

1907

Bible Lessons



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

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

**Vol. 8, No. 1
Jan., Feb., March,
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Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

Volume 8

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Theme For First Quarter, 1976

For this quarter we will have for our lessons the last journey of our Lord and Saviour, which He made to Jerusalem. We will start with two events that took place before Saturday evening preceding His crucifixion on the following Friday. Since there are so many events in His last week, we will only have lessons in this quarter up to Thursday night. The crucifixion and His resurrection will be in the second quarter, which will bring us up to Easter Sunday, April 18th.

We find the last events of Jesus' journey to the cross, in the four gospels. We will take the events from them as they occurred on each day.

Let us walk along with Jesus as He journeyed to Jerusalem, while we study these lessons. This will help us to get in the spirit with Him. We will not be like the disciples whom Jesus told of His approaching death. It was hard for them to believe. Yet, they did understand that some great events were going to take place soon in Jerusalem, and a certain amount of solemnity hung over them. He was with them and they accepted each day as it came, until they faced the stern reality of His leaving them.

For the chronological outline of Jesus' last week, I followed the outline in "Halley's Bible Handbook." In my research of the Bible events, His outline seems to check out correctly. —Sis. Marie Miles

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January 4, 1976

JESUS TRAVELS TOWARD JERUSALEM

John 11:47; Luke 18:31-43

John 11:47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

Luke 18:31 Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

32 For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on:

33 And they shall scourge him, and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again.

34 And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

35 And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the wayside begging;

36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,

41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.

43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

Memory Verse: Nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. John 11:50.

Central Thought: Jesus is passing by. We must feel the depth of the need of our souls and call earnestly upon Him for deliverance and salvation. Others will bid us to hold our peace, but we must call upon Him with all of our heart.

Word Definition: Accomplish: *complete, execute, conclude, discharge, finish.*

LESSON BACKGROUND

Be sure to read the "Theme for First Quarter."

The town of Jerusalem was full of people. John tells us that "the Jews' passover," which started at sundown on Thursday, "was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew

where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him." John 11:55-57. So we see that there were those in Jerusalem who wanted to see Jesus and then there were those who sought to kill Him. Jesus, who knew all things, understood what it would mean for Him to go to Jerusalem. Our lesson begins with Jesus on His way to Jerusalem and tells what happened as He came close to Jericho. They had crossed the Jordan River, arriving at Jericho, which was a beautiful city situated at the foot of a lofty mountain range. It was from this range that Moses viewed the Promised Land before he died. (Deut. 34:1-4) It was rich in history. Jericho was famous for its sparkling fountains, but we do not know if Jesus noticed them or not. We do know that He noticed the people. Feeling His own great need ahead of Him, He was sensitive to the needs of others, which was part of His nature. So we find Jesus on His way to Jerusalem before His crucifixion. He met Bartimaeus, the blind beggar, of whom our lesson is about. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. What did the chief priests and the Pharisee council say about Jesus? 2. What did Jesus tell the disciples would be done to Him when He went up to Jerusalem? 3. Did the Jews or the Gentiles put Him to death? 4. Does Jesus pass by the souls of men today, and what does He say to them? 5. How can we exercise faith for the healing of our bodies today?

ADULTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Our lesson contains two important aspects of Christ Jesus the Lord. We find Him directing His journey with His disciples toward the last leg of their journey to Jerusalem, where suffering and death are waiting for Him. In this we see Christ moving forth in obedience to the eternal purpose of God. He came into the world for this cause. The souls of men were His prime and most important goal. See Him as He goes forth with confidence and courage! He knows what is waiting for Him at the end of His journey. It is not a mystery to Him, for it was begotten within His soul from the foundation of the world. To draw back would be foolishness and folly. Just a few hours of suffering for eternal gain! At Jerusalem awaited those who thirsted for His blood, who yearned to see His candle put out. But He goes with courage and faith in His Father to see Him through. Does it not make us rejoice to behold Him as He moves toward His great victory? He goes

not only as a King engaging the greatest conflict of all time, but also as a Victor, triumphant in power and love.

But wait. What is this that is heard by the roadside? A maze of voices, one prevailing over the others who seem to be seeking to quiet such a needy one. Yes, someone is in need. Is Jesus too bent in His holy purpose that He will hurry on and leave this scene of someone's need? No, He stops and looks. "Let him come to me," we hear Him say. And blind Bartimaeus steps forth, calling for mercy from the Son of David. How blessed to see and hear the Master's love and mercy to him. Hear him now praising and glorifying God, following Jesus in the way. Thus it is with our blessed Lord, and even though now He is seated in glory, interceding for the whole world, He yet has space in His heart and mind for each one of our individual needs. What a wonderful Saviour He truly is! —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

One night in a service, the Holy Spirit could be felt very strongly. The message of invitation had gone forth and the congregation was singing, praying, and waiting for someone to come to the altar. Surely Jesus was passing by that night. He was dealing and was pleading with every soul. Some shut Him completely out and did not let Him talk to them. They would smile or talk, or sing earnestly, or even leave the building. Oh, our hearts were pleading with the Lord to help some soul to move. Suddenly one person ran to the altar and burst into tears. Jesus had passed by and His Holy Spirit had plead. The person could no longer turn down the pleadings of One who had died for them; One who had died to take their punishment and let them go free. Torment awaits every soul who rejects Jesus' sacrifice that He made by dying on the cross for their sins. Then another listened to His pleadings and came. Soon a number were at the altar. Surely, Jesus passed by that night. The devil was right there to tell each one to hold their peace or to stay at their seat, but Jesus' loving call prevailed. He broke the binding spirit of the devil and set souls free. Oh, what a wonderful Saviour we are serving! All who do not know Him today should fall at His feet and surrender all to Him. He will cause your life to be a life of peace and satisfaction. He will help you bear the problems that everyone faces in this life. He not only came to save us from our sins, but to heal our bodies. What a glorious privilege to trust Him for both soul and body. My soul

magnifies my precious Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Keeper! —Sis. Marie Miles

PASS ME NOT

Pass me not, O gentle Saviour,
Hear my humble cry;
While on others Thou art calling,
"Do not pass me by."

Chorus
Saviour, Saviour, Hear my humble cry;
While on others Thou art calling, Do not pass me by.

Let me at a throne of mercy,
Find a sweet relief;
Kneeling there in deep contrition,
Help my unbelief.

Trusting only in Thy merit,
Would I seek thy face;
Heal my wounded, broken spirit,
Save me by Thy grace.

Thou the Spring of all my comfort,
More than life to me,
Whom have I on earth beside Thee?
Whom in Heav'n but Thee?

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—L. D. Pruitt, Publisher

January 11, 1976

JESUS MEETS ZACCHEUS AT JERICHO

Luke 19:1-11a

Luke 19:1 And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

2 And, behold, there was a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, . . .

Memory Verse: For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19:10

Central Thought: Although a man may be rich and filled with material gain and prosperity, yet there languisheth in his soul an emptiness and wretchedness which can only be satisfied through the love and salvation of the Saviour.

Word Definition: Chief among the publicans: *principal tax-gatherer*.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After Jesus healed the blind man, He journeyed on through Jericho. Jesus was well known in Jericho. He had been there often. Now a large crowd was with Him after the healing of the blind man. The people were full of anticipation of seeing more great things done by Jesus. No doubt there were all classes of people in the multitude that was with Him. But we do know that there was one rich man in the crowd, but he was not loved by the people. His name was Zacchaeus. He was a chief publican, or the head of a large office of tax collectors. Publicans were classed, by the people, with harlots. Matt. 21:31-32. They were generally hated, because the taxes were for a foreign power. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. Where was Jesus going and what was ahead of Him? 2. What kind of a man was Zaccheus and what noble

aspirations did he have when he heard that Jesus was passing by? 3. How do people today hinder souls from seeing Jesus? 4. How do people who are seeking the Lord have to "come down" before Jesus can abide with them? 5. What conditions did Zaccheus meet to be able to have salvation and are those same conditions true today?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Let us itemize the different things about Zaccheus which are worthy of our consideration. First, he was chief of the publicans or tax collectors. He had a prominent place. He was rich, no doubt made thus by much dishonesty as those particular kind of men were noted for. We have a lot of people like that in this present age. But usually, as was the case with Zaccheus, such people are not happy, and if the real sentiment of their heart could be read, we would find that they, too, are yearning for something that their riches cannot buy.

"He sought to see Jesus who He was." Can you think of any more worthy and noble aspiration that a man could have? How about you? Have you become interested enough to do some seeking into this matter about God and Christ? He was seeking to see Jesus, but he was hindered because of the pressing throng. He was unable to see over them. Do you think that there are any other people who are hindered from seeing Jesus because of the press? Is it difficult for some of us humans to look over the things that are round about us, in order to get a real first-hand look at Christ and what He really is? But we see that this obstacle did not daunt the courage of this little man. "He ran before". That is what we have to do. We've got to get ahead of the crowd or they will blot out the knowledge of God. "He climbed up." So must we get above the swirling multitude in all of its confusion and jangle. "He was to pass that way." How was this important? How did he gain this information? Is this necessary for us to seek Christ in the right way?

This lesson just goes to show that those who are seeking Christ are also being sought by Him. Little perhaps did Zaccheus dream that Christ would take notice of him. But He did. "Come down, Zaccheus!" "And he made haste." Do you think that there is anything about Christ worth hurrying for? So many are sluggish in their approach to God, and it is because so many things are hanging on. "He came down." You must humble yourself. "He received Him joyfully." Oh, what joy can we see that swelled in his heart

as he stood before Jesus. And even while those around were murmuring and fussing and going on in their scornful way, he was hearing those blessed words: 'This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.'" —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

When Jesus comes into a heart, it must be clean from all sin. There are things that people have in their lives that are hidden away from everyone else. There are also things that only a few might know of. But when a person deals with Jesus, He knows everything. We must understand that nothing is hidden from Him. We must deal justly with Him and not try to hide anything or excuse ourselves. When we meet all of the conditions and come out and are completely honest with the Lord, then he will save us from our sins and the work will be done. God doesn't require more of us than is possible, but if we have stolen something or taken something that didn't belong to us, we must take it back, if possible. Of course, a person that goes to the altar can't take something back while there, but God takes the willingness or promise for the deed. God is a reasonable God. He said, "Come let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18. So we can reason with the Lord and know that He is a reasonable God.

One brother had taken money in a business deal. He knew that if it was confessed it would put him behind bars. He had to confess this to the banker. He got saved and the Lord forgave him by the promise he would make it right. He prayed, sweated, and wept before the Lord for grace. His family would be in such need if he was put in jail. He knew it meant making it right or losing his soul. He went to the banker and they faced each other over the desk. He broke down and wept and confessed his deed, telling the banker of his conversion and how wonderful it was to be saved. He also told him that he was ready to take the consequences of his deed. The banker rose from his chair and paced the floor. The brother sat there waiting and praying. He didn't know just what would be the answer. Finally, the banker came over and shook hands with him. He was visibly shaken. He told him that he forgave him and nothing would be done about it. He told him he could repay the debt in his own time. Then he asked him to pray for

him. He made this brother know that he, too, was in the same position but that he would never be able to confess it. So if anyone who reads this has things to make right, be sure to remember that God will go with you, as you clear your soul before God and man. —Sis. Marie Miles

FROM SIN TO GRACE

A long night passed without any sleep. Morning came. This was the 6th of January 1895. I was worked up in mind as I never had been before. I had done a great deal of business and made large contracts, but I was now on the largest deal of my life. I ordered a horse caught. I thought I was bound to have \$75.00 to run my work. This is the way the devil always would work me—make me think I needed money. I would go and borrow it and the devil would get me on a spree and I would spend the money and would be in a worse condition financially than I was before. My mule was saddled. I went to get on, and put my foot in the stirrup. As I mounted I decided to quit sin. In the name of Jesus Christ I looked up to the God whose power I had denied and I recognized him as a merciful God, and the Jesus I had refused to serve I called on for conviction. I had seated myself in the saddle when I decided and said, "I will pray six months if I live that long to get salvation if there is any for me." By the time I could think I said, "I will pray as long as I live, let it be six months or six years; I will get salvation if there is any for me." I was afraid I had sinned against the Holy Ghost. I could not cry or weep. I was convinced I was a sinner bound for hell; I was convinced there was a God that would answer prayer, but to just get down to weep like I wanted to, I could not. My heart seemed so hard and my mind would run off on other business; but as I would ride along the road I would say, "O God, have mercy! take everything from my mind and send conviction to my heart that I may weep for the way I have treated you."

I reached the place where I was going to borrow the money. Mr. Hill was out on the farm.

I told my business. He said he did not have the money by him, but thought he could let me have it in ten days. So I went on my way home.

When I reached my home the men were cutting wood out in the wood-yard. Lee, the colored man, took my mule and put it in the stable. It was about 3 o'clock p.m. My wife prepared my dinner. While she was doing this I pulled my

pistol out of my pocket and hid it away and said I would not carry it any more. I had carried it eight years, only when I would drink until I was crazy and try to take my life, then wife would take it away from me until I would get my right mind; then she would give it back to me again, for she was afraid for me to go without it, as I was always getting into trouble and likely would have been whipped many a time had I not carried it.

wife sat with me. I would look at her and think how I had treated her. I loved her, but had not showed it by my past life. I thought, "Here I am just ready to die and have lived with my wife all these many years. She has been a slave to me and I have never been a husband to her. My life is just at a close and has been a failure." I could not eat. I was going to meeting, but I did not want her to know it.

