemed I could nearly look into heaven. Oh, praise the Lord! The Lord reminded me of the scripture which said of Jesus, "He looked up into heaven and prayed." What a boost that gave to my soul!

I was afflicted 2½ months, had much swelling, throbbing pain, hurting, and burning, and aching like a toothache. The above song and looking up into heaven by faith were the weapons I used all through this trial. The Lord healed me on May 17, 1973, completely of what was, no doubt, a large tumor or cancer. Praise His dear name! My suffering was great at times and the enemy would press hard against my faith. During the time of suffering, I would weep and pray until all suffering and the enemy were rebuked. God always was faithful to visit my soul. I would never get off my knees until the pain left and I was helped and encouraged in my heart. So often I would tell the Lord, "You said, I was strengthened by the mighty power of heaven!" Oh, the many, many times I used that song during this battle! It took me through, and it works! Thank the Lord!

I thought of the dreadful disease of cancer. Maybe sometimes it seems as a big giant, but God wants us to keep our faith and eyes on heaven. He is our victory. Let not any of us be fearful or draw back. God has the victory for us.

Many times I would want to feel of the tumor or cancer I had and God would impress me, "Not by sight or feeling, but by faith." I thank Him for His faithfulness to me. He has been so good to me. I feel I owe Him my whole life.

This past year He also healed me of low sugar, as I hardly had strength to go. Thank the Lord, now I eat anything I want and work just like anyone else. Also, He has wonderfully healed my feet. I suffered much with broken arches. My feet pained and hurt so I could hardly walk on them. I had to wear

specially made supports in my shoes as my ankle bone had dropped because of the broken down arch, but thank the Lord, I wear just the shoes now and feel wonderful. God still heals today, but we must have faith to believe.

I love Him supremely. I know He loves me. I am glad I belong to God and am enjoying His blessings. The Lord impressed me many times that the saints of old overcame by the word of their testimony. I testified again and again what God has done and is doing. I have the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Praise His dear name! —Sister Malinda Penner

(Parts of a testimony printed in July "Faith and Victory" paper.)

March 17, 1974

ACCESS TO THE FATHER

Isa. 11:1-12; Eph. 2:16, 18

Isaiah 11:1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

2 And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamathe, and from the islands of the sea.

12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Ephesians 2:16 And that he might reconcile both [Jew and Gentile] unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

18 For through him [Jesus] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Memory Verse: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28.

Central Thought: Through Christ all peoples of the earth in this gospel day have access to the Father. Those who are "born again" are changed, made one in Christ, and dwell in God's "holy mountain."

Word Definitions: Stem means stump Cockatrice or adder. Adder means "a small, poisonous snake." Ensign would mean, "a symbol; badge; a flag or banner." Partition means, "division into parts; separation." —Web. Dic.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson in Isaiah is a prophecy of Jesus in the gospel Day. We need to bear this in mind as we study it. "In that day" refers to the gospel day.

In the early days, a king would put up an ensign and people would rally around it. In the gospel day, the root of Jesse, which is Jesus Christ, who was of the lineage of Jesse and David, set up an ensign. That ensign was Jesus crucified on the cross. The Gentiles and the Jews lost their hatred of each oth-

er. The enmity was broken. The middle wall of partition was abolished through Jesus' dying on the cross and they both have met in a divine tie and are made of "twain one new man, so making peace." Ephesians 2:11-15. The Apostle Paul says, "And again, Esaias [Isaiah] saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust." Romans 15:12. The Gentiles rejoice today because they can be heirs of salvation with the Jews. Through Christ, the Gentiles and Jews are alike. They lose their identity, become Abraham's seed and heirs of the promises. When we are "born again," we are born into the Church that Jesus built and become the "habitation of God through the Spirit." In Christ there is neither male, female, Jew, Gentile, bond or free, but all are one. Praise the Lord for the gathering of the remnant of His people from the four corners of the earth in this gospel day. The saint Jew and Gentile are rallying around the ensign which is Christ crucified, resurrected and living today with God. He is our mediator. We need to keep these thoughts in mind as we study the lesson. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. Are we to be like Jesus? How can we have the spirit of wisdom and understanding? 2. Will the righteous judge others by the Word of God? 3. Explain how the child, lion, wolf, and lamb live together. 4. "In that day" means the gospel day. What will Jesus do in the gospel day? 5. Who will God through Christ reconcile to Himself, and will they be the church in which God's Spirit will dwell today?

