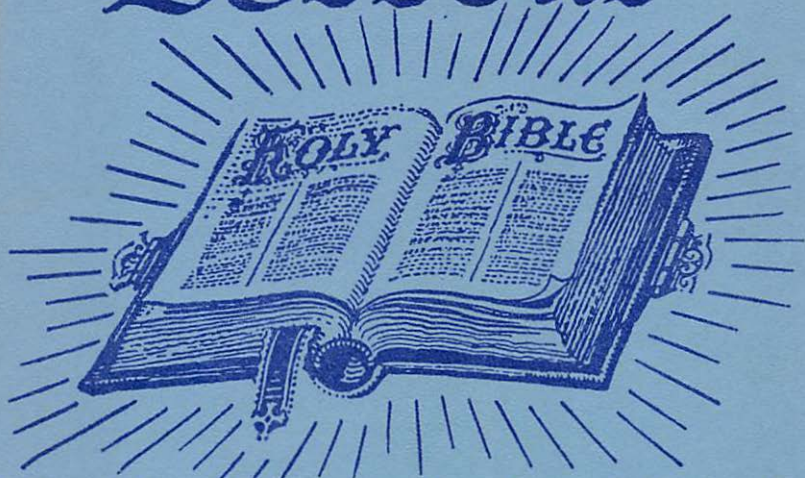


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# Bible Lessons



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

**ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE**

Vol. 9, No. 1  
Jan., Feb., March  
1977

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# Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

Volume 9

Jan., Feb., March, 1977

No. 1

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Jesus Christ and His Church  
Edited by Mrs. Marie Miles, and other co-workers.**

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## **Theme For First Quarter, 1977**

Our lessons for this quarter will cover the Gospel truths from Genesis that are so prevalently brought out in the New Testament. Many fundamental, vital doctrines of the plan of salvation have their root here in these precious, sacred records. They are authentic, and should be accounted so with all our hearts. The initial plan and purpose of God revealed in His creative acts, and the divine laws that He instituted are important for us to know and understand. Mankind is in dire need of comprehending the character and image of God, what sin and transgression is, the essence and nature of faith, and the wrath and displeasure of God against sin and wrong, as well as the goodness and mercy of God. As we study this series of lessons from the Bible, pay particular attention to the sayings in the Old Testament writings that are quoted and referred to in the New Testament, and how they are applied. This is an important part of the study. The application of the spoken and written word of the prophets and holy men of old, by the Spirit-inspired men of the dispensation of grace, is the true pattern of the application of the Word of God. This is an informative and interesting as well as an edifying and profitable study. May God grant to each Bible student enlightenment and holy inspiration as we explore this part of the Bible. —L. Busbee

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**January 2, 1977**

### **THE ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN**

Genesis 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

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

2:7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

15 And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Eccl. 7:29b God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

Psa. 8:4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.

**Memory Verse:** According as He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Ephesians 1:4.

**Central Thought:** Man is the workmanship of God, created for the purpose of reflecting the glory and image (likeness) of God in his life. He was made from the earth, but was imparted spiritual life and nature by the Spirit of God. He was given the dominion of the earth and all things therein. He was created pure, holy, wise, and righteous. He was everything that God wanted him to be. Such a state of happiness and security was to exist as long as man was obedient to the commandment of his Creator.

**Word Definitions:** *Subdue* means "to conquer, subjugate, keep under, bring into subjection." *Replenish* means "to fill and possess wholly." "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." This was the charge and command of God along with His blessing. It is worthy to note sin entered into the heart of man, causing him to lose proper dominion and lordship of the earth. Instead of subduing the earth, the earth subdued him and brought him into bondage to its lusts and desires. Such is the fallen state of man, but thank God, a Saviour has come to deliver us from this bondage of corruption and give us power to reign once more.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