I went home after night meeting and went down on my knees as before and asked God if there was any salvation for me to show me what to do. I said all I needed to say; I was not yet convicted. I went to bed and prayed until I went to sleep, but did not stay asleep. I went to church the next day, and stayed until after night meeting.

I was wonderfully convicted, as never since I was thirteen years old. God showed me just what I had to do to get salvation. I had murder in my heart. I had been seeking the advantage of the law to kill two men. I was willing to quit and treat them right, but I did not want to go and tell them so. I was an Irishman, and it takes God's power to make an Irishman love an enemy. I kept trying for two days and nights to pray around it, but on the night of January 10, 1895, between midnight and day, when all were asleep but me, after I had fallen upon my knees for the third time since I came from church, I saw it was salvation or hell and I had to go to those men and ask their forgiveness or God would not forgive me. It seemed the Spirit was taking His flight as He did eight years before when I sat by the bedside of my dying child and rebelled against God. It seemed as though the foundation was giving away beneath me and hell was enlarging or opening up to receive me. It seemed as though it was salvation, and right then, or hell. I cried out from the depths of my heart, "I will do anything, Lord."

There was then a great load lifted from my heart. A light shone in my soul that drove away a gross darkness and love leaped into my breast that was never there before. For the first time in life I could realize I loved everybody and God! Oh,

glory! Tongue cannot tell it, pen cannot write it, mind cannot conceive it, and my soul could scarcely hold it. Praise God! It still remains, and as I write this the flow of God's love rolls over my whole being and through my soul and I can down deep in my soul shout, Amen! Glory, glory! God and I only know.

—Willis M. Brown

Taken from "Life and Conversion of a Kentucky Infidel"

January 18, 1976

JESUS AT BETHANY

John 12:1-3; Psa. 141:2a; Rev. 8:3,4b; John 12:4-11

John 12:1 Then Jesus six days before the passover come to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

Psa. 141:2a Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense;

Rev. 8:3 And another angel came and stood at the altar . . . given . . . much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

4b And the prayers of the saints ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

John 12:4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, who he had raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

Memory Verse: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. Mark 12:30.

Central Thought: Acts of spiritual devotion, love, and sacrifice are not accepted by the worldly-minded people.

Word Definition: *Passover feast was the feast to commemorate the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. Blood was put on the doorpost after the passover lamb was killed and the death angel passed over that house and the eldest of that home was spared. Lev. 23:6; Ex. 12:1-14. "The bag." The Greek word is used in Hebrew . . . to signify a "purse, scrip, chest, coffer." As our Lord and His disciples lived on charity, a bag or scrip was provided to carry those pious donations by which they were supported.. Jews-John, who was a Galilean, often gives the title of Jews to those who were inhabitants of Jerusalem, although he was a Jew and an inhabitant of Judah.*

LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus leaves the city of Jericho. He and His disciples climb up the steep mountain pass on their way to Jerusalem. It was on this road that the scene of the Good Samaritan, which Jesus told about, took place. Finally they reached the city of Bethany, which lies at the eastern foot of the Mount of Olives. Bethany was a small town, and a quiet, secluded place. The mountain shut it off from the view of Jerusalem.

Jesus stopped at the home of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, who were brother and sisters. He often stayed at their home. They made supper for Him. Being close to Jesus, they no doubt sensed a sadness about Him. Mary especially took note. She was a very sympathetic, loving person. She wanted to show her love for Him. She brought the rarest treasure of their household, which was a bottle of perfume. "It cost about 300 pence or shillings. In our money it would be about \$50.00," says Halley's Bible Handbook, in the 1964 edition. Today it would be much more.

We see the similarity between this act and the act of a sinful woman who wept and wiped the tears from Jesus' feet,

in the house of Simon. Luke 7:37-38. But we do not read about Mary, the sister of Lazarus, weeping as the woman did in the house of Simon. Only supposition might lead us to think that the Mary in Simon's house, was Mary, the sister of Lazarus, and that it was she who was converted and changed.

"Reckoning the day of the passover to be the last of the six days, our Lord came on our sabbath, the first day of the Jewish week, to Bethany, where He supped; and on the next day He made His public entry into Jerusalem. Calment thinks that it was about two months after the resurrection of Lazarus." —Clarke's Comm. The Jewish Sabbath was our Saturday, so we find Jesus at the home in Bethany on Saturday evening where the events of our lesson took place. —M. Miles

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Since the raising of Lazarus, Jesus had left and Mary had not seen Him. She had not had the opportunity to show her deep love and care for Him. Finally, there He sat at her table. Her heart was full of love and devotion, affection and gratitude for Him. How blessed had been the hours that she had sat at His feet and listened to Him explain the deep things of God to her! The heavenly wisdom, comfort, hope, and promises that came from His lips were indeed precious to her soul. Then she turned and there sat her brother, in health, whom Jesus had brought back to them, though once dead. Everywhere she turned or wherever her thoughts went, Jesus was in them. How could she show Him how much she loved Him and make Him know how she appreciated Him. Words seemed so frail, and gifts seemed even poorer. Oh! She had an expensive flask of ointment. She went to get it. She broke the flask, and then poured it upon His feet. This, (in the East) was "an ordinary mark of honour." She wiped his feet with the hairs of her head. "She had poured forth the precious oil, unconsciously as it were, anointing the great kingly Priest after the order of Melchisedec, as He went forward to His path to conquer and redeem." Those around her did not understand. The worldly-minded cannot understand the movings of the Spirit upon the souls of those who love Jesus. They are too worldly-minded. They are thinking only of time, and not of eternity. They are thinking selfish thoughts and thoughts that lead away from humility and sacrifice. We need not be surprised if we are called fanatical, foolish, or unwise. Our sacrifices are called a waste, many times. Our time spent for

the Lord is called useless. How sad that even some so-called saints do not have a vision of others' sacrifices for the Lord and make remarks that wound and hinder. How careful we ought to be.

Mary's sensitive nature was wounded by the remarks of Judas and those around who, no doubt by their looks, disapproved. But as she waited, Jesus said, "Let her alone." Oh, how we need to let others alone who are laboring for the Lord, and not criticize them. We need to get behind anything done in the name of the Lord, with our prayers and support, even if we do not personally have a burden for that work. Some think that if they do not have the burden, they shouldn't do anything about the calling of others, but that is not true. We need to encourage each other. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Mal. 3:16. —M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How true is the saying, "A little love goes a long way." Though it be but a simple act and deed of kindness and love, if it be backed by pure and earnest love, God will see to it that such will prosper and go far and be a benefit to many. Many times a friendly smile can go so far as to lift a heavy load and brighten another's day. No words need be spoken, but just the warm radiance of a loving smile. It is pleasing, and that well pleasing in God's sight, for us to seek ways of communicating our love to one another and to our fellow man. If we would look for ways to show love instead of always looking for iniquity in our brother, we would find ourselves accomplishing much more in this life for the cause of God. It was not Jesus' request for Mary to do what she did. This was purely on her part. And Jesus did not despise it nor turn it away. It is wrong for people to expect honor and respect from others in the sense that they demand it, and murmur when it does not come. But we all know that a word of kindness and a deed of love has a power and a bearing that is not easily shaken off. To fight back and retaliate and seek to avenge ourselves will never settle any problem or issue. To seek revenge will only breed and call for more strife and retaliation. Just think of the many strikes, debates, controversies, arguments, schisms, factions, and such like that are in this disquieted world. People have forgotten and do not

(15)

seek to know the way of peace. But Christ came to show us the way of peace. In following His example and seeking to do those things that He approved, we learn the way of peace, and what a blessed way it is to live! Let us earnestly seek to follow those things that will make for peace and love the Lord and one another.

ACROSS NIAGARA FALLS ON A TIGHTROPE

I am sure that you have heard about the mighty Niagara Falls, haven't you? Perhaps you have even been there. Well, over 100 years ago, the world's greatest tightrope walker, Charles Blondin, announced that he would walk above the thundering Niagara Falls with only the assistance of a forty-pound pole.

Naturally the news soon spread like wildfire. Special trains from Toronto and Buffalo were run to bring the crowds who wanted to see this man defy death and the law of gravity.

At last the big morning arrived, June 30, 1885. An 1100-foot tightrope had been stretched from bank to bank. "I'll walk across!" Charles Blondin said proudly.

Suddenly the voices of the great crowd were hushed as he began his breathtaking adventure. They watched him place one foot after another—one foot after another—until finally he placed both feet on the bank at the other end, the American side of the Falls.

Above the noise of the mighty Niagara arose the cheers of thousands of onlookers. He waved his hand in thanks and then shouted: "I don't want to go back to the other side by myself. I want to carry a full-grown man on my back. Who will volunteer?"

Believe it or not, not one person would volunteer. They all admitted that he could do it, but no one believed in him enough to risk his own life. Finally, in desperation, Blondin turned to his manager, named Henry Colcord: "Do you believe I can carry you across?"

"I have no doubt about it at all," he replied.

"Then will you trust me?" asked Blondin.

"I will," answered his manager.

"All right. Let's start," said Blondin.

The 39-foot pole is balanced, the great rope tightens beneath their weight. The two men move along slowly, but confidently. They reach the center. All is well. But as they near the Canadian side of the Falls, they pause. Some gambler has cut the guy line, and the rope is swaying fearfully.

“Dismount,” says Blondin to Colcord. This he does, standing with one foot on the rope and his hands on Blondin’s shoulders.

“Henry,” says Blondin, “you are now no longer Colcord. You are now Blondin. Be a part of me. If I sway, sway with me. Do not try to balance or we will both be dead.”

Colcord climbs back. The rope sways wildly, and Blondin begins running. How he keeps his balance, no one can understand. But he does it—he does it! With Colcord on his back he steps on Canadian soil. The nerve-wracking experience is over. The spectators go wild with excitement.

This, my young friend, is a true story. It really happened. And it is a perfect picture to show what Jesus did for you and me at Calvary. His cross spanned the great gulf between man and God, between time and eternity. No other “rope” could span it. No other one could die and then rise from the grave in three days—alive and triumphant!

Do you believe that? Surely you do, but have you put your own heart and soul in His hands? Have you, like Henry Colcord, trusted your whole self to the Saviour? Or are you still standing on the shore, trying to be a Christian in your own strength, refusing to put your whole trust for time and eternity in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Oh, I urge you, put your whole trust in the Son of God. Make this your prayer, “Come into my heart, Lord Jesus.” —Sel. —————○—————

January 25, 1976

ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

Mark 11:1-10; Matt. 21:10, 11; Zech. 9:9; Mark 11:11

Mark 11:1 And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples,

2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him.

3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither.

4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him.

8 And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way.

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:

10 Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

Matt. 21:10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

Zech. 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Mark 11:11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

Memory Verse: The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him. John 12:19.

Central Thought: Christ's humble entry into the heart must be given a joyful welcome if He is to come as the Saviour and the King of Glory.

Word Definition: Hosanna: A combination of two Hebrew words which means, "Oh, Save!" **Foal:** *offspring of the donkey.*

LESSON BACKGROUND

We read in John 12:1-11, about Mary anointing Jesus' feet and at the end of this account, which took place "six days before the passover," we read, "on the next day," about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. This would place it on our Sunday. This is the day our lesson took place before Jesus' crucifixion.

Horses were not known of as we know them today.

To carry palms was a mark of homage to a victor or to a king. Jesus truly was and is our King.

The prophecy of Zechariah was written nearly five hundred years before this event of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a colt.

Let us walk up the eastern slope of Mt. Olive with Jesus, riding on a colt, with the crowds of people following. Soon, we crest the hill and meet another crowd of people coming out of Jerusalem to meet Jesus, as the news has traveled into the city that Jesus is coming, riding like a king, on a colt.

QUESTIONS:

1. What day did Jesus ride into the city of Jerusalem and was proclaimed a king? 2. What did the Lord say that He had need of? Did He ever say He had need of any other creature in the Bible? 3. What prophecy was fulfilled that day? 4. How shall we let the King of glory come into our hearts? 5. How was Jesus received in Jerusalem?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Our lesson today is the fulfillment of the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9, which is also included in the text. Let us consider, however, that this is also to be fulfilled in a much more personal manner with each one of us. In reality there is so much at stake and involved in the coming of Christ to be our Saviour and King, that we should rejoice and shout at the wonderful salvation that He thus offers. The joy and adoration that the people expressed to Jesus as He rode into Jerusalem that day is but a figure of what should be in our hearts when Christ, through the gospel, comes forth and makes His great appeal. How glad and blessed we should count ourselves to have the chance to inherit the kingdom of glory! Such has it been with those who, since that day, have made Him Lord and King. See the Gentiles at Antioch in Pisidia glorify the word of the Lord, believing unto eternal life! Hear their rejoicing and see their interest as they asked that the gospel be preached to them again on the next sabbath day! Behold the Ethiopian eunuch as he joyfully receives the Saviour into his heart and life, and watch him go on his way rejoicing. Oh, it is the blind and the darkened souls who reject the great invitation to come to the feast of God.