TYPES

Various animals are used in the Word of God to show different characteristics of men. The following are a few: "harmless as doves," "Feed my lambs;" "ravenous wolves;" "grievous wolves,"—Matt. 7:15; Acts 20:29; "Beware of dogs,"—Philippians 3:2; "Without are dogs," etc.—Rev. 22:15; "serpents," "generation of vipers;" "sheep;" "goats;"—Matt. 25; "fat cattle;"—Ezekiel 34.

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

There is a gross misunderstanding today in most religious circles concerning the lesson scriptures. "The natural man understandeth not the things of the spirit." Many teach that this will take place sometime in the future, but, dear ones, today is the gospel day. We are living right now in the day when the wolf dwells with the lamb and the calf with the lion in the "holy mountain," the Church of God. The cow and the bear

feed together in the church which Jesus built. I am sure that some may question as to how this can be. Let us stop and think a little about this. We must remember that these are just types. Some want to make them literal. Do you not remember when the Pharisees came to Jesus and told Him to depart out of the country because Herod was going to kill Him? Jesus said to them, "Go tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." Luke 13:31, 32. He called Herod a fox. Was he a literal fox? No, he was of that nature. He was slick, sly and deceptive. It was a type of his nature. Now let us go back to our text. How can a bear change so he would feed with the cow and how would the wolf dwell with the lamb? How would the fatling and the young lion dwell together and a child lead them? There would have to be some changes made. Did you ever see someone who continually growled around and was always trying to cause trouble? Doesn't he need a change? What about a person acting like a lion? Sometimes an adult, with but little provocation, will hit another person, "springing upon him" like the lion upon his prey. The wolf will circle around and come closer and closer to make a kill. What about the person who hates another and is out to get him? Little by little, he spreads gossip or false tales. Little by little he tells grosser tales and you might say he is trying to circle that person with trouble, and finally, when he sees that one get down, he jumps in with one last hurtful thing and the person many times will go down under it. People with natures like these need a change. Who came to bring that change? Praise God, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Jesus, came to break the binding power of the devil and set them free! Jesus hit right at the seat of the trouble. The sin principle passed upon each person in this world. Through His death on the cross, we are forgiven of our sins; and through the Comforter, the Holy Spirit who came, and because of Christ's shed blood, we are cleansed of that sin principle, our natures are changed and we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus. Praise the Lord for perfected holiness!

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In our lesson the wolf is spoken of as dwelling with the lamb, and the leopard with the kid, the cow with the bear, etc. Then it speaks of the middle wall of partition being torn down by Christ between the Jew and the Gentile, the enmity slain, and both having access to God. It is very important that we count this to be fulfilled now in full and free salvation. And whether man in his gross darkness perceives it or not, this is fulfilled

in the hearts of truly born-again children of God. The enmity is slain that rends the hearts of men apart from one another. What good would it do for God to cause the animals to be at peace while the strife and enmity in the hearts of men are unchanged? It would be of no profit. It is error to look at this scripture as foretelling a future age for the Church, when the specifications call for a unity of believers into one heart, soul, and mind.

God is against division and elements that sow discord among brethren. It is an abomination in His sight. His way is the way of peace, and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. But as long as the enmity still exists in the heart, there will never be perfect peace and unity. We are exhorted in the Word to seek peace and pursue it. It is the very nature of a saint of God filled with love to seek peace with his brother, and bear long with him rather than to have a falling out. Discord and strife grieve the heart of one who has the Spirit reigning and ruling within. Oh, how the Lord loves harmony between brethren, and how pleased He is when He can see a people bearing His gracious name endeavoring to keep unity, peace, and love.

The Root of Jesse, standing for an ensign of the people as an example of a meek and quiet spirit, is a signal of brotherhood, love, and mercy to all who look to Him. He that loved us so much that He was willing to shed His own blood for our justification has set the example of how we should be to one another. He was displeased with the error and folly of men, yes; but He loved us so much that He was willing to bear our blame that we might have a chance to repent and come back to the Father. This holy and righteous bearing shining down into the heart of a saint tames the spirit into meekness and gentleness.