Some of the thoughts in our lesson today have been mentioned in last quarter's lessons. We desire to focus our

study principally at this time on the character, position, responsibility, and nature of man in his original, intended state. All of these things were either ruined, destroyed, defiled, or lost when man gave consent to obey the voice of the tempter, instead of remembering the Word of God. Think of the high intelligence man possessed, enabling him to give names to all the creatures of the earth, even naming the helpmeet whom God gave to him! He had spiritual comprehension and clear understanding of the will and purpose of God. He was the leader, the lord and king of the realm of nature, and held control of his own desires as well. He had work (though not hard and strenuous) to do and a place to keep. His nature was in the likeness of God who formed him and gave him life. Think of these things. Ponder them carefully with fixed meditation. Just what kind of man was this first man? He was able to commune clearly and intelligently with God. Oh, what a beautiful and inspiring scene! Can you not picture them in the beautiful garden of Eden surrounded with sunlight and the beauties of nature with no fear, care, nor pain? Their hearts did not have any greed, selfishness, pride, vanity, hatred, strife, jealousy, or grief. All was love, peace, harmony, joy, courage, comfort, and every good thing imaginable. Behold their blessed state, and be assured that salvation is a perfect plan and can restore our hearts to this same bliss and purity.

—L. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Man was created in the likeness and image of God. Name some of the attributes of God that were reproduced in created man.
2. Name the responsibilities that God gave to man.
3. What makes us know that man was created a free moral agent with the power of choice?
4. Why did God create man with the power of choice? Why did He not make man to automatically serve and obey Him?
5. Why were the man and his wife not ashamed of being naked?
6. What was the man given the privilege to do?
7. What was he commanded NOT to do?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

It would be profitable for us to give much thought and study to the position of man in his primary state and relationship with God. God was the Creator and He created man for His pleasure. He did not create man to play around with. His relationship with

man was to be one of earnestness, purity, and truth. He created man with an intelligent mind and a rational soul and being. He gave man a place to fill, something to employ and accomplish. He also bestowed upon man a society, an association with a like being, yet different enough to be enjoyable and interesting. It would seem that He was making man to be whole in himself, but in reality He was not. He designed man to commune and have fellowship with Him. In order for one to enjoy fellowship with another, man must be a being with a power of choice, with the ability to think and do, that is, to be a separate individual. Ponder this carefully. Much vital truth lies here. Let me present to you two separate courses of action that God could have taken in His creation of man. (1) Create man and give him a few pleasures and joys, but be constantly with him to remind him of his duty to God and watch and restrain him in any move toward wrong. Keep communing with him every waking moment, and not allow his heart to feel the fellowship and joy of any other source. Let him feel the presence of God all of the time. Be intimate with him and lord over him in every move he makes. Make him to know that he is the property of God. Or (2) Provide a bounteous habitation and much space to live and enjoy life. Let there be sunlight and beauty and many various creatures and plants to care for and behold. Provide him with plenty of good wholesome food to eat and enjoy. Make him a helpmeet, someone to love and cheer his heart, someone to be close to and live with. Then in the midst of these blessings, reveal God to him in a gracious and loving manner. Make him to realize that God is the sole Provider and Creator of all these blessings. Make him to know that God created him. Commune with him of God's love, God's will, God's holy purpose. Make clear to him promised blessings of continual life and joy, and what the conditions are. Show him the bounds God wants him to keep within. Make clear to him what he must leave alone. Visit him often enough to provoke joy and love, causing him to look for and welcome the presence of God. Make him to know that God is counting on him to be faithful, and warn him of the consequences of disobedience.

Which of these two courses of action would you say God took in His creation of man? —L. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

This is a great question that the Psalmist asked, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" The Lord brought to my mind those Scriptures in Isa., chapter 43. The Lord said, "that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not, for I

have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine . . . thou wast precious in my sight . . . and I have loved thee . . . I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. . . . Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and besides me there is no saviour." (Verses 1,4,7,10,11.) How precious are these words! God created man for His glory and man is precious in His sight, yet it grieved Him when man sinned. God provided a way for man's deliverance from sin and now He wants man to be a witness for Him to others, that they may know God loves them and will save them from sin.

We notice that God gave man some responsibility in the garden to "dress it and keep it." Adam, in his original state was a busy man. He accepted responsibility. Today God is calling for those who will accept responsibility. We think of Matthew, whom Jesus called to be a disciple. He was busy collecting taxes. Peter, James, and John were busy fishing. Elijah called Elisha from his plowing. Paul, who was called Saul, was busy gathering up all those he thought were trying to destroy God's law, which had been given to Moses, and bringing them to trial. He was doing this with sincerity and God understood. When He got Paul started in the right direction Paul was just as bold and determined to face danger for the sake of Jesus. God is calling for workers and witnesses who will be workers for Him. Lazy people will never make it into heaven. God wants those who have a testimony for the Lord to be workers for Him.