"Hosanna!" is an expression of adoration, praise, and supplication. In the Hebrew tongue it means: "Oh, save!" "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and

having salvation." As we realize our need of a Saviour and the great Salvation that He brings, our hearts will cry and reach out to Him also, in the heart-expression of "Hosanna!"

Within seven days Christ would be risen as the great King of Glory. His great loving heart, as the lover of the souls of men, is filled with anticipation and joy. Although His flesh will seek to assert itself and draw back at the sight of the sufferings that await Him, yet in His soul is that strong and overcoming determination to accomplish the Father's will. How we rejoice today that He has come and fulfilled the great plan of redemption for us to be saved. May we live and glorify His name for all He has done. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In all the glory that was accorded Jesus as He rode into the city being proclaimed a king, there is one thing that we might overlook. It is where Jesus told His disciples to tell the men who would question them as to why they were taking the colt, that, "The Lord hath need of him." This is the only time in the Bible where the Lord is said to have had need of any creature. And think, that creature was an ass, or colt. What does that make us think of ourselves? Have you ever heard of people who seem to feel that they are indispensable? Yet, Jesus never said that He had need of any person. He did say, however, that He had need of a lowly colt. Is there a lesson in this for us? Some might feel that they are without any talents or abilities; that they can't be of any service to the Master. Or they might feel that their position or work for God is too obscure, or their service too small to be of any benefit to the glorious Master. Let each of us take courage. If the Lord had need of a colt, He has need of each of us and all of our small or great labors for Him. We each have our place to fill. No one can fill our place. There is a light going forth from our lives that can be of benefit for the Lord, if we will keep humble and stay busy in our place.

Recently one Sister said she was surprised when a neighbor, whom she barely knew asked her to take care of her children, because she was a Christian. She felt good to know that she was letting a little light shine in her neighborhood, even though she has several children and her work for God is in her home. —M. Miles

JESUS LIFTED

A Northwest American Indian Chief heard the call of God, responded, and was converted. Immediately he knew that his sins, which were many, were blotted out, and that he had an inward peace, indescribable. Wherever he went, he was always talking of his new Chief, Jesus, and what He had done for him. His life was so changed that he became the talk of the countryside.

One day a distant chief visited him and wanted to know who this Jesus was, what he had done and where He lived. The converted Chief took some chips of wood, made a small circle on the ground, and put a worm in the middle. Then he set the circle of wood on fire. The wretched worm tried to get out of that circle of fire, and sought shelter from side to side, but could find none. The converted Chief then put his hand into the middle of that circle and lifted the poor scorched worm out of all danger and harm.

Then turning to the inquiring Chief, he said: "That circle of fire is this world, and I am the worm; the fire of sin and evil hedged me in on every side, and I was helpless to save myself. I tried to escape but could not, and was doomed to suffer in the fires of hell. Then the Great Chief, the Lord Jesus, came down from heaven right into this circle of death, and lifted me out of the fire of sin and hell."

"In loving kindness Jesus came,
My soul in mercy to reclaim,
And from the depths of sin and shame
Through grace He lifted me."

David said, "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people . . . Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me . . . I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." Psalms 22:6,21,22

Dear sinner friend, you too may be like the Chief. Are the fires of sin and evil pressing in upon you? Are you longing for some deliverance from the awful guilt and power of sin? Jesus, the Son of God, came to save you from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil. I John 3:8. The fires of sin may be hot and may burn deep, but if we refuse the Hand put forth to save us, we will find the fires of hell much hotter.

Many, many people have tried to crawl out and through the fires of sin encircling them. Many have given up and perished in the circle, without knowing a Great Chief came

from the heavens and now stands ready, with outstretched hands, to snatch souls from the awful fires of sin and evil.

It is not enough to belong to some church. It is not enough to have been baptized. To really have great peace and joy that comes by being forgiven of all our past sins, and to be delivered from the power of those sins, we must see the danger we are in and come to the Saviour, the Great Chief. How He loves you! How He longs to pick you up now and spare you suffering now and in eternity. Crawl upon His hand now; let Him lift you out of the fiery circle of sin and evil. Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28. —Sel.

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February 1, 1976

JESUS WEEPS OVER JERUSALEM

Luke 19:41; 13:34-35; 19:42-44; Matt. 24:15-20

Luke 19:41 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

Luke 13:34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Luke 19:42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

Matt. 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand,)

16 Then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

Memory Verse: For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16.

Central Thought: The spiritual desolation of the Jews who rejected Him and the knowledge of their terrible fate, brought great sorrow to Jesus.

Word Definition: Desolate: Lonely, empty, void, vacant, wasted (Greek). The words **abomination of desolation** refer to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman Army under Titus in A. D. 70. God allowed this to show that the Jews as a nation were an abomination to Him because of their rejection of His Son. How strange it is that so many today uphold a nation as still being God's chosen people who yet reject the Son of God!

LESSON BACKGROUND

As we walk along with the crowd following Jesus, who is riding on a colt, we see Him stop as He crests the hill and the beautiful city of Jerusalem comes into full view. No doubt the temple glistened in the sun. There was gold on its sides and the marble was a dazzling white. As Jesus looked over the city, He saw beyond the buildings and saw into the very hearts of the people. He was deeply moved and His grief over their sins and their rejection of Him brought a flood of tears. In our lesson we read how He said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." He also said that an army would surround the city and trouble would come to it. Let us think about the prophecy of Jesus. Forty years later, in 70 A. D., the Romans surrounded the city. Eusebius said, "All who believed in Christ left Jerusalem and fled to Pella and other places beyond Jordan." So they were spared the awful things that took place when the people in the city were not allowed to come out for food. The famine was so severe that mothers ate their children. It was a horrible thing. Soon they began to throw their dead over the wall into the valley. Josephus, the historian, writes about this and says that 1,110,000 people perished in the terrible siege.

One day Titus walked around the wall and saw the terrible pile of dead bodies and the sight sickened him. History says that he raised his hands to heaven and called on God to witness that it was not his doings. Soon the city was stormed and destroyed by fire, and the temple was destroyed, too. They even dug up the foundations and the prophecies were fulfilled by the prophet Moses and Isaiah. Deut. 28:49-57. The Prophet Micah said, "Zion . . . [will] be plowed as a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as high places of the forest." Micah 3:12. With the foundation dug up, surely it was plowed as a field. The words of Jesus came to pass just as He had spoken them. At Jesus' trial the Jews said for His blood to be upon them and upon their children. Matt. 27:25. It is a serious thing to reject our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Let us think seriously as we study this lesson. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Jesus weep over Jerusalem? 2. Why should we weep over our nation and the world today? 3. What had been done for the Jews to cause Jesus to say "ye would not"? 4. How does God deal with souls today and why will God say to them, "ye would not"? 5. How did Jesus instruct the disciples, or those who believed His words, to do when they knew the time of the destruction of Jerusalem was near? 6. What destruction came to Jerusalem in later years according also to the prophecy of Daniel?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

What a sad fate awaited the Jews for their despising and rejection of Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus was aware of this, and it caused Him to weep. The sad thing about it was that the Jews were totally unaware of what they were doing. First, they were very blind and ignorant of the things that Jesus was endeavoring to give to them. The time of their visitation had come and they had not known it. They counted Jesus as an imposter, and a deceiver. They had their ideas as to what the promised kingdom of God was to be like and they clung to their ideas with great vigor and determination. They did not understand what the true nature of the Kingdom of God was — a spiritual force within the very affections of man molding and fashioning the human heart into the very image of God. The wisdom from above they knew not, for had they

known it they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. They could have known it if their hearts had been humbled from pride and opened for instruction and light. But the light had come and they had rejected it. Now they were in darkness—gross darkness. Now the treasures of salvation were hidden from their eyes. Oh, what a tragic condition to be in! Let this be a warning to us.

Then they were totally unaware of what lay in store for them. They were heartily set in their own paths, not realizing that such paths of unbelief and rebellion leads to the same end as those who had trodden such paths in past times had reached. They failed to see the narrow gate and press to get in; thus they thronged the wide and broad way that leads to destruction. Even if they had been told what was ahead, they would not have believed it. And so it goes. It is a tale that so often has been told, even in our time. Those who neglect so great a salvation have no means of escaping the just wrath of Almighty God. It is a serious matter, but it is so unpopular to get on the serious side of life. But the time came when they got serious, all right, but it was too late. So will it be with those who carelessly go on in their sins. They will get serious one day, but it will be too late. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Today the saints, ministers, and gospel workers are weeping over this wicked world as they see souls living so carelessly and seemingly without any concern about the future abode of their souls. They are reveling, dancing, playing, eating, and drinking without thinking of their doom. Our nation is reeking with sin and soon will fall into the hands of the anti-God communist nation. Just today (Oct. 27) we heard about some bombings in our nation's capital and other cities. More of this will take place as time goes on. The devil is at work and he is hitting hard at our religious freedom in this nation. We who love the Lord, surely need to get established in God and have our hope built upon things eternal. We need to have the love of Jesus in our souls and as we look out and see these things coming, we can weep and beg the Lord to deal with souls. Forces are working to destroy the homes of our nation. Divorces are on the increase and infidelity is rampant in the world. Nudity is out in plain sight on the news stands. The pure minded saints of God are grieved and embarrassed by such nudity staring them in their face when they have to trade at some stores. On the streets in the

summer, you see so many alarming things. Even bumper stickers and pictures are on the back of cars, staring you in the face as you wait at a stop sign or traffic signal. Oh, it is so grievous and our souls cry out to God to have mercy upon this sin-corrupted world. I think of what the Bible said about Lot, who lived in that wicked city of Sodom before God destroyed it. Lot was "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)" 2 Pet. 2:7,8. But be encouraged, God delivered Lot and the Bible says, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government [dominion]. Presumptuous are they, self willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." 2 Pet. 2:9,10. This is surely true today. God will take care of His own and give that sufficient grace to face every trial.

—Sis. Marie Miles

A FATHER'S EXAMPLE

"Why, Harry, don't you take any wine today?" said Mr. Carrisford to his only son, at the same time filling his own glass to the brim. "No, thank you, father," said Harry. "Have the teetotalers got hold of you?" said the father, half jesting, and half in earnest. "I should hope a son of mine would have too much spirit to submit to such dictation as that." Harry looked embarrassed, but he replied, "I have joined no pledge, father, only I have come to the conclusion that it would be best for me to drink no wine at all. Mother and sister Mary think as I do about it."

And well poor Harry might come to such a conclusion. Had he not seen his own father, time and time again, in a bad way enough? Had not that father's step too often lost its firmness, and his eye its lustre, till soul and reason were prostrated under the hoof of brutish sense, and all on account of the wine? Well may your mother and sister Mary, and your own conscience too, advise and encourage you, dear Harry, to have nothing to do with the wine—absolutely nothing. Don't admit the traitor at all. Keep him outside and he'll do you no harm.

I wish I was able to say that Harry always adhered to his good resolution. Sometimes, though he knew better, he

would take a glass with his father, and sometimes two, three, and even four. Oh, is he not standing on a slippery place now? Poor Harry thought so himself when the effects of the poison had passed off. He resolved again and again, but he did not, and could not keep his resolution.

"Dear father," said Harry one morning, "I've a great favor to ask of you." "What is it?" said Mr. Carrisford. "And if it is within the limits of my purse, you shall have it." Mr. Carrisford's purse was large and well filled, and he doted on his only son, that is, when he was himself. Harry looked very interesting that fine morning, and well might his father be proud of him. There he stood, the boy just passing into the man, with a bright, high forehead, and erect figure, with thick, clustering locks, and an open, ingenuous expression of countenance. "What is it, Harry? What would you have?"

"Father," said Harry, lowering his voice and coloring deeply, "will you not, for my sake, dispense with wine on the dinner table? Will you not lock it up in the cellar, and keep the key in your own pocket? I do so want to be a sober man, a man among men. But I cannot if that cursed wine is before me every day. I shall fall. I shall be a miserable drunkard, and I had rather die now." What did that father reply to his earnest-eyed boy? He just swore at him, and left the room in a rage.

What a blessing if some kind friend could have come to Harry just here, and said to him, "You are weak, and can do nothing of yourself, but God is strong, and can impart his strength to you, so just go to him and ask him for Christ's dear sake to help you keep your resolution, and you will be helped. A little of God's strength in your soul is just what you want." But nobody said any such thing to poor Harry. His mother and sister, though kind and amiable themselves, lived without prayer.

Harry was a thoughtful boy and a great reader, but no one put religious books into his hands, or advised him to read them. So he read a great many romances, plays, and that kind of poetry which inflames the imagination and the passions, and whose tendency is to break down that hedge of thorns between right and wrong which God has planted in every human bosom. Harry read a great many histories too, and sometimes his heart glowed with such a desire to imitate the example of the great and good, that his emotions could hardly be repressed. Was there no one to help and guide poor Harry? Alas, no one seemed to care for his soul.