—L. Busbee

THE REST OF THE SOUL

In Paul's letter to the Hebrews, chapters 3 and 4, the apostle draws an analogy between Israel in the wilderness and children of God not yet fully saved; also between literal Canaan and the spiritual "rest" "we which have believed do enter." God had promised the children of Israel rest in the land of Canaan. The first generation did not enter this land, "because they believed not." Of them He swore, "They shall not enter into my rest." "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief."—3:19. The literal Canaan is a type of the experience of perfect holiness. God had promised to give Israel rest in the land of Canaan, "from all their enemies round about."—Deut. 25:19. "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee

rest."—Ex. 33:14. By exterminating all the Canaanites who were born and bred in that land, the children of Israel were to possess the land and have rest. How clearly this typifies the complete redemption we have in Christ Jesus! The various bents of evil—pride, selfishness, jealousy, fear, covetousness, anger, etc.—born in us. These are inward enemies. Christ "condemns sin in the flesh," and "destroys the works of the devil" out of us; namely, saves us from these enemies, and enables us to serve Him "in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life."—Luke 1:74, 75. Not one of these enemies is allowed to remain and lurk in the walls of "man's soul." Perfect love casteth out fear, and the soul sinks down into a perfect tranquillity, a haven of rest—a rest that gives "quietness and assurance forever." This is the land of Beulah. Here "peace is extended like a river," and the soul is enabled to "rejoice evermore," and "in everything give thanks"; even in times of trial, adversity, disappointment, pressure, opposition, and misunderstanding. Here the soul feasts on "fat things" and is "satisfied." This so far surpasses the experience of the masses, that they naturally suppose it can only be obtained in a supposed Millennium after death. But thank God, the redeemed have found it in this life. "We which have believed do [present tense] enter into rest." Hallelujah! You see this is present. Believers now "do enter" by faith into the Canaan "rest." The apostle urged the Hebrew converts to enter this perfect soul-rest. 4:1; 4:11; 10:19-22; 12:14. . . .

The promises in the Abrahamic covenant which related to his literal descendants after the flesh reached their fulfillment under the law; and that those which related to the Messiah and His people reach their fulfillment in the gospel age: that the very things people are looking for in their Millennium, we now possess and enjoy in this last and best dispensation of God's love and mercy. Here again the word of truth gets far ahead of the dark-age Millennium theory.

"The kingdom of God is within you,
So the greatest of teachers hath said;
And the faithful and loving have found it,
And enjoyed it before they were dead.

"The Word, and the blood of the Savior
Is the anchor in which we do rest;
And heaven began with its favor
Now we reign with the pure and the blest."

—The Kingdom of God, H. M. Riggle

March 24, 1974

THE ROSE OF SHARON

Song of Sol. 2:1; Isa. 35:1-7; Col. 3:8-10; 12-14

Song of Sol. 2:1 I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

Isaiah 35:1 The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

2 It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

3 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

4 Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.

5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

6 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.

7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy, and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Memory Verse: Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Matthew 5:7.

Central Thought: The Gospel changes the barren, desert heart and life of an individual into a fruitful garden when the Rose of Sharon is allowed to bloom.

Word Definitions: The word sharah, "parched ground," more exactly, "looming sand-waste," refers to the mirage, of which it is the Arabic name. Mirage is "an optical illusion caused by the reflection of light through layers of air of different temperatures and densities, by which a ship, or water in the desert appears to be very near." —Web. Dic.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Twenty-five thousand years ago, the prophet declared that in the days of the Messiah (Jesus Christ) the soul's desires should be satisfied, so that which had been only a vision should become a reality, the parched ground, or, the mirage, should become a pool.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who is the Rose of Sharon? 2. What does the prophet compare to the sinner's heart? 3. What did Jesus do for the physical body when He was here on earth? 4. What blooms in the garden of the soul which has been watered by salvation? 5. Name some of the changes which take place in the life of a person who has been "born again."