—Sis. Marie Miles

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January 9, 1977

## SATAN, THE DECEIVER

John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

I John 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

I John 5:17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

Eph. 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

I Pet. 5:6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

9 Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

II Cor. 11:13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

Rev. 16:14 For they [read Rev. 16:13] are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

**Memory Verse:** 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. Matthew 25:41.

**Central Thought:** Satan, or the devil, has been from the beginning; he never did abide in truth. He is a deceiver and works through his agents to discourage God's children and destroy the work of God in the world.

**Word Definition:** *Satan* is a Hebrew word, and signifies an "adversary, an enemy and accuser." Satan is also called the devil in the Scriptures: "that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan." Rev. 20:2. Our Saviour portrays Satan as a monarch who has other sub-ordinate devils obedient to him. Beelzebub is, as it were, their king. (Matthew 12:26).



## LESSON BACKGROUND

We studied in the first lessons of last quarter about the beginning. We established the fact that God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit were in the beginning. Now we will establish the fact, by the Bible, that Satan or the devil was in the beginning also. Jesus declared without reservations that "the devil sinneth from the beginning." To go beyond the beginning would be to go beyond what Jesus tells us. False teachers have taken verses out of context and tried to teach that the devil was once in heaven and was kicked out, but this is not true. Heaven is and always will be a holy place. Evil has never, nor ever will, enter there. Bro. Ostis Wilson explains this subject in full, in a booklet entitled, *Was the Devil Ever in Heaven?* (The booklet may be ordered from this office.) It would do you good to read and study its contents. One person commented, after reading this booklet, "Why was I ever so dumb to accept the false teaching that the devil was ever in heaven?" If the devil had been there, would it be safe for us to go there? "Heaven is a holy place, Filled with glory and with grace; Sin can never enter there; All within its gates are pure, From defilement kept secure, Sin can never enter there . . . So if at the judgment bar, Sinful spots your soul shall mar, *You* can never enter there."

—M. Miles

### QUESTIONS:

1. When does the Bible tell us that the devil first existed?
2. What kind of a spirit is the devil?
3. What was the purpose of the Son of God in coming to this world, taking on the form of human flesh?
4. How can we overcome the devil?
5. Does the devil perform miracles?
6. What will happen to the devil in the end?

### ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

It is a well known fact, there is an opposer to all righteousness. We are not going to try proving there is a devil. The thing that we need to understand is how he works, so we can be on our guard to resist him. One person said they thought it would not hurt to drink a can of beer and use just a little marijuana. That person did not know or disregarded the fact, that the devil is not satisfied for a person to stop there. This individual said they soon were deep under the influence of drugs and found themselves in jail, their life ruined by the loss of health and loved ones. They listened to the call of God and

were soon delivered. They quit it all instantly. You don't just tamper with it, but you must stop all at once and fight your way back, by God's help, to your normal self again. It is hard to understand why others don't take warning from the experiences they see around them. Again we have to point our finger at the devil, who is a deceiver. He tells each person that he would never get in that condition, and he listens until it is too late.

The word *beginning* is used in the Bible for both God and the devil in relation to time. We cannot comprehend eternity, but God's plan for mankind existed before the beginning of time.

I would like to quote what Bro. C. E. Orr wrote: "Sin is a principle. Righteousness is a principle. We hold that no holy being could create or generate a sin principle any more than an unholy being could create a righteous principle. For holy angels to sin, a sin principle must have existed and they received it in their nature by consent or in some manner. The devil and angels did not create sin, for God created all that has been created. God did not create sin. He did not create goodness. Goodness is an uncreated and eternal principle. If it were a created principle, then God created it, for He alone is Creator. A holy being could not create sin and retain his holiness; therefore, God did not create sin. Devils could not create it; therefore, sin is uncreated. God saw that His creation was good, but we do not understand that sin was His creation."

Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the devil so he encouraged; God will give us power over all the power of the devil and we can be "more than conquerors" through Christ.