Yet he was much favored in some respects. He had a beautiful home, a fond sister and mother, and an abundance of money, which, if he had known how to use it, would have proved a blessing. Yet Harry was very unhappy. When his father was brought home at night insensible, and had to be carried to bed by the servants, painfully illustrating all the disgusting effects of drunkenness, Harry was quite wretched, and even despairing. "I am going in the same way too," said Harry. "Alas, alas, I wish I had never been born." It was about Thanksgiving time, and Harry said to himself, "I'll try once more. Yes, I'll try once more, and break these cursed chains."

Harry seemed to be reclaimed. Wine was before him every day at dinner, and when he went to pass a social evening with his friends, there was sure to be wine or something stronger, to tempt the thoughtless; but for some weeks Harry held out bravely, and his eyes grew bright with hope, and his step elastic, like one who had broken the chains of a cruel master, and had suddenly found himself free. "I am not going to be a drunkard after all," thought Harry. "I shall never disgrace my friends. I am going to be a man."

"Come, Carrisford, come along," said James Lawson, "our party will not be complete without you." "But where are you going?" said Harry. "Oh, we are going to have a fine time tonight. We'll have a visit to the theatre, and as much fun as we want afterwards." How the vices are banded together. Harry was not principled against the theatre. He had been taught to consider it an intellectual, and at least a very harmless amusement. Harry joined his young companions. All went to the theatre, and when that entertainment was over the merry company adjourned to a hotel for a supper.

"Why don't you fill your glass, Carrisford?" said several voices at once. "You used to be thirsty." "Well, I'm not thirsty now," said Harry, attempting to laugh off importunity. "You haven't got to be one of those sneaking cold-water men, have you? Why, they're afraid to take a friendly glass, for fear they'll have to swallow the barrel." All the company laughed at Harry's expense. "Come, now, Harry," continued Lawson, "We're going to sing 'Auld Lang Syne,' so please take 'a cup of kindness yet' to help us along."

(continued in next lesson)

February 8, 1976

THE FIG TREE AND CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

Mark 11:12-26

Mark 11:12 And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry:

13 And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.

15 And they came to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

16 And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple.

17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

21 And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away.

22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.

23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

Memory Verse: And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. Mark 11:22.

Central Thought: Jesus wills that our lives be temples of prayer and faith.

Word Definition: "Among the Jews the word vessel, keli, had a vast latitude of meaning. It signified arms, Jer. 21:4; clothes, Deut. 22:5; instruments of music, Psalms 71:22; . . . it points out any of the things which were bought and sold in the temple." —Clarke's Comm.

Judea had many caves, therefore robbers hid there. Jesus referred to the money changers, etc., as making the house of God a "den of thieves."

LESSON BACKGROUND

The last verse in last Sunday's lesson makes us know that Jesus and his disciples returned to Bethany that evening and probably spent the night. The first verse in our lesson says, "On the morrow," which would place our lesson on Monday, before His crucifixion on the following Friday.

The city of Jerusalem was ordinarily a city of about fifty thousand inhabitants but at this time of the Passover it is said that as many as a million people came to the city from different parts of the country. There were unscrupulous men in that day, just as there are today. Where a crowd gathers together, the price of things go up. So enterprising business men set up stalls in the very court of the temple to meet the demands of the people. We know birds and animals were killed and offered as sacrifices at the festival of the Passover, which was held every spring to commemorate the exodus of the Jews from Egypt. (Exodus 12:1-14) Roman money had to be changed because it could not be paid into the temple treasury. The Mosaic law required the Jew to pay into the treasury atonement money. This was half of a shekel. Ex. 30:13. So when the money changers changed the money, they made a commission on it. Historians say that the money changers made a profit in a few days, of many thousands of dollars. Of course, most of this was taken from the peasants and working people who came in great numbers to the Passover. Jesus knew the hardships of the working class of people. He had worked as a carpenter with Joseph.

Let us walk with Jesus and His disciples as they pass through the city of Jerusalem and come into the temple. We will pass through the gate into the outer court known as "the court of the Gentiles." Above the voices of the packed court, Jesus hears the bleating of sheep and the cooing of doves. Added to this is the crowd of people arguing, and the clinking of coins like the hubbub of the marketplace. The Apostle John tells us that Jesus made a scourge of small cords and drove them all out of the temple, along with the sheep and the oxen. The disciples remembered that it had been written, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." John 2:15-17. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. What day did our lesson take place on? 2. What are the leaves in our life and what is the fruit that we are to bear that Jesus is looking for? 3. What lesson did Jesus get over to the disciples in His cursing of the fig tree? 4. What did Jesus find in the temple and what did he do about it? 5. How can we keep our faith strong in the Word of God?

ADULTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

May we give the two principle parts of our lesson today much time and careful thought. First, consider the matter of Christ cursing the fig tree. Let us note the fact that "the time of the figs was not yet." It was therefore no fault of the tree that it had no figs. It was not the season for figs. It would seem to us then that the Lord's evident displeasure toward the tree was not justified. Here is where we have to have an eye for something farther than just what seems. The statement "And his disciples heard it" explains the Lord's real cause here. Here was a lesson that He sought to portray. He seeks to show the authority and power of His faith over even the natural elements. As Peter noted the dried up tree in the morning, and made mention of it, he was given the answer that we need today for our lives. "Have faith in God." And then He brought it a little closer to us as He applied it in a more simple language: "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

Let us also consider His indignation toward the money-changers in the temple. Now He quoted from the prophet Isaiah when He said that His Father's house was to be called a house of prayer of all nations. He had full scriptural and authoritative right to be very angry with the rabble that

day. They had invaded the sacred and holy atmosphere of the dedicated house of worship with their thirst and greed for financial and earthly gain. Oh, the wretched and blind condition of human hearts to allow such a thing to go on. How hardened and evil the ones were who promoted and pulsed such corruption in the holy courts of the temple. It is no wonder that the zeal of Christ was stirred to such measures. Oh, what a commotion it doubtless was! Can you not visualize the money rolling every where, the sheep bleating, the birds flying around searching for freedom and the angry dazed look on the faces of the people. It was a scene indeed, and justly so. So may all who cleave to their own ways be banished from the courts of the Lord until they are willing to come and be saints of God and live spiritual lives of prayer. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What Jesus did was for a lesson. He was a light here on earth, but that light was soon to fade away because of the rejection of the Jews. The Jewish nation was going into darkness. They were full of corruption. Jesus was on His way from Bethany to the temple, to clean out some of that corruption. He wanted to teach His disciples a lesson. He looked at the fig tree and saw leaves, but no fruit. This was disappointing. So He said, "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever." Jesus had been preaching repentance to the Jews, for more than three years. He tried in every way He could to help them to see their hypocritical and ungodly lives. He healed the sick and comforted the sad. He forgave the sins of those who saw their need. He taught them daily in the temple and tried to help them to see that God had sent to them the Messiah and that He had come to save them from their sins. But it all fell on deaf ears. They went about scheming ways to get rid of Him. There was not any good fruit for God to see in the Jewish nation. Therefore destruction was their doom. Their cup of iniquity was nearly full and they would finally be destroyed. Jesus had previously said, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. . . . Fill ye up then the measure of your father." Matt. 23:27,28,32. Jesus wanted to point out to His disciples that the wrath of God was coming upon a

people who had nearly filled up the measure of iniquity. "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season." Job 5:26. To the fruitless soul that God has dealt with and has continually rejected the Lord, there comes a time "when a line is drawn by rejecting the Lord—where the call of His Spirit is lost." Another part of the song says, "But you hurry along with the pleasure-mad throng. Have you counted, have you counted the cost?" Oh, we need to be aware of the fact that God is looking for fruit in our lives.

In the evening, as Jesus and the disciples left Jerusalem and went back to Bethany, they saw that the fig tree had withered up. The disciples were astonished. Jesus told them to "Have faith in God." They would need great faith to believe all of His words that He had spoken to them, as the devil would try to make them doubt. —M. Miles

A FATHER'S EXAMPLE

(continued from last lesson)

Oh, Harry, Harry, why not ask God to help you now? He could save you even in this very den of wild beasts. But alas, Harry is not acquainted with God. It is true he has heard of Him in church, and he has heard His great name taken lightly every day, but he has never asked His assistance and blessing, so that he has no one to depend on in this dark hour of temptation but his poor weak self. Harry fell. He took a glass, another, another, and still another; then his long-slumbering appetite, as if to avenge itself for past neglect, seemed almost insatiable. He knew not where to stop. At last Harry's gay and witty companions were obliged to convey him upstairs to bed, and they all thought it was a capital joke.

The sun arose bright the next morning, but its brilliant beams fell upon the face of one to whom its light was hateful. Shame, remorse, and despair were written on Harry's expressive countenance, as he gloomily sat pondering his unhappy condition. "I am lost, lost. Oh, I cannot be a drunkard." And then bringing down his hand heavily on the table, in all the energy of despair, "No, I will not be a drunkard."

Harry went home. His mother and sister Mary wondered what made him look so sad after having had "such a gay time." But his manner was very tender towards them, and they thought they never loved him so well before. The

sumptuous dinner was spread, but Harry could not eat, and he turned pale at the sight of the decanters.

"Come, Mary," said Harry after tea, "let us take a walk." They were soon on the summit of a hill which commanded a view of distant mountains, of a winding river, and of the town. Harry did not say much, but he seemed to look at everything with tears in his eyes. When at last the sun went down in all the glory of gold and purple, Harry said, "I thought I would see that sun set once more." Mary wondered at the words "once more," but she simply said, "You'll see it set a great many times, brother." "Life is always uncertain," said Harry. Mary returned home with distressed spirits, for the shadow of a coming woe had already fallen upon her heart.

"Goodnight, dear mother," said Harry in softest accents, smoothing her hair. "Goodnight," he repeated. "Why, Harry, goodnight?" said Mrs. Carrisford, "I hope you are not sick," for she noticed a peculiar cadence in her son's voice. Harry kissed his mother, and said, "No, I am quite well." Then he bade his sister goodnight in the same way. As he left the room, his eye seemed to linger on the dear faces of his mother and sister, on each familiar object, and he was gone.

The breakfast next morning at Mr. Carrisford's was waiting. The bell had rung, and Mrs. Carrisford and Mary took their seats. Mr. Carrisford was still sleeping—late hours were his habit. But where is Harry? "Run upstairs, Mary," said the mother, "and see if he is well. I thought he looked pale yesterday." Mary went. In a minute, a shriek wild and piercing filled the house. The mother rushed upstairs—and such a sight! What mother's heart could endure it? Harry was dead, and Mary had fainted beside him. A letter directed to Mrs. Carrisford lay on the table. After a few hours of unutterable anguish, the mother was able, amid her tears and groans, to read Harry's letter, which ran as follows:

"My dear, darling Mother and Sister: When you read this letter I shall be gone. Life is sometimes a greater evil than death, then why should I bear its intolerable load? No, I will not, when the means of relief are within my reach. Was it not better to take poison than live to be a drunkard? Could you and my sweet Mary bear to have another in the family? No, one is surely enough. I will save you from this calamity. You shall not see me come staggering home more like a beast than a man. Oh, how I have wanted to be great and good. How I

have longed after something higher and nobler than anything within my reach. But it is all in vain. I am not strong enough to wrestle with the cruel temptations which meet me every day. Who knows what there may be in store for me in that other world which I shall soon enter? Will anything worse than drunkenness meet me there? I know not, but I will venture. Precious mother and sister, believe that I loved you to my very last breath. And my father! Ah, I have no message to him. Standing as I do on the brink of the grave, I will speak the truth. He has murdered me. But I have baffled him, *for I will not fill a drunkard's grave.* Mother, sister, God bless you. Farewell."

So the poor misguided boy had rushed uncalled into the presence of his Maker. Parents, beware how you tempt your children. Beware of setting them a bad example, lest their souls' blood be found in your skirts.

—Sketches From Life," 1871

February 15, 1976

THE REJECTED STONE

Luke 20:1,9-21,23,26

Luke 20:1 And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders,

9 Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

10 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty.

11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty.

12 And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out.

13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him.

14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?

16 He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.

17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

19 And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

20 And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly:

23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marveled at his answer, and held their peace.

Memory Verse: Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. Luke 20:18.

Central Thought: We note that the people of God have been persecuted down through the ages, but it seems that most of it has fallen on God's ministers.

Word Definition: "The builders" refers to the chief priests and elders of the people, and the doctors of the law. "Rejected" is an "expression borrowed from masons, who finding a stone, which being tried in a particular place, and appearing improper for it, is thrown aside, and another taken; however, at last, it may happen that the very stone which has been before rejected, may be found the most suitable as the head stone of the corner." —Clarke's Comm.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We note that the teachings of Jesus in His last days before His crucifixion, were somewhat different from His earlier teachings. We have recorded, in the New Testament, a number of accounts where He exposed the lives of the self-righteous Jews. He put emphasis on the coming judgment, the folly of unpreparedness and the result of rejecting the kingdom of God. As Jesus taught them and exposed their long history of killing the prophets, whom God had sent to them, and their rejection of the Son of God, He had no illusions about their intentions of killing Him.