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

We are not looking for this scripture to be fulfilled in some future date as most of the so-called religious world predict. We know that in the gospel day, in which we live now, that the desert heart blossoms like a rose and we find the fulfillment of these texts. The Rose of Sharon (Jesus) came and died on the cross to bring to the hungry soul, full satisfaction. The Rose of Sharon, who is now King of kings, came and brought salvation. He opened the eyes of the blind and unstopped deaf ears. The lame man was made to leap and the dumb to sing. The water of life flowed down through the desert and the parched ground became a pool of living water. Those who hungered and thirsted after righteousness were filled. The water of life became in them a well of water springing up into eternal life. Praise God for the life-giving stream! All can come and drink to their full. The unregenerate heart is desolate, weary, and solitary. It is "a habitation of dragons," a foul, serpent-

brood of uncontrolled passions. How suggestive of the sin-cursed soul are the descriptive symbols found in our text! It makes us know that there is a lack of water, which is the lack of eternal life. People who are in sin are "dead in trespasses and sin." They are filled with condemnation and remorse of conscience. They are under the control of the enemy through habits of alcohol, drugs or other vices. They long to be free. Their lives have become desolate. But, praise God, we know that Jesus can set the captive free. That one, who is filled with fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, covetousness, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, etc., can be changed. Those evil things can be taken out of that heart and it can be filled with beautiful virtues. That heart, which was a desert, can blossom like a rose. Joy and singing will be placed where mourning and sorrow once had control. The glory of the Lord will shine forth from that life that is given to God. Mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, charity, forgiveness, and many other sweet virtues will flow out like the perfume of a rose. The Rose of Sharon will bloom profusely in that life which has been dedicated to Jesus, who is the Rose of Sharon. What glorious things the Lord has prepared for all who will love and serve Him! Not only healing to the soul, but also healing to the body is given to those who love Jesus. Our souls do magnify the Lord!

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

History tells us that Jesus spoke to Pilate on one occasion when the Roman governor was seeking to cause Jesus to change the course He was taking: "Before the Rose of Sharon blooms the blood of the Just shall be spilt." When Jesus came forth triumphant from the grave that Lord's day morning, He came forth a Rose blooming forever in the hearts and lives of His own. After being crucified by evil men, and humiliated to the lowest level, He ascends now up onto the highest pinnacle of power and grace for all time and eternity. To all who believe and obey Him, He becomes the heavenly Bridegroom and the Lover of the soul. He will never fail in His care and guidance to them. Oh, how wonderful it is to know Him and the power of His resurrection. How we need to fellowship His suffering and be made conformable unto His death, and follow Him as Lord and Redeemer if by any means we may attain unto His resurrection in the last day!

West of Jerusalem toward the great Sea stretched the plain of Sharon. On the levels of this plain grew there a rose luxuriant, fragrant, and beautiful, a perfect likeness of what Jesus is to those who have sought and found His loving favor, and of

how He can bloom from out the holy lives in such a gracious way.

Yes, there is a Rose blooming amid the thorns and bleeding stains of our earthly tread. Its beauty and grace will strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees. It will cause us to make straight paths for our feet and cause us to desire a healing to come to the lame and the troubled and fearful hearts. The weeds, and thistles of hatred and malice, lust and greed, pride and vanity will be destroyed out of our hearts and we can be filled with the fruits of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, etc. What a difference this Rose of Sharon has made in men and women who have tasted and seen that the Lord is good. —L. Busbee

"Deep strike Thy roots, O Heavenly Vine, within our human sod,
Most human, and yet most Divine, the flower of man and God!"

—Whittier

THE ROSE OF SHARON

Lord Jesus, my sweet Rose of Sharon,
My Prophet, my Priest and my King;
To thee I will sing all my praises,
For blessings thy mercy doth bring.

I gaze at the wounds of my Savior,
From which that great fountain doth flow;
His word is my shield and my buckler,
By faith I'm made whiter than snow.

In love's verdant vale I am resting,
In Christ all my hope I confide;
My heart and my life He is blessing,
As humbly I walk by His side.

I'm living low down in the valley,
Where sweet Rose of Sharon doth bloom;
Oh, glory! its heavenly odor
With fragrance my soul doth perfume.

Come, sinner, thy heart like the desert,
With sweet Rose of Sharon shall bloom;
'Twill blossom as flowers of summer:
His Spirit thy heart shall illumine.

He paid all thy debt on Mount Calv'ry,
He suffered that you might be free;
Oh, look, guilty one, there is mercy,
There's life and salvation for thee.