—M. Miles

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Here is some food for thought. Much is said about where the devil came from. Some declare that he (the devil, Satan) was in heaven at one time, and he waged a war with God and the angels. They affirm that the Scriptures teach that he was a loser of that war and was cast out of heaven down to the earth. There are some that teach that God created the devil for the specific purpose of an opposing force. There is also the theory that Satan always was, just as God always did exist. Did it ever occur to you that an effort to ascertain the real origin of Satan is a foolish and unprofitable endeavor? Right while your heart and mind are engaged in this vain pursuit, Satan may be preying upon your life, and unconsciously to you, be working great spiritual havoc. You are not capable of seeing this, because you

are lost in your thoughts about where he came from. Look at our lesson, and bear in mind that it is not a study of where he came from, but rather it is a study on the danger and threat of damage that he has wielded against mankind, and he is yet seeking whom he may devour. Let us remember this: Satan is not going to come out in the open and say, "I'm the devil, you had better watch out!" He is smarter than that. Suppose you would suddenly one day see a lion running loose in your neighborhood. What would you do? Would it be a wise and profitable course for you to launch an investigation concerning where the beast came from before warning others and taking precautions for your own safety? Would you get into an argument with your neighbors on where he came from? Of course not! It is the same with the devil. The theory of where the devil came from is not what we need to know. What we need to know is how to be able to overcome him and free ourselves from his evil grasp. Many people speak freely of the devil, and are at the same time under his influence. We had better take heed. I was told about a person riding a city bus in one of the large cities of our land. A man came through the bus loudly warning the people of a pick-pocket thief. It came out that he, himself was the pick-pocket thief and was picking the pockets of the unsuspecting people while he was warning them. Oh, how sly and tricky the devil is! Surely we need to be on our guard, and look diligently to Christ for victory and preservation from Satan.

—L. Busbee

### **PROTECTED BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS**

*A True Story by Joseph Payne, A Missionary to Mongolia*

Throughout the long winter months Gashatay, it seemed, had led a charmed life. For many miles around, villages had been sacked, looted, and refugees had been continually pouring into the mission station. Spring came and with it, the news that a fresh and much larger band of brigands than had hitherto been seen had entered the district. They were the "Heh Ma Tui" (Black Horse Brigade), exceptionally well equipped and numbering over 2,000 strong.

One night, while everyone slept and silence reigned, I was suddenly awakened out of my sleep by a blood-curdling yell. It came from my wife who was fast asleep. Following the scream, still fast asleep, and in a perfectly steady voice, she cried out triumphantly, "Protected by the Blood of Jesus, protected by the Blood of Jesus!" She kept crying this until I awakened her.

She was in a state of great excitement and fear. She had been dreaming, and this is what she had dreamed:

Stretched before her vision lay the vast open plain of Mongolia. Nestling in its little hollow, lay the village of Gashatay, and the mission buildings. Presently, gathering from the four parts of the earth, multitudes of shadowy figures appeared. They were unclean spirits being vomited from the pit of hell. There were legions of them and they overpowered everything in their pathway as they swept over the countryside. No one and nothing was spared.

Finally they reached Gashatay, and then came pouring over the hill and through the mission gates. The dreamer then saw two of the figures break away from the rest of the company and enter our little two-roomed, brick house. They entered the first room and were about to enter the second when my wife and I with all the strength of our lungs cried out, "Protected by the Blood of Jesus, protected by the Blood of Jesus!" (It was this cry which had awakened me out of my sleep.) Slowly, and sneering horribly as they realized they were being cheated of their prey, the two evil spirits in her dream slunk backwards. The power of the precious Name was compelling them to yield ground, until finally, after one last supreme but fruitless effort to advance, they disappeared. We were safe. What could the dream mean?

About nine o'clock that same morning, just after prayers, one of the brethren came running over to me, crying excitedly, "Mu-shih, come quickly, bandits are coming!" Following after Brother Pai, I raced up the little hill, at the top of which is the small mission cemetery, and looked in the direction indicated. Far over in the west I saw great rolling clouds of dust which told us that a veritable army was on its way. Intermittently groups of horsemen broke through the dust clouds and we saw them galloping madly in the direction of Gashatay. In between the horsemen and Gashatay, the whole countryside was seething with the fleeing peasants. Even as we watched, the villages immediately below us were being whipped up into a state of great excitement as they realized that within an hour the plundering horde would be upon them. Already they had reached and were sacking "Red Slipper Valley."