As we study the parable which He spoke on Tuesday, we want to keep in mind that the husbandmen or caretakers of the vineyard were the Jews. God, at different times, sent prophets to the Jews, but they killed them and finally killed God's only Son. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. Whom did Jesus preach to mostly in His last days on earth? 2. In the parable, whom did Jesus refer to as the man who planted the vineyard and who were the husbandmen? 3. How were the servants treated that were sent by the owner of the vineyard, and what kind of treatment did the son receive? 4. Who is the stone and what will happen if that stone is rejected and thrown aside? 5. Does the devil work today and cause others to twist our words?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

As we think of the dealings of God with the Jews, and how He sent the prophets again and again to warn them of their transgression and to call them back to the true God, it makes us see the great mercy He had. When we study about the prophets that were killed, we find that this parable is true. Jesus, at one time, plainly referred them to Zechariah whom they had slain in the house of God. At that time Jesus said, "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." Matt. 23:34,35. See 2 Chron. 24:20-21. Jesus remembered how Herod had caused

John the Baptist's head be cut off to please Herodias. Matt. 14:1-12. Now they were intent upon killing the heir, the Son of God whom Jesus plainly let them know that He was. This claim does not take away from the humility of Jesus, but it makes his humility the more amazing. He did not come in kingly robes and was not born in a palace, but to a humble woman in a stable.

Today God has sent forth His pastors, teachers, evangelists, preachers and greatest of all, His Word, the Bible,—to the whole world. These are proclaiming that Jesus is the Son of God and that He is the world's Saviour, but if rejected, He will be a Judge. People are killing the thoughts of Jesus and are rejecting Him. The stone, which is Christ, will fall upon them and they will be destroyed. How sad! It is better to fall upon that stone now and repent and find peace with God, than to wait until death overtakes you and you find that the stone falls upon you.

Notice how they tried to catch Jesus in His words. The devil today is trying to twist our words and make us think we have done wrong. Then he will cause others to twist our words and hold us for things that we never thought of saying. We can be aware of this and not be surprised about these things. The devil will work today through others to cause us trouble just as he did Jesus. But thanks be unto God! We know that God knows all about us and can see our hearts. —M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What makes the difference in those who accept and love Christ, and those who fulfill the scriptures in rejecting them? In the first place we must remember that the weight of the decision as to whether man is going to be saved or not rests solely upon the individual's choice. Man is not going to be forced and made to serve the Lord against his own personal will. Whosoever serves the Lord successfully does so willingly, and by choice. And whosoever serves Satan successfully does so by choice.

Therefore we could change our first question and perhaps get closer to the bottom of the matter if we would ask it thus: What is it that causes a person to accept or reject Christ? God alone knows fully what goes on inside a man concerning such issues, but there are some facts already proven that will help us here. We say many times that animals are creatures of habit. This is true, but there is

something that causes them to form the habits they have. This can be also said of man. Men are often creatures of habit, but the habits that they form are the result of another source. This source, this cause, can be termed as influence. We are not only creatures of habit, but we are also creatures of influence. If you are saved today, it is because something or someone has influenced you in so doing. If you are not saved it is very likely because you have fallen under the wrong influence of something or someone.

Could we list a few of the things that can wield an influence to cause men and women to become willing to give their hearts to the Lord? What are some of them? Look in your own life and see what was the source of influence that caused you to serve the Lord. And if you are not a child of God, it would do you well to regard the influences that are keeping you from gaining access to the grace of God. Pride in the heart and the favor of others are perhaps two of the greatest influences that keep people from serving the Lord. Let us consider this. We do not have space to go into detail, but there are many influences that are working for and against the souls of men in this world. —L. Busbee

POLYCARP, THE MARTYR

Polycarp refused to burn incense to the emperor at Rome. He was brought to the arena and the officer gave him three chances to save his life. First he was ordered to say, "Away with the atheists!" (Since the Christians did not worship the many pagan gods of Rome, and since they had no statues of gods before whom they worshiped, they were called atheists by the pagans.) Polycarp pointed to all the heathen in the galleries and said, "Away with the atheists!" This was not what the officer meant, so he gave Polycarp another chance. "Curse Christ," he was commanded. Polycarp answered, "Eighty and six years have I served Him and He has done me no wrong, and can I revile my King that saved me?" A third time the governor said, "Swear by Ceasar." Polycarp answered, "I am a Christian. If you want to know what that is, set a day and listen." "I'll throw you to the beasts." "Bring on your beasts," answered Polycarp. "If you scorn the beasts, I'll have you burned." "You try to frighten me with fire that burns for an hour and you forget the fire of hell that never goes out."

Polycarp, the faithful child and minister of God, was burned at the stake, but his last prayer could be heard rising

above the crackle of the flames that leaped about him, "Lord God Almighty, Father of Jesus Christ, I bless Thee that Thou didst deem me worthy of this hour that I shall take a part among the martyrs in the cup of Christ, to rise again with the Holy Spirit. May I be an acceptable sacrifice. I praise Thee. I bless Thee, I glorify Thee through Jesus Christ." —From History

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February 22, 1976

THE MARRIAGE FEAST

Matt. 22:1-14

Matt. 22:1 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding; and they would not come.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.

7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

11 And when the king came in to see the guest, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

12 And saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

Memory Verse: But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Mark 13:32.

Central Thought: Today the call has gone forth for all to come and partake of the marriage feast.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We continue with our lesson about some of the teachings of Jesus at the temple, on Tuesday, before His crucifixion on Friday.

"A marriage for his son," is when a son is put in possession of the government, and thus he and his new subjects become married together,—according to Clarke's Commentary. See I Kings 1:5-9, 19, 25, etc.

Remember that the King, means God; His Son, the Lord Jesus; the marriage means the union of those who repent of their sins and have the spirit of Christ; the marriage feast is the means through which men are invited to partake of salvation, purchased through the death of Jesus; those who have been bidden (verse 3) are the Jews in general; the servants would be the first preachers of the gospel, (possibly John the Baptist and the 70 disciples); the other servants would be those who were later to preach the gospel to the whole world. By people making light of the invitation, they were rejecting salvation. By injuring some and slaying others, they would be persecuting and killing the apostles. By sending forth troops (verse 7), would mean the commission given to the Romans against Judea, by the burning and total destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, which happened some years after Jesus' death (See Clarke's Comm.) The highways and hedges would mean the calling of the Gentiles to salvation. Salvation is sent to every soul.

Verse 11 is about the coming of the Lord, who is referred to as King.

As wedding garments are to be spotless, so the soul must be holy. Those who claim to be right before men and yet are defiled, will be speechless before the Judge. They will be cast into outer darkness and torment. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. Whom did God call to the marriage feast first?
2. How did they react to that call and how are people

reacting today? 3. What did happen to the Jewish nation because they rejected Jesus? 4. Who was bidden to the marriage feast the second time, and did they come? 5. Who is the call for today? 6. What is the wedding garment and what happens to those who will not have it on when Jesus comes as our Judge?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Jesus was a wonderful Teacher. He could take sermons from those things around Him or from something that had happened. By doing this, He brought to His listeners precious truths. Today, we find Jesus teaching in the temple. He had attended the marriage feasts of that day, as is recorded in the New Testament. He was familiar with their customs. He wanted to impress them with some deep truths, so He referred them to a certain king who made a marriage feast for his son, upon taking possession of the government. He and his subjects were to become a union.

God sent His Son to this world because man had separated himself from God through sin. Jesus bridged the huge gulf between God and man. God can't look upon sin with any kind of pleasure. When Jesus died, bearing our sins, God had to turn His face. No wonder Jesus cried out on the cross, saying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was a terrible suffering for the Father to look away from His Son and Jesus knew it. The marriage feast is the means that is used to help souls to be aware of how wonderful salvation is and their need of it. The invitation has gone out to every soul. The Jews were the first ones bidden. Jesus came to His own, but His own rejected Him. They made light of Him, and continued living in their own self-righteous ways. They even took the servants that invited them, and killed them. They killed John the Baptist and rejected the seventy that were sent forth. They refused to accept the truth that if the marriage of the soul with Christ doesn't take place here, they will miss heaven. Therefore, verse seven makes us know that they were punished. History tells us about the destruction of Jerusalem and about the people dying from starvation and with the sword. The wedding feast is still waiting to be partaken of by all who will come. Today the call has gone out to every soul. The ministers are going out in the by-ways and the hedges, begging others to come. The Jews rejected it, but all who will come can be saved from their sins. There will be a judgment day and God will come to

judge each person. We must have on the wedding garment. Those who overcome, "the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." Rev. 3:5. Those who are ready to meet the Lord are arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." Rev. 19:8. —Marie Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It is very sad indeed to think of those who are not interested enough in their souls' welfare to accept the invitation of the Saviour's love and pardon. It has no appeal to their darkened hearts because they are so carried away with the material things of this life. Spiritual treasures have no value to them. Even though these precious eternal gems are set forth and evidently declared to them, it has little or no bearing. "I pray thee have me excused" is the attitude of their heart. But they will not be excused. Yes, they will miss the blessings that attend the marriage supper of the Lamb, but they will not be excused from the responsibility such an invitation brings upon them. Seeing that they are created of God and given life and good things, they ought to glorify the Lord who made them, by yielding to His divine call. But they know not the hand that feeds them. Counting themselves whole in themselves, they pursue their selfish and lustful courses away from the more lasting and satisfying blessings of life.

To refuse to come to the Lord and partake of His supper merits great wrath and displeasure from His righteous and holy anger. There is not anything left for us but everlasting destruction. There is no other blessed abode for the souls of men than that which Christ has gone to prepare. To fail of His grace and mercy means to step into outer darkness from which there is no hope of return. There will never be another Christ who will come and make a hope for the lost who refuse to accept salvation's call. Therefore it is for us to diligently yield ourselves to God, accept the sacrifice that His Son has made for us to be saved, and walk in the light of His blessed gospel all our days. —L. Busbee

PRAY WITH YOUR CHILD

How often are the hearts of Christian parents torn with anguish by the persistent disobedience of a beloved child. How many sleepless midnight hours are spent in trying to devise some plan for reclaiming him.

Such a son had Mr. K____. Paternal admonition was unheeded, kindness was abused, punishment only seemed to make him more sullen and obstinate in his evil way. At length, quite despairing of his own success, his father resolved to place him in the care of an aged clergyman, a celebrated instructor of youth. When alone with the minister, the father told him what a desperate lad his son had grown to be, that praise or blame had no effect upon him. The good man asked if he tried no remedies. The gentleman enumerated various measures he had adopted to reclaim him. Still the other inquired if he had done nothing else. "Yes, after a very flagrant act of disobedience, I once kept him two days confined to his chamber, on bread and water."

"Ah," said the old clergyman, "these remedies were not sufficient; I know a better remedy for such desperate cases. It is prayer. Did you ever go alone with your son, and earnestly pray with and for him?" The gentleman was forced to confess he had never done so. "Then," said the clergyman, "it need not seem strange that all your pains have been in vain."

Deeply impressed with the suggestion, the humbled father betook himself to the new remedy, and with the happiest results. The wild, reckless lad became sober and thoughtful. Soon a change in his daily conduct was apparent. He dared not go out of that chamber, where he could not but feel that God was, and plunge into his customary sinful courses. He lived to become an excellent, efficient man, and an honor and blessing to society.

Father, mother, do you pray daily with your child? One has well said, "A child should not be able to remember when his parent first prayed with him." The practice should be commenced in infancy, and never discontinued while he is under your watch and care.

The mother of ten children lived to see them all within the fold of Christ. When asked the secret of her successful training, she answered she had been accustomed to take each of the children with her to her closet, and pray with him alone. —"Sketches From Life," 1871

(Teacher, have you ordered lessons for the 2nd quarter of 1976? The first Sunday of the quarter is April 4. For your convenience, see order blank in back of book.)

February 29, 1976

JESUS ANSWERS QUESTIONS

Matt. 22:23-25a,27-33,35-40

Matt. 22:23 The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

25a Now there were with us seven brethren: [Each brother married her and left no children]

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scripture, nor the power of God.

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

33 And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine.

35 Then one of them, [Pharisee] which was a lawyer, asked a question, tempting him, saying,

36 Master, which is the great commandment of the law?

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Memory Verse: Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Matt. 22:37.

Central Thought: If God is real to us and we love Him with all of our being, He will be real to us in eternal life and immortality.

Word Definition: Seed should be translated to read as "children" or "posterity." Lawyer was a teacher of the Mosaic law, or, in other words, was the same as a scribe.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We want to remember that our lesson is still centered around some of the teachings that Jesus taught on Tuesday before His death on Friday. It is generally understood that He taught these teachings in the temple vicinity.

The Sadducees were a sect of that day who did not believe in a resurrection. Josephus, the historian of the Jews said, "The doctrine of the Sadducees is, that souls die with the bodies." We note in our lesson how Jesus called attention to the Sadducees and said that they did not believe the scriptures which they professed to uphold. The books of Moses are the first five books of the Bible. In Exodus 3:6, God has said, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." They were living, but not in the fleshly body. The Sadducees overlooked this fact.

The Pharisees were another sect. They believed in the resurrection, so they asked another question of Jesus. All of this was being done in order to catch Him in some way so He could be condemned to death by the Mosaic law. But Jesus was full of wisdom and they were no match for Him.