Sweet Rose of Sharon,
Blooming above for me. —(Evening Light Songs)

—O—

March 31, 1974

THE HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS

Isa. 35:8; John 14:6; Isa. 35:9, 10; Luke 1:68, 69, 70, 74,
75; Heb. 12:14, 15; 1 Thess. 3:3, 4, 7

Isaiah 35:8 And a highway shall be there, and a way,
and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall
not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring
men, though fools, shall not err therein.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the
truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but
by me.

Isaiah 35:9 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:

10 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.

Luke 1:68 [Zacharias spoke of Jesus] Blessed be the
Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his
people,

69 And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in
the house of his servant David;

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets,
which have been since the world began:

74 That he would grant unto us, that we, being deliver-
ed out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him with-
out fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the
days of our life.

Hebrews 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness,
without which no man shall see the Lord:

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.

1. Thessalonians 3:3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith.

Memory Verse: Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.
Psalm 29:2.

Central Thought: Holiness is received by the fire of the Holy Spirit cleansing the heart. God is holy and only those who are holy can enter into God's holy presence in Heaven.

Word Definitions: Holiness means, "being holy." Holy means, "consecrated; sacred; spiritually pure; sinless."

LESSON BACKGROUND

Some ask if a baby can enter heaven because the Bible says that without holiness no man can see God. We must remember that the Bible teaches us that "sin is not imputed when there is no law." Romans 5:13. Imputed means, "to attribute (especially a crime or fault) to another; charge with; ascribe." Webster's Dic. A child does not have understanding of what is right and what is wrong. He does not come under the law of God in the sense of being charged with sin when there is no knowledge of wrong-doing. The Bible teaches us that he "that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17. So there must be a knowledge of sin before we can sin; a knowledge that we are disobeying God's laws and are accountable to a righteous God. So when a child dies, the blood of Jesus atones for it because it is innocent in God's sight.

Some might wonder how the heathen who are grown and who did not have any knowledge of God's laws will stand before God. The Apostle Paul tells us, "For when the Gentiles [or heathen], which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience [or, the conscience witnessing with them—margin] also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean

while accusing or else excusing one another." Romans 2:14, 15. So we see that if they do not know God's laws, they are under the law of their conscience and sin is not imputed unto them. The blood of Jesus takes care of them because of their lack of knowledge. But we are sure that very few will live according to their conscience because of the great superstition, sin and evil and other influences around them. We need to take the gospel message to them so they can know how to receive power to become sons of God. This is important, and we all must feel our duty to help every soul possible.

Sammy Morris, who lived in Africa, was dealt with by the Holy Spirit. He had never heard anything about the gospel. But after God so miraculously dealt with him, he was led by the Spirit to a mission where he heard about the gospel.

—M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the way to get on the highway of holiness?
2. Can those who are unlearned get on the highway?
3. Through Whom can we serve the Lord in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life?
4. Can any one see God if they are not holy?
5. What does the Holy Spirit do for the heart?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Can we enter into the vision of the prophet as he, by the Spirit, looked into the future and wrote about that great highway of holiness? Not only did he see that great highway of holiness far above the world of sin and corruption, but he also saw the way to get up on that highway. Many people want to live right and desire to quit their sins, but they do not know how. But Jesus speaks to us and tells us the way to be holy. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Jesus is the way to get up on the highway of holiness. By His dying on the cross and shedding His blood, He paved the way for us to have our volitional sins forgiven and also by His blood, we are sanctified by the Holy Spirit. The Lord never intended for anyone to stay in a justified state. He shed His blood that we might be cleansed of the sin principle that passed upon all men because of the fall of Adam and Eve. The Apostle Paul plainly tells us, "By the which we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Hebrews 10:20. To be sanctified means to be made holy. To be made holy, we must consecrate and place our body, soul, mind, and will into God's hands without one reserve and leave them there. We then move at the will of God, and not our will. We are made holy through this

giving of ourselves to God and the infilling of, and cleansing by, the Holy Spirit. We are then upon the highway of holiness. We can serve the Lord without fear, "in holiness and righteousness . . . all the days of our life." Without holiness no man shall see God, our lesson makes us know. The whole New Testament teachings are for those who are living a sanctified life. Without the power of the Holy Spirit within us, we could not live according to the standard of holiness.