Returning to my wife as composedly as possible, I explained to her what was happening. We were expecting our first baby any day, and our nearest medical help was nearly four day's journey away, so anxiety was tearing at our hearts. By now the refugees were streaming past us in an ever-

growing number. Sweating and cursing men, their faces set with determination and drawn in anxiety, were furiously lashing their beasts into greater effort. Springless carts drawn by oxen, bearing terror-stricken women with their screaming children, rumbled clumsily by on their wooden wheels. Small boys did their part and struggled gamely along with their belongings tied up in a dirty blue cloth and slung over their shoulders. Lastly, bringing up a pathetic rear, came poor women, too poor to own carts or animals, shouting at their screaming children to hurry faster, hobbling painfully by on their crippled bound feet. Some would stumble and fall, while scores of them too discouraged and weary to go farther, turned into our mission gates and implored us to help them.

Our own friends pleaded with us to join the stream of runaways and try to make a get-a-way while there was still opportunity, for they knew that we would be considered a rare prize should we fall into the hands of the bandits. We declined, however, as we felt in this matter we must trust the Lord. The last refugee had passed, and momentarily we were expecting the blow to fall, but for some reason it failed to come. Except for some sporadic shooting in the distance, all was quiet.

We were at a loss to understand it, when suddenly, from out of the earth it seemed, away on the ridge of the distant foothills by which Gashatay is surrounded, a column of horsemen appeared. Silhouetted against the skyline, they were an inspiring sight as they galloped along the crest of the hills. Others appeared and soon the air was again filled with the sound of barking rifles and the rat-a-tat of machine guns. Presently some of the refugees came straggling back, bearing with them one or two wounded. Even before we were told we knew what had happened; we were surrounded! A nauseating feeling of utter helplessness came over me—and not over me only, but over all, as we realized that it was only a matter of an hour or two before our fate was sealed. There was not a vestige of hope left that we would be delivered because there was no company of soldiers within eighty miles large enough to rescue us.

(to be continued)

**January 16, 1977**

**THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF SIN**

**Gen. 3:1** Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

**2** And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

**3** But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

**4** And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

**5** For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

**6** And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

**7** And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

**8** And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

**James 1:14** But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

**15** Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

**Romans 14:23b** Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

**Psalms 51:5** Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

**1 John 2:15** Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in Him.

**16** For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

**17** And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

**Memory Verse:** Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people. Proverbs 14:34.

**Central Thought:** Through the avenue of the appetite of the flesh, and of the attractiveness of the forbidden fruit to the eye, and through the allurements to be wise, the adversary succeeded in persuading mother Eve to transgress the known commandment of God. This brought sin into the world. Christ has come to save us from our sins, but we can still be tempted of the devil and will go into sin if we yield. Satan yet tempts us through the avenue of these three points just as he did Eve.

**Word Definitions:** *Sin:* "to err or miss the mark" (Greek). *Drawn away of his own lust, and enticed:* It is evident that this phrase refers to the first stage of temptation, a stage that all of us come in contact with. We will never get beyond the reach of the enemy and his temptations while we tarry in this present world. Through the desires of the flesh we can be enticed to do that which would be wrong. The word *lust* means "very strong desire." Every person has desires. Sin comes when these desires are not controlled by the will of God. The grace of God is sufficient to help us ward off every approach of the enemy along these lines. But when the lust (or desire) hath conceived (taken control or been given over to) it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

It is very important for us to realize that God made man a free moral agent with the power of choice. True love is not satisfied with forced or involuntary service. It must be our willing choice and desire to love and serve the Lord, or He is not satisfied. For it to be a free will, there must be occasion and opportunity to refuse and to choose something else. Thus man was not made a machine, but a being capable of love and choice, a rational, and a living individual. This is the setting for God's relationship with man. He made man this way. He will not force, He will not drive. He is content only with willing obedience. Therefore God made it possible for man to be tempted, and allowed him to be tempted through the bodily and mental appetites that He created him with. Let us not forget this. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." I Cor. 10:12. Let us remember that we have an adversary to contend with. Sin can and will be made very attractive. We must be on our guard. Some how the devil caught Eve off guard and deceived her. Do not think that Satan will pass by an opportunity to deceive us.