We read in Deut. 25:5 about the commandment of a brother-in-law marrying his deceased brother's wife, who did not have children. In that day it seemed to be a great calamity for a family name or a family to become extinct. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the question that the Sadducees asked Jesus? 2. Why was the question a seemingly difficult one for them? 3. How can we apply the lack of knowledge and faith that the Sadducees had in the books of Moses to the false teacher of today? 4. Discuss the life of people after death. 5. Why was the question that the Pharisees asked Jesus difficult to answer, according to the lawyer's idea? 6. Discuss what loving God with all of our being means.

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

As it is today, there were various sects that had different religious beliefs. They took the Mosaic law and twisted it to fit their own reasonings. How sad! Jesus said that "Ye do err,

not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." These are two things that many people today do not know and therefore are ensnared in many false teachings. They do not read the Bible for themselves, nor do they have faith in the power of God. Nothing is impossible with God. God is able to do all things. He is able to perform all that He has promised in His Word. We must believe it and count it so. But first we must love the Lord with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength. If we do this and have been truly born again and filled with the Holy Spirit, God will be faithful to us and lead us aright. Praise the Lord for His matchless love and power! It is real and we must count that God is able to do all things right.

We do not know all that God has prepared for us in heaven, but we do know that it is a place far beyond our expectations. There are not enough words in the English language to describe it. It will be just perfect. We note that the Sadducees used some exaggerations trying to put Jesus on the spot, so to speak. They wanted to make their question as difficult as possible. The conception of spiritual things in a fleshly manner is the ground of mistaking the truth and setting up error and heresy, as it seemed the Sadducees were doing. After the resurrection we shall be set free from the infirmities whereunto now we are subject, and shall neither need meat nor drink. We will not marry, but shall be upholden immediately of God, without means, as angels are, and shall be worshippers of God as the angels, and do God's bidding. We will be in the redeemed throng and together we will worship the Lover of our souls with such an intense fervency that He will be all and in all to us. What a glorious place God has prepared! Our souls will bask in the sunlight of heaven. We will never have a want or need.. It will be a perfect place for our souls and immortal bodies. God is a God of the living. The soul never dies.

The Pharisees took over and wanted to ask a question. The lawyer thought he would present a legal snare. The question he asked was very broad. It was similiar to asking a man to point out the most important star. The Bible says, "One star differeth from another star in glory." I Cor. 15:41. Who but God can count the number of the stars? Psa. 147:4. Just so, there are a lot of God's laws and who can tell which is the most important? How can a person arrange them and pick out the most important one? Jesus was all wise and He gave the correct answer. Surely, the commandments are not obeyed unless

obedience springs from supreme love that only God can give. The measure of loving God is to love Him without measure. —M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How could men be so deluded as were the Sadducees, which held that there was no resurrection, no angel, or spirit? It really seems incredible that there were such men of folly, especially in the face of Christ and all of His great works and holy teachings. It was because they "knew not the scriptures nor the power of God." These men were ignorant men. They were ignorant even though they had a knowledge of the letter and the wording of the law. Yet, they lacked divine unction and inspiration that alone will enlighten the soul and bring the truth to light. It is noteworthy to see how they sought to present a situation that very doubtfully could never quite happen such as the case of the seven men all having the same wife. This would never ordinarily or naturally happen in a thousand years. It seems that they implied that such had happened, but viewing the ruthless and dishonest hearts that they manifested, we cannot count on it being the truth. But even that is beside the point. If by any means such an incident did occur, where one woman was married to seven brothers who died one after another, it presented no real problem to Christ. Jesus was, in the spirit, of quick understanding. He had deep insight into the things of God. His mind was channeled along with the holy anointing that rested upon Him. Note His answer, a very simple and yet conclusive one: "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage. This stops all the figuring and planning. There is no need to even worry about a wife or husband when it comes to eternal glory. All of that is confined to the bounds of this earthly realm. How darkened the minds of men have been on this very point. We have heard of a woman who made her husband promise on her death-bed that he would know no other woman except her, and wait to reclaim her in Heaven. This is far from the truth. One man I read about said he had a vision that he saw two angels who told him that they would be his wives in glory. Oh, what darkness. Let us refuse these vain reasonings of men and give ear to the wisdom of God's well-beloved Son! —L. Busbee

ORGANIZATIONS THAT JESUS FACED

There were many sects and different beliefs in the days of Jesus, just as there are in our day. When the multitudes believed and followed Him, He felt the cruel anger and jealousy of the sect leaders.

One of the sects were called Essenes. They were a group that had many proposed solutions for the troubles of the world. They sought to escape the rub of the world and to avoid mingling among those they thought were evil, by forming their own communities in the desert places. They lived separate and as they called it, holy lives, but we know that without God, they could not do it.

Another group was called the Zealots. They were very much against the Roman government which ruled Israel at the time of Jesus. They tried to get the people to revolt against the Roman government. Of course, the Romans appointed and removed the Jewish high priests. The people were heavily taxed by the Romans. We read in Acts 5:36-37, about Theudas, who gathered together about four hundred people and rebelled against the Romans, but of course they were scattered and their leader killed. The Zealots were looking for a leader to come and it seems that they thought Jesus could be their leader. We do not have a record but it could have been that they turned against Jesus when He made the answer about paying taxes to Caesar. This is something that they hated. It could have been that they joined in the crowd that wanted Jesus crucified.

The Sadducees only used the five books of Moses, which are the first five in our Bible. They based their teachings solely on what was in those books. They insisted that there should be an "eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." They did not believe in the Resurrection. They were people of wealth and had much political power. Josephus, the historian, said, "Their doctrines reach only a few men, and those who hold the highest offices." They were in sympathy with the Romans and wanted to be careful and appease them. When the state and the temple fell, the Sadducees were not heard of anymore. They opposed Jesus because they feared that His actions would cause them trouble with the Romans.

The Pharisees felt that they could interpret the law. They also believed in the written Scriptures, but they had many traditions. They were a large group. The historian said, "The

Pharisees have the multitude on their side." We read more about the Pharisees in the Bible and their opposition to Jesus because there were more people who were Pharisees.

Besides all of these groups, Jesus had to contend with the Roman soldiers, and the Roman officials, such as Herod and Pilate. So Jesus had much opposition because He would not line up with any of these groups.

They had a council and the conclusion was this, "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. . . . Then from that day forth, they took counsel together for to put him to death." John 11:48,53. Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, "prophesied" that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." (verse 50) He did not really know that he was prophesying that Jesus would die for the salvation of all who would believe on Him. Those that believed would not perish, but have eternal life.

—Sis. Marie Miles

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March 7, 1976

THE JUDGMENT WILL COME

Matt. 24:1,2,3a, 35-39; Matt. 25:31-34, 41

Matt. 24:1 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to show him the building of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3a And as he sat upon the mount of Olives,

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Matt. 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

Memory Verse: I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2 Tim. 4:1.

Central Thought: We are living in a dispensation of faith and not sight; therefore, we need to be watching and praying.

Word Definition: "Judge the quick and the dead at his appearing." This means that the quick is the living and the dead are those who are in the graves but have come forth. There is no space of time between the judgment and his appearing. Immediately, Christ will judge and that great separation will take place.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Herod wanted to gain the approval of the people so he restored the temple in 19 or 20 B. C. It was a magnificent structure and covered an area of about four blocks. It was a Greco-Roman architecture, built in white marble, with parts overlaid with gold. There were four courts and double rows of pillars of the whitest marble which were made of a single stone measuring 37 feet and 6 inches high. There were ten decorative gateways. It was one of the greatest buildings of the ancient world. It stood in the same location of the temple built by Solomon which had been destroyed. The temple was destroyed by the Romans under the leadership of Tisus, Friday, Aug. 9, 70 A. D. It has never been rebuilt. It is said that a Mohammedan mosque now stands on the site of the Temple.

The Jews were very proud of the temple and in the first verses of our lesson, we read about the disciples calling Jesus' attention to the beauty of the temple. Jesus also was thinking of the temple. This was his last time to be in the temple. But

His thoughts were quite different from those of the disciples. Jesus was thinking of the approaching destruction of that beautiful temple and the presence of God moving out of it. No doubt he knew that at his death the curtain or veil between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, would be torn apart by God. Jesus also knew that in the future that the temple would be destroyed by the Romans, which did come to pass.

Jesus mentions the stones of the temple. The stones were fifty feet long, twenty-four feet wide, and sixteen feet thick.

Josephus, the historian, said, "Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the whole city and temple, except the tree towers, Phaselus, Hippicus, and Mariamne, and a part of the western wall, and these were spared; but, for all the rest of the wall, it was laid so completely even with the ground by those who dug it up, even the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited." The wall that is left is called the "weeping wall."

Now Jesus left the temple and saw it for the last time. This was on Tuesday and He went out on the Mount of Olives. There Jesus talked to His disciples and taught them about the final judgment scenes.

It would be well to read the verses not written in our lesson between Matt. 25:34 and 41 for references. We note that common kindness, prompted by the deep love of God, will affect our eternal destiny. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. What was Jesus thinking about the temple and what were the disciples' thoughts? 2. Did Jesus' words come to pass concerning the temple and how did He later compare His words to the world? 3. How do the days of Noah compare with today? 4. What does Peter say about the things that will happen in the end? (2 Pet. 3:10-14). 5. What did Jesus say would happen on that great day of separation? 6. What will happen to those who live carelessly today?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

It has been almost two thousand years since Jesus spoke these immortal words of eternal life to His hearers as He walked among them. Today, those words have not passed away. They are just as true today as they were at that time. The evangelists preserved them and we have them in

the four Gospels. Even though heaven and earth pass away, and they will, His words will stand forever. When we think of our feeling about this world, the stars, the planets, and how stable all of it seems to be, yet Jesus dared to compare the endurance of His words to be more than the endurance of the stars, earth, and the ocean. The perpetuity of the words of Jesus are indisputable. His words are so marvelous and are so adequately adapted to the needs of our immortal nature that those who have once felt their power would feel it was parting with life to part with them. Earthquakes, deluges, might sweep this world, but you must unpopulate it before the words of Christ could pass from it. Even if the Bible perish, there are those who have the blessed words of Jesus stored up in their memory. That born-again, Holy Spirit filled person would live on by the effects that those words have produced.

People should take warning today and be on their guard. Jesus plainly refers us to the days of Noah. What happened in that day will happen today. They planted, builded (Luke 17:26-28), married and were given in marriage while making fun of Noah. Not till that "door" was being "shut" (Gen 7:16), did they give any thought to the fact that maybe Noah's words were true. They had taken life for granted and had almost total disbelief in the preaching of Noah, warning them of the coming destruction. Today people are doing the same. This world will "pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" —not burned over. We ought to search our hearts and be ready when that great day of separation takes place. "The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." 2 Pet. 3:10-12. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." 2 Pet. 3:14. —Sis. Marie Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The destruction of Jerusalem that took place in A. D. 70 by the Romans, is not spoken of much in our world today. People who speculate on God's eye being upon Palestine across the sea as a scene of His glory and dominion again, are not mindful of the fact that the Jerusalem of long ago was destroyed twice, once because of departure from God and once because of rejecting His Son. The Nation of Israel, which false prophets are dotting upon with great enthusiasm, is

but the product of the special help and aid of the United States of America. The hearts of these people, as a nation, are far from God and His truth. True, there are doubtless individuals who are interested in Christ as Saviour and Lord, but as a nation, Israel is no better than the other nations around. But Jerusalem was destroyed. The temple that was the scene of the great sacrifices and ceremonial worship of the olden time is no longer there. God's blessings and vision is no longer resting upon such a city or nations. But we find it is hard for man to get his eyes off of the natural. He still speculates in the scriptures concerning a great future for literal Israel, and nothing could be farther from the truth. God is through with literal Israel as far as blessing them as a nation. God is working and is interested in the spiritual Israel and the Jerusalem that is above. We even read in the history of the Crusades and their zeal to gain access to the Holy City. We read how cruel and wicked their hearts were toward the Moslems and those who were holding Jerusalem. They killed and fought savagely to gain access to Jerusalem so that they could go and worship as they desired. They were in darkness. I heard a church minister recently advertising a tour to the "Holy Land." He stressed how important it was for the Christian to see these places. He said we are to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." He said, "I wonder if you know what that scripture means?" He does not even know himself. If their blinded eyes could be opened and they could see what the real Jerusalem is now in all her power and glory, they would stop being so interested in a nation like Israel as far as expecting such dreams to come to pass. —L. Busbee

THE PLANS OF A LIFETIME

Colonel G_____ was a fond and ambitious father, but wholly irreligious. It was a favorite saying of his, that "a smart man might carve his own fortune," and to his friends he sometimes added, "My own success in life I owe wholly to my own efforts. Resolution and perseverance were the making of me."

With regard to his only son he thought and said, "I shall give Albert a thorough education and then, with the plans which I have laid out for him, and his own exertions, he can hardly fail of fortune and distinction. I mean to qualify him for some responsible and lucrative foreign post. His nature is too active and enterprising to be satisfied with the dull routine of

ordinary business. He must go abroad, that is certain, and I shall prepare him to fill the highest station which fortune may open to him. All the foreign languages he must master thoroughly. There is no telling what he may not have occasion to know, and he learns so easily, that the acquisition will be only a pleasure to him."