Are you on the highway of holiness? Are you living up to your privileges on this highway? When we are holy we are walking with Jesus. We have Him for our constant companion. When problems arise that touch you deeply, and, if you would allow it, would plunge you into the deepest despair, are you turning to your Friend that is walking with you on this highway? Or are you ignoring Him, and falling under the influence of the spirit of the enemy that tries to get to you from the earth below? Oh, dear one, use your privileges and resist those influences and sing the song about your Friend who hears your faintest whisper. Praise God for this highway which is leading us to our eternal home with victory! —M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Let us always bear in mind that these prophecies from the Old Testament are fulfilled in New Testament salvation. This way of holiness and highway for the saints to travel to glory on is opened up by the power and grace of God in Jesus and His wonderful salvation. And who could have opened up the way of holiness but Jesus who was consecrated forevermore by His death upon the cross according to the will of God? Consecration, holiness, and sanctification are terms so closely associated in meaning and application to our lives. Jesus said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." He paved the way for us to walk the way of holiness by consecrating Himself to the will of God. The will of God for Him was to suffer the penalty of our sins and to be raised in power to newness of life for us. And by this will we also are sanctified to live and do His pleasure.

The Son is "consecrated forevermore." Heb. 7:28. He gave up His wishes as a man and His desires and became subject to the will of God to be crucified on Golgotha's hill. Oh, the depths of such holy consecration! It was the only way, and He did it so that we can follow His perfect example. It is a "high" way. It is a way that is elevated up above the normal run of mankind, into the realm of heavenly peace and purity. All the sins and degradation around, all the strife and discord, the hatred and envy, and all the pride and vanity—all this stems

from unsanctified hearts and lives. If men and women will offer themselves upon the altar of God unreservedly and wholly, their hearts and affections will be lifted to higher levels. This is what Jesus came to bring us. "A highway shall be there." Thank God, it is here! "And a way." Yes, there is a way to get up on this highway, and that way is the way of holiness. It was Jesus Christ, the Saviour, Who made all this possible.

The only way that leads to glory is the way of holiness. God designs that we live holy lives with holy thoughts, aims, and purposes. Only in the state of holiness are we accounted worthy to enter into the presence of God and His heavenly Home. Only as we follow Christ's example are we worthy of Him.

—L. Busbee

YOUNG PEOPLE AND IDLENESS

The youth who idles away his time, or much of it, and thus continues through life, cannot hope for great and worthwhile success. The days and years of youth are precious and priceless, insofar as preparation for the future is concerned. Idleness lays no plans for anything good, great, useful and sublime.

Today the attractions and demands are great for the time of our young people toward the shoddy and useless pleasures of life, and toward things of little or no value. One cannot master books, become scholarly and well qualified for a place of importance in the business, moral and spiritual world who is an idler.

There must be a determination on the part of every youth to break away from the temptations to idleness, folly and worthlessness if he wants to rise above failure and defeat. These words of the apostle Paul are of weighty and great importance: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Eph. 5:15, 16.

It is true that recreation and relaxation are essential in every youth's life for body, mind and soul, but these should be of the right kind. The old saying, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," is true. However, all play and no work, or little work, makes Jack a worthless boy. Youthful idleness lays no foundation for future usefulness and greatness.

Every youth needs God in his life to enable him to rightly spend his time and energies. Leaving God out accounts for the idleness of multitudes of our youth, hence their failure now and hereafter. To be idle as one grows up may lead to crime and punishment rather than to obedience and noble achievement. Youthful violators of the law are usually idlers. When they do not work for an honest livelihood oftentimes they steal, rob, and maybe murder for money.

Idleness never produces scholars, great inventors, fine and noble teachers, useful ministers, good doctors, and smart nurses. Idleness never makes good noble fathers and mothers, business men and women, nor qualifies people for the important places and positions of life. Idleness never tunnels mountains, bridges rivers nor scales mountains. Idleness never writes good books, composes soul stirring songs, nor leads heavenward. Idleness blazes no trails and makes no roads that lead to enlightenment and marvelous achievements.

Dear youth, find something to do that is worthwhile—worthy of your time and energy. Work of the right kind is honorable and absolutely essential to health, happiness and prosperity. Set for yourself a goal that is worthy of your very best efforts to achieve, and by the grace of God go forth to reach it. —Sel.