We have a Saviour who overcame Satan and He will be with us. The three points of Eve's temptation correspond with the three elements of the world that John mentioned. The lust of the flesh—the tree was good for food; the lust of the eyes—it was pleasant to the eyes; and the pride of life—a tree desired to make one wise. These three points of temptation correspond with the three points in which Satan tempted Jesus. Christ overcame in all three of these points. He is able to succor us when we are tempted if we will look earnestly by faith to Him.

—L. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Satan mean in the first question that he asked Eve?
2. What were the three points that made the tree tempting to Eve?
3. Do we have to watch these three points today?
4. What was there about yielding to Satan that caused them to be made aware of their nakedness?
5. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Why?
6. What are the things that are in the world that are not of the Father?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

We need to be aware of what sin is. Sin is the transgression of the law. All unrighteousness in sin (I John 3:4; 5:17). "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17. Adam and Eve knew what God wanted them to do. They were aware of the bounds that God had given to them. The tempter came along and got their minds running in different channels. Sin was made to look inviting and attractive. It was enticing. Forgetting what God had said, they plunged headlong into the awful pit that we see around us in the world today. Sin is progressive. There is no let up, no contentment. Farther and farther Satan drives the soul down the road of sin. Sin ruins the character and debases the mind. It warps the attitudes and affections and blinds the heart to the realities of heavenly and pure issues. Sin came into the world as a tiny seed; just one transgression, just one act of disobedience. That is all it took to cut man loose from the blessing and favor of his Maker. It destroyed immediately, that pure and innocent charm that enwrapped his soul. It made him feel and sense the need of clothing and a covering. He had never thought about it before. The guilt of sin and condemnation was upon him now. People today need to realize that sin will still have the same effects upon the character of whoever yields to it. Christ came to save



us from sin and break its awful binding power. Thank God for salvation. Sin must not be allowed, condoned, nor petted. It must be repented of, forsaken, and put under the blood.

Through the avenue of the desires of the flesh we are tempted to sin. Perhaps we unintentionally harm or destroy another's property. We can be tempted to lie or say nothing about it. We are tempted to be proud when someone else praises us for doing something. When someone does us injury we may be tempted to feel ill toward them. These temptations must be resisted steadfastly. The flesh may crave things that it ought not to have. We must beware of covetousness. Christ went through all of these temptations for us, and is interceding for us at the right hand of God. He will keep us, if we steadfastly yield to His will and choose His way. We must be on our guard.

—L. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

If a person saw a ten dollar bill lying on a table, the devil would work this way according to the Scriptures in James 1:14,15. The devil would say to you that no one would see you, so you ought to take it. That would be a temptation. Now the word *lust* means "excessive desire." The devil would put a great desire in your mind to have that ten dollar bill. *Entice* means to "attract by offering a hope for reward or pleasure." The devil would tell you that you could buy a certain thing you have been wanting so much, and you would enjoy having it. Now the next part of the Scripture says, "when lust hath conceived." *Conceive* means "to form in the mind." When that excessive desire (lust) comes to the point you have made the decision in your mind to take the ten dollar bill to buy the item you have wanted, then lust has conceived and brings forth sin. When you do take it the sin has been committed and that brings forth death. You have sinned and have been separated from God.

The way back is to confess your sin to God and with godly sorrow, ask for forgiveness, take the ten dollar bill back to the person you stole it from and ask their forgiveness. Then you are clear before God.

—M. Miles

### PROTECTED BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS

(continued from last lesson)

My wife and I solemnly turned back into our little home. Conflicting thoughts filled our minds and anxiety clutched at our hearts for the little one that was to be born to us in the near

future. Tales of bandit cruelty were carried to us, increasing our alarm and anxiety. The suffering of those who had been fastened to rafters and branded with hot shovels, of those who had fingers crushed under stones, lips and noses slit with knives, of others who had been thrown alive down wells, came very near to us, and caused distress and terror.

Gunfire was coming perilously near now. I looked out of the window and there on the southern foothills I saw a company of bandits taking up formation. Even as I watched them they came charging down the hillside, riding like demons. Bullets were whistling in all directions as my wife and I again sought the Lord in prayer. We asked for grace to die—if that were to be our lot—to die as Christians. Then we asked for a word of comfort, and to our hearts the Lord spoke and gave us these words: To my wife the promise given was, "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil." And to me, "No weapon formed against thee shall prosper." In a wonderful way we felt strengthened and a sweet assurance filled our hearts. God was with us, and something of that calmness and peace which the martyrs must have experienced flooded our souls. "Oh, the peace that Jesus gives!"

Rising from our knees, we got a glimpse through the window of bandits galloping round and round the compound firing on us as they passed. Finally, when they realized that their shooting was not returned, they came charging into the compound. The hour had come. Deliverance or martyrdom? What was it to be? "Be brave, dear, it will not be long now." What followed in the next few moments is a hazy jumble in my mind, but I remember my wife and I together going out into the compound to meet the bandits; then a rifle being pushed towards us, a curse and a command to get back into the house under threat of death, and my wife scolding our would-be murderer for walking on the garden! Strange what things we do in a crisis! We returned to the sanctuary of our rooms as ordered and waited.

We had not long to wait, for soon the door was rudely kicked open and in strode two bandits. They had been detailed off from the main group to loot and bring us forth, probably for execution. Here was an outstanding thing: it was exactly as my wife had seen in her dream. For the second time within a few hours she was looking upon the same picture. Up till now it seemed as if the devil had had everything his own way, but now we began to see the hand of the Lord. Approximately ninety-five per cent of the population of Mongolia is unable to

read or write, but God in His goodness saw to it that one of these men who came to us was one of the five per cent who could read. Furthermore, somewhere he had heard the glad message of God's love, for he appeared to be acquainted with the Gospel. On our walls he had seen Scripture portions printed in Chinese.

What happened next was overpowering. Striding across the room, this bandit, clothed still in his heavy winter furs (though it was May 4th), perspiration coursing down his face in tiny rivulets, with his rifle held ready, confronted me and stared into my eyes with a peculiar expression. I wonder what thoughts passed through that man's mind? What past experiences had he had? Who knows but that some isolated, lonely missionary's labor was now bearing fruit!

"Is this a Jesus house?"

"It is."

"Are you a Jesus man?"

"I am."

His hand was placed on my shoulder and in tenderness he said, "Do not be afraid, I will see that you are not molested. I will protect you, for you are good people. You preach the way of righteousness." Then as suddenly as he had come, he was away. He had come to loot, to rob, to plunder and to kill. He became our protector. He had come to drag us to our death. He became our comfort and consolation instead. Oh, wonderful, wonderful are the ways of our God! Who can fathom His love? Of all that murderous horde there probably was only one who could help us and God sent that one!

All that morning, throughout the afternoon, and well into early evening, the terrible work went on. Young men were murdered in cold blood; women were ravished; old people were thrown alive down the wells. Homesteads and farms were looted and put to the torch. Backwards and forwards raged that horde. What some had missed, others found, so that none escaped. In the midst of all this sorrow, destruction and carnage the "Jesus House" stood unscathed. It was a "city of refuge," for all that sought its shelter that bloody day. "Protected by the Blood of Jesus, protected by the Blood of Jesus!" "When I see the Blood I will pass over you."

Four weeks afterwards a beautiful little girl was born to us.

There is a remarkable sequel to this story, without which it would not be complete. About six weeks after these terrible, but wonderful happenings I received a letter from a friend of ours in London. The writer had had a dream—no; more than a

dream—it was a visitation. She had been awakened out of her sleep by someone calling her to get up and pray. She opened her eyes and realized the Lord was speaking to her. "Get up and pray." "But, Lord," our friend replied, "for whom shall I pray?"

The answer came, and it seemed as if it were an audible voice in her room, "Pray for the Paynes; they are in danger." Prayer was made on our behalf until assurance was received that all was well.

The letter asked whether, on this day, about a certain time, we were in danger or anything untoward happened. Yes, it was the very day!

As a result of this miraculous deliverance, twenty-two Chinese and Mongols followed the Lord through the water of baptism.

—From "I Beheld the Mountains"

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January 23, 1977

## RESULTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

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

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

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

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

13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

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

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

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

Luke 10:17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

**Memory Verse:** Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Romans 5:12.

**Central Thought:** Sin separates a person from God. God pronounced judgment upon Adam and Eve but also gave a promise of redemption.

**Word Definition:** *Enmity* means "hostility or warfare." *Bruise* means "crush or break."

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In last Sunday's lesson we studied about the temptation of Adam and Eve by the devil who talked through the beast, and their yielding to that temptation. Not only did they lose a covering for their souls but also for their bodies. When sin entered they knew they were naked, and they hid themselves from God. They were on their downward road with their new master, the devil.

Today God is calling to those who have sinned, "Where art thou?" Death is sure for every person, but what then? The soul leaves the body, but where does it go? The Bible gives us the answer. There are only two places. One is a place prepared for those who are faithful to God's ways, and the other is a place

prepared for the devil and his angels and all who are his servants. Where are you today? What road are you on? We can be on the road to heaven by accepting Jesus as our Saviour, who broke the power of sin and set mankind free from the clutches of Satan. Satan deceived and brought man under bondage to him in the beginning. —M. Miles

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Who was blamed for the sin that was committed?
2. Do people today want to shift their responsibility upon others?
3. Did God give a promise of a Saviour in verse 15?
4. Can Satan today touch the head of the child of God and break his contact with God?
5. How did Satan bruise the "heel" of Christ and how does he bruise the heel of the child of God today?
6. How was the ground cursed because of sin?
7. What punishment was given to Eve and what was to befall Adam and Eve at the end of their life?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

What a sad plight Adam and Eve plunged the whole human race into. The punishment was great. They were separated from God, the ground was cursed, and thorns and thistles grew abundantly. By the sweat of their face and sorrow they would make a living. Eve would bring forth children, and her sorrow would be multiplied. They came from the dust and to dust would they return. Spiritual and physical death passed upon them and their posterity.

Let us notice the 15th verse. Here God is talking to the devil who talked through the beast. God told the devil that He would put enmity between him and the seed of the woman. Who was the seed of the woman? That was Christ, who was born of the virgin Mary. In Luke 1:31-35, we read how the angel told Mary that she would have a child and she should call his name Jesus. She did not understand this because she was a virgin. The angel told her that "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and . . . that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." So God was the Father and Mary the mother of Jesus Christ.

The seed of Satan are those who have yielded themselves unto him and are his servants. Jesus said to some that opposed Him, "ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." John 8:44. So we note that the warfare would be between the seed of Satan and his servants and the seed of the

woman, or Jesus Christ and His followers. Now who will conquer? God said that "her seed, it shall bruise thy head." Jesus Christ would crush or break the power of Satan over mankind and they would be able to become sons of God.

Down through the ages before Christ came, those who were full of sincerity and kept the laws of Moses, were accepted of God by their continual offering of sacrifices, yet they could not live without sin. They had to come again and again to offer sacrifices. When Jesus came to "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." John 1:12. When the disciples were sent out, the seventy came back and rejoiced because "even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." Luke 10:17-19. Praise God, Jesus Christ had conquered the enemy! Satan had fallen from the lofty seat in the hearts of men and those who desired could believe on Christ. The power of the devil had been broken by Christ, and man again could come into full relationship with God. But God added that "thou shalt bruise his heel." God knew that Satan would be able to bruise or touch the child of God through persecutions, but he never could again touch His head. They could be overcomers through Christ. Jesus was bruised by Satan by dying on the cross for our sins. "He was bruised for our iniquities." Isa. 53:5. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." James 1:12.

#### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT** —Sis. Marie Miles

Think of the sorrow, trouble, disease, heartache, grief, anxiety, distress, suffering, shame, dishonor, strife, confusion, evil, pride, and vanity that have developed in our world resulting from one offense! Yes, it is true. One transgression opened the door for a world of separation from God. Sin has passed upon all men. Sin will be a person's ruin if repentance and faith are not exercised in the name of Christ. Look what sin will do to an individual. Picture before you a child so pure and sweet, so humble and meek, so gentle and innocent. This is before sin has had a chance to do its dirty work. Let a few years slip by and a change takes place. The purity and innocence and sweetness are gone. They are replaced by a visage of pride and vanity. This is the work and ruin of sin. Oh, if men and women would but behold sin in its awful and blighting state! If they could but behold the true danger that lies in trifling with God! But Satan sees to it that their eyes become blinded to the reproofs of the Word of God. Thus the multitudes are launched forth on an

ocean of sin, caught in the tide of the fear of man that brings a snare