Albert G____, to all human view, seemed likely to realize his father's hope and anticipations. He had health, talent, and activity; was virtuous and amiable, and entered with spirit into the plans so sagaciously laid out for him. The Colonel was full of faith in the success of his schemes, and when his son completed with honor his career at the University, and was pronounced the most promising young man of his class, and as popular as he was promising, the fond father foresaw the brilliant future which he had predicted nigh at hand. Two years more must be given to complete the young man's complement of modern languages, however; and while sojourning near the college for the requisite facilities, he could read law with the LL. D.'s, and then he would be fully equipped for his career.

With the ardor which was natural to his youth and position as well as temperament, Albert G____ pursued his professional studies. But while thus engaged, an event occurred which taught both parent and son that there is a divine providence in human affairs, and that the most sagacious and consummate earthly plans are by no means secure from intervention or failure. This most unlooked for event was the sudden, but deep and solemn interest of Albert G____ in the subject of personal religion. It had never entered into his own or his father's schemes that he should become a Christian. But most unexpectedly to them both, the Spirit of God and the voice of conscience echoed through the chambers of his soul the declaration of God's word, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." —Ecc. 11:9.

When first the claims of his Maker were thus pressed upon him by the divine Word and Spirit, his heart was full of rebellion, and refused allegiance. But when he seriously considered the nature and justice of those claims, and saw what the Lord had done for him as Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and constant Benefactor, his heart smote him for

his impiety. He realized the guilt and baseness of living only for himself. He saw and mourned over his neglect and disobedience of his God and Saviour. Humbly seeking that forgiveness and reconciliation which the gospel proffers to every penitent sinner, he cast himself at Jesus' feet with the humble inquiry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

(continued in next lesson)



March 14, 1976

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Mark 14:12-26

Mark 14:12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

15 And he will show you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us.

16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eatest with me shall betray me.

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I?

20 And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dipbeth with me in the dish.

21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

22 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

26 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

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

Central Thought: The keeping of the Lord's Supper is a token of His love to remember Him by. The thought of Jesus' sufferings awakens a deep love in our hearts for Him.

Word Definition: **Unleavened bread** means without yeast or a leavened ingredient. **Furnished** means "spread" with carpets — so this word is often used. It might signify it was furnished with couches as they did not eat the Passover standing like their fathers, but reclining on couches. **Dippeth with me in the dish** means that it was an Eastern custom for two or more persons of the same caste to eat from the same dish. **Blessed** means giving thanks to the Father. **Brake** it meant to signify the wounding and piercing that the body of Jesus went through. The cup had in it the "fruit of the vine" which would be grape juice.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We do not have any firm record that Jesus did anything on Wednesday. Some commentators say that Jesus spent a quiet day in Bethany. We do have written in Matt. 26:1-5, "two days is the feast of the passover," which would be on Wednesday, that the chief priests, the scribes, etc., came to the palace of Caiaphas and consulted how they might take Jesus by subtlety and kill Him. Then in verses 14-16 we read about how Judas covenanted with the chief priests to deliver Jesus to them for 30 pieces of silver. Oh how terrible it is for people to let the love of money kill the love of Jesus in their hearts. Today we are finding it to be true.

Read Exodus 12:1-27 about the Passover. "It began on the first month, Nisan, and lasted only one day; but it was immediately followed by the days of the unleavened bread, which were seven, so that the whole lasted eight days, and all the eight days, are sometimes called the feast of the passover or the 'feast or days of unleavened bread.' It is the common

opinion that our Lord ate the Passover some hours before the Jews ate it; for the Jews, according to custom, ate theirs at the end of the fourteenth day, but Christ ate His the preceding evening, which was the beginning of the same sixth day, or Friday, The Jews begin their day at sun-setting, we at midnight. Thus Christ ate the Passover on the same day with the Jews, but not on the same hour. Christ kept this Passover the beginning of the fourteenth day, the precise day and hour in which the Jews had eaten their first Passover in Egypt. See Exod. 12:6-12. And in the same part of the same day in which the Jews had sacrificed their first paschal lamb, viz., 'between the two evenings,' about the ninth hour, or three o'clock, Jesus Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Mark 15:25-38. For it was at this hour that He yielded up His last breath; and then it was that, the sacrifice being completed, Jesus said, 'It is finished.' " —Clarke Com.

Now according to the above reading, we notice that it was Thursday that the disciples looked for a place to keep the Passover with their Lord. But it was precisely at three o'clock that He ate the Passover which was the Jewish beginning of Friday. We notice that in our gatherings we observe the Lord's Supper, which Jesus instituted at the Passover Supper, around three o'clock. Jesus also instituted the ordinance of feet washing at the same time. John 13:1-28.

"It is worthy of note what the Talmudists say, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem did not let out their houses to those who came to the annual feasts, but afforded all accommodations of this kind gratis. A man might, therefore, go and request the use of any room, on such an occasion, which was as yet unoccupied." —Clarke Com.

The Lord's Supper and Communion are the same. See I Cor. 10:16,17.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the difference between the Passover Supper and the Lord's Supper? 2. How did Jesus know that a man was bearing a pitcher and would meet the disciples at a certain time? 3. How did Jesus question the disciples about one of them betraying Him, and what had Judas previously done? 4. What does the bread in the Lord's Supper stand for? 5. What does the cup stand for? 6. Discuss the times of the day these things were done.

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The Lord's Supper is a memorial service. It is really a love feast. What a solemnity falls over our souls as we partake of the cup, and the bread. It has such a deep meaning and is a precious symbol of the death of our Lord and Saviour. Jesus said to His disciples, "Do this in remembrance of me." Remembrance means keeping in mind; recollection; memorial; token. Jesus knew that man often forgets and Jesus didn't want us to forget what He went through for our salvation. We should never forget the death that He died that we might be saved. As we drink of the cup, our minds go back to that time when our Lord was beaten by the Roman soldiers and the blood flowed out. Peter tells us, "By whose stripes ye are healed." Then when we think of the crown of thorns piercing His precious head and the blood flowing down His face, we are made to know that He was reviled, threatened, but "committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" all men "that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness." I Pet. 2:21-25. They took Him and nailed the nails through His precious hands and feet. The blood dripped down. They took a sword and pierced His side, and out flowed blood and water. Oh, the death He died just for you and me! He died, being innocent of any sin, so He could bear our sins and let us come before the Father and find favor with Him. He died that we might have everlasting life. Oh, how we ought to love Him. We should never forget.

As we partake of the bread, we think of His body. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." I Cor. 11:26. As we look at the loaf, it reminds us that "we, being many, are one bread, and one body." Many different grains of wheat were brought together and now they constitute one undivided loaf. So we — the Church of God — being many individual members, are all brought together into one body, and are all made one. Thus the unity of the church is clearly seen. In the blessed state of holy unity we gather around the "Lord's table" in sweet communion! When we break the loaf, we think of the breaking of the body of Jesus, which brought us salvation. As we partake of the symbols or emblems of the broken body and the shed blood of Christ, our hearts are filled with love and praise unto the Lord who died on the cross for us. —Sis. Marie Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Jesus spilled the life stream of His mortal body for our sake. Had He not gone to Calvary and taken upon Himself our blame, there would have been no hope for us. We were guilty, but there was nothing that we could do to save ourselves. To die for our own sins meant to sink into the second death never with any hope of coming back. But since Jesus had done no sin, He could die and not sink into outer darkness. Here is where the beauty and the wonder of salvation shines out to our hearts. It was God's love that planned and provided the redemption for the lost souls of men. God counted Christ's death and suffering to be sufficient ransom to satisfy His righteous demand for reconciliation. In Jesus shedding His blood, God was given glory and place to approach the souls of men with love and power so sure that nothing in this world can shake it. He gave His life for the chance to save us.

One day in an ordinance service, I was earnestly looking Heavenward for special inspiration to get something out of the service that I never had seen before. And in a quick instant, a wonderful revelation of glorious truth opened up to my heart. I saw how that Christ gave, sacrificed, and yielded His own body to bear the sins and sorrows of the world. He bore in His own body our transgressions and as a criminal He carried our guilt right up to the cross. If He did that for us, what can we do? We cannot pay or reward Jesus for doing these things. There is but one thing that we can do, and the words of a good old song illustrates that which we can do.

"Here, Lord, I give myself away,

'Tis all that I can do."

Yes, the best we can do for Him who died for us is give ourselves wholly to Him and partake of the sufferings that He bore. This is what partaking of the Lord's Supper means, typifying us eating His flesh and drinking His blood. We cannot repay, but we can give our all and receive His all. This is our reasonable service. —L. Busbee

THE PLANS OF A LIFETIME

(continued from last lesson)

The news of this great change in his son was gall and wormwood to the father of Albert. At first he wrote to the young man angrily and threateningly. But quickly remembering that opposition and persecution might only

render Albert more firm in his new course, he changed his plans. He even apologized for his violence and assuring his son that he only desired his real welfare, he kindly urged him to leave his studies for a while, and accompany him in a journey which he found necessary to his own health. Albert dutifully consented, and they made a long tour together. By previous arrangement of the parent, a round of festivities and gayeties awaited their return, all designed to lure the young man from his new and serious views. Albert saw his father's plans and motives, and although he had some months before attained his majority, yet he resolved to obey his parent in everything not clearly inconsistent with his duties as a child of God. He did not feel that religion forbade innocent mirth, or extinguished social affections, and he tried to show his father and friends that he did not love them less for loving Jesus more. As he was very modest and quiet with regard to the change which had come over him, the Colonel hoped it was not so decisive and radical as from his letters he had feared. So he suffered him in a few weeks to return to his studies. But when they separated for that purpose, the parting words of the father were most significant: "Remember, Albert, there is to be no more of your serious stuff. This pious turn is all nonsense. I shall never tolerate it. It would defeat *the plans of a lifetime*. So keep yourself clear. That's all."

Brief words and impious, but to the heart of a Christian child sorely trying. Yet on the ear of Albert G___, only the five words we have italicized fell with much weight. "The plans of a lifetime!" he repeated to himself as the boat slowly bore him down the river from his home. "The plans of a lifetime!" How the words thrilled and haunted through the wakeful hours of that and many a subsequent night. "Yes," said he at last to himself as he reached the conclusion to which truth and duty led him; "yes," he wrote to his ambitious but disappointed father, "the plans of a lifetime are and must be changed. I cannot live to myself, I cannot make earthly fame and worldly fortune the object of my life. In my soul I feel that God would have me preach the gospel of His grace. And in my heart there throbs so deep a pity for the deluded and benighted heathen, so ardent a desire to tell them the way to heaven, that I cannot but see in the unusual education which I have received, a providential and imperative call to give myself to the cause of foreign missions."

And this was the result which a divine hand had wrought out of all that subtle human scheming. The sound personal

health and strength which had been so carefully trained; the gifts and graces so sedulously cultivated; the foreign tongues so dexterously acquired, all eminently fitted their possessor for the Master's use, and he called them into his service. Truly, "the heart of man deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his step." —Sketches From Life," 1871

March 21, 1976

BE NOT TROUBLED

John 13:33,37,38; 14:1-3,15-17,26; 15:3,7; 16:31-33
33

John 13:33 Little Children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

15:3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

16:31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

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.

Memory Verse: If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. John 14:14

Central Thought: We need not be troubled because we have the Comforter to be with us and give us power over all the power of the devil.

Word Definition: **The Comforter**, which is the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit, would comfort them, cleanse them, and lead them. "Ye shall receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you." Acts 1:8.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper in the upper room, it is said that they sang a song and went out. But before they left the upper room they paused for prayer. Read John 17 which is truly the Lord's prayer. Clarke's commentary says, "They arose from the table, left the city and went toward the garden . . . on the road to which a part of . . . the discourse was delivered. It was now about midnight, and the moon was almost full, it being the 14th day of her age, about the time in which the Jewish passover was to be slain." So to us this would be late Thursday night, but according to the way the Jews counted their days, it was early Friday.

Jesus' heart was grieved as He knew that Judas had gone out into the night to commit treason against Him. The words of Jesus to Peter must have been a terrible blow. Peter felt in his heart that he would go all the way with the Lord, but on that fateful night, he denied Christ. Possibly all of the disciples were thinking that if Peter would not stand, what about them? But Jesus wanted them to look beyond this world and to the place that He had for them and not only them, but for all those who will "endure unto the end." He didn't want them to be troubled because they would have tribulation in this world, but Jesus wanted them to remember Him as their example. He overcame and they could overcome, too.

—M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. As Jesus walked along the road at midnight to the Garden of Gethsemane, what did He say to His disciples when they felt sad? 2. Did they understand what was going to happen to Him? 3. How did Jesus prepare a place in heaven for us? 4. What is the Comforter and what is the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and lives? 5. Since the disciples were clean, or saved, what did Jesus tell them to do?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Troubles press our souls at times and the way seems blocked but we helplessly look up to Jesus, the One who has trod the way before us, and we hear him say in such an affectionate way, "My little child, let not your heart be troubled. Believe in my words, rest upon my promises. Be faithful unto death and I will come and take you to that place prepared for you. Lean heavy upon the power of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. He will give you 'power over all the power' of the devil. 'In this world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.' Because I overcame you shall overcome." How comforting are the words of our Lord to us. Just so, Jesus looked upon His disciples that night as they were in such wonderment about all that they had heard and felt the burden that Jesus was carrying.

Jesus said, "If I go" to the cross and die, I will have prepared a place in glory for you. At the resurrection "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." What a glorious promise! You shall be with me forever. We need to keep our eyes upon Jesus and the place prepared for us. This brings such a calmness, such a peaceful assurance that all will be well with us. Oh, how precious is the truth of Jesus' words. They are a balm to heal the heartache. They are the words of eternal life. They are food to the soul and an anchor for us beyond the grave. If we will live for Him, let His words abide in us, be our constant source of instruction and the basis of our faith and confidence, we can ask and receive from Jesus the things that we have need of in this life. He has promised to never leave us nor forsake us.

What a blessing it is to have the Comforter. When we come to Jesus bowed down under the load of our volitional sins, which are the sins we voluntarily have committed and

those sins we have voluntarily committed by omitting to obey God's Word, we find forgiveness through asking for forgiveness with godly sorrow. But there is a sin principle within each of us that we can't ask forgiveness for. That is the sin that has passed upon all men through the fall of Adam. This has to be cleansed by the Holy Spirit. "Giving them the Holy Ghost . . . purifying their hearts by faith." Acts 15:8,9. They were purified of that sin principle. Oh, praise the Lord for the Holy Spirit! There are two definite works of grace upon the heart. They both are real experiences, and those who do not possess this experience should seek for it today. —Sis. Marie Miles

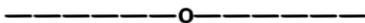
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I do not believe there is any other term used to describe the influence of God's love and grace upon the soul of man that is more fitting than that of *comfort*. The prophet Isaiah, when he was about to foretell the advent of the gospel day, spoke these words: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem. . . ." Isa. 40:1,2. Jesus said in His sermon on the mount, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." The troubled and distressed heart, on account of sin and sorrow for sin, greatly welcomes the loving favor of a Saviour and it is a great comfort to know that they can have mercy and forgiveness. Isaiah also prophesied of Christ in 61:1-3, when he spoke of Christ coming to "comfort all that mourn." Simeon in the temple was waiting for the consolation of Israel. The Holy Spirit had visited his heart with assurance that he would see the Christ before he left this world. Israel was in such a state of affairs that the hearts of the saints were greatly distressed, and they mourned for God's glory to be seen upon them again. Thus they looked for the Messiah to come and fulfill all things that needed to be done. This hope and expectation of the Messiah was a great consolation to their lives. And it was a great comfort to Simeon to be able to take the baby Jesus in his arms and know that the promised One had made His appearing even though it was in the form of an infant child.

Thus when Christ was about to be taken from His disciples for a little while, He sought to bring comfort to their hearts. He spoke many comforting words to them, and these words not only were for them, but they are a comfort to us today. He has gone into Heaven, and we see Him no more in

this world, but we see Him in the Spirit and because He lives, we live also.

Then Paul in his first letter to the Thessalonians, spoke of Christ dying for us that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. He spoke this to comfort us with the hope that is in Christ and what we can anticipate while going through the battles of life. Therefore, we can all be of good comfort, and can comfort one another in the Christian life. —L. Busbee



March 28, 1976

IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

Mark 14:32,33; Luke 22:41-44

Matt. 26:46,47,49,50,53-56

Mark 14:32 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he [Jesus] saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and very heavy;

Luke 22:41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strenghtening him.

44 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.

Matt. 26:46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

49 And forthwith he [Judas] came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; and kissed him.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

54 But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitude, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.

56 But all this was done, that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

Memory Verse: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Phil. 2:8

Central Thought: As we drink of the cup of Christ here in this world, may we know that His grace and power are sufficient to help us make heaven our home.

Word Definition: The cup "is frequently used in the Sacred Writings to point out sorrow, anguish, terror, and death. It seems to be an allusion to a very ancient method of punishing criminals. A cup of poison was put into their hands, and they were obliged to drink it . . . An allusion in Heb. 2:9, "He [Jesus] by the grace of God, tasted death for every man." And kissed him . . . proper meaning of the original word . . . means, he kissed him again and again — still pretending the most affectionate attachment to him (Jesus). Twelve legions of angels. A legion, at different times, contained different numbers; 4200, 5000, and frequently 6000 men; and from this saying, taking the latter number, which is the common rate, may we not safely believe that the angels of God amount to more than 72,000? The Garden of Gethsemane is a garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives. The name seems to be formed from (words meaning) . . . press . . . and oil; probably the place where the produce of the mount of Olives was prepared for use. The garden of the oil-press, or olive-press. . . ."

—Clarke Commentary

LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus was in great agony in the Garden of Gethsemane on Thursday night or the early hours of the Jewish Friday. Surely, the beginning of His redemption price was paid there in the Garden. "His sweat was like great drops of blood falling to the ground." Clarke's Commentary says, "How exquisite must this anguish have been, when it forced the very blood through the coats of the veins, and enlarged the pores in such a preternatural manner, as to cause them to empty it out in large

successive drops! . . . Bloody sweats are mentioned by many authors; but none was ever such as this — where a person in perfect health, (having never had any predisposing sickness to induce a debility of the system,) and in the full vigour of life, about thirty-three years of age, suddenly through mental pressure, without any fear of death, sweat great drops of blood; and these continued, during his wrestling with God, to fall to the ground.”

Jesus and His disciples went to the Garden. Jesus told the rest to wait for Him and He took Peter, James, and John and went out into the garden a little farther. He then left them and told them to wait for him while He went to pray. But they went to sleep. He came back and asked them if they couldn't wait for Him just one hour. He longed for human support but was even refused that. The third time He came back and found them asleep, He told them to arise because Judas and the multitudes had come for Him.

—M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. Whom did Jesus take with Him to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray? 2. How did He show that He longed for human understanding? 3. What agony did He suffer? 4. Is there a Garden of Gethsemane for us to go to and die to selfish interest, etc., before receiving the Holy Spirit? 5. How did Jesus receive the treachery of Judas? 6. How were the Scriptures fulfilled that day?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

There in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus fought the battle for our souls. Unless He was willing, He could not have died for our sins. Unless He completely yielded to the will of the Father, He could not have gone through all the agony that lay before Him. Yet in agony there, with the weight of our sins upon His soul, He wrestled with the flesh and with the devil. He suffered, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. What a great suffering it was. He was made sin that we might be free from sin. Sin has to be punished; therefore, the punishment of our sins was upon Him. He prayed, "Oh my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, then I will drink it so that fallen man might be redeemed back to you." But if it were possible that any other way could be worked out, Jesus wanted that to be done, yet He humbled himself and suffered in the flesh that the atonement would be

perfect. He was not forced to do this nor was He constrained to do so. He with His own free will did this or otherwise it would not have been a perfect atonement. Praise our loving and mighty Saviour! He had enough love for us that it constrained Him to die for us. He had power to lay down His life.

There is a cup for you and me to drink. There is a Gethsemane for you and me to enter. There we must decide if we will obey the Lord and bring the flesh under subjection to God or go on our own way. The Holy Spirit will never enter into a soul that is not fully surrendered to the Lord. There is a death that a soul must die. We must yield completely to God. God must be first and the supreme Ruler of our life. He will not take a second place. Children, father or mother, husband or wife, or anyone close to us cannot be first but God must be first and all in all. In coming to this place, we place ourselves into the hands of God. We are bought with a price and oh, what a price. We are not our own. We must therefore glorify God in our body and in our soul. I Cor. 6:19,20. We are then ready to drink of the cup. Jesus drank the whole cup but we only took one sup. That cup is sorrow, anguish and many persecutions that might touch our lives. But thank God, Jesus went before us. He is there to be with us and give us power to drink of the cup. By drinking of the cup and being faithful, we can then help others to find Jesus. Let us humble ourselves and walk with God daily with godly fear, knowing that someday we will soar away to be with our Lord and Saviour, our Redeemer and King forever. Praises be unto our God forever and forever! —Sis. Marie Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In the scene of Gethsemane, how many different kind of people were there?

First, there was Jesus. He was the central Figure. On Him were resting the sins of all the world. He was being betrayed. He was alone, without the comfort and help of man. He was looking to God for help and strength. Satan was warring against Him, and the flesh was crying for to be spared the death and suffering of the cross. Yet He prayed with determination to let God's will be done. He came forth victorious.

There were Peter, James, and John. They sought to help their weary Master, but sleep overtook them. They were weak in the flesh, and were unable to go the extent that their Lord

was going. But they were there, doing all that they could, but their flesh was weak.

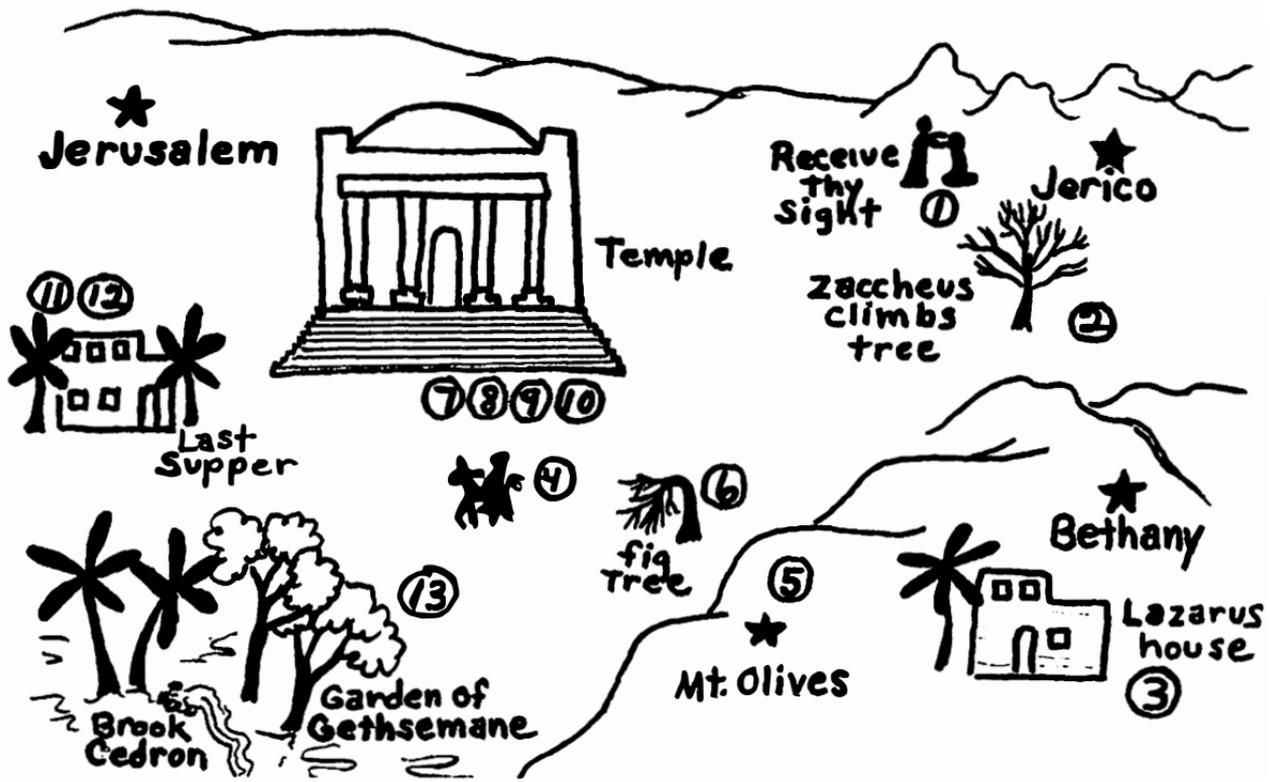
There were the angels, twelve legions strong, hovering near. One appeared to Christ and strengthened Him. And the Father above was looking down. He was God, and it was His Son who was going through this great battle for the souls of men. He had a crown of glory to place on His Head instead of the crown of thorns that man was going to put on Him. If His Son would be true and obey His will, He was going to give Him a Name above every Name. He was going to set His Son at His own right Hand in the Heavenly places. Yes, the Heavenly Father was there, too.

Behold, a multitude comes being led by a man. Yes, there is Judas. What about him? What is he doing here? See him approach the Master with his kiss of betrayal. What are those thirty pieces of silver going to mean to him after this? They will be used to buy his burying ground. Sad for the Master to suffer, but ten-thousand times sadder for this man who coveted the wealth of a few pieces of silver to sell his soul to Satan.

Look at the multitude. Here is the thoughtless crowd, thirsty for the blood of an innocent man. Moved and inspired by the hatred of the chief priests who used their influence to accomplish their own murderous designs, the crowd has come.

There is one more spectator to this scene. Who may this be? It is you, my dear friend. On whose side will you be? Can you go even beyond the disciples? Can you enter into Christ's sufferings and live for Him in this time world? Even though He is seated in glory, He welcomes you to His embrace and will reward your labors for Him.

—L. Busbee



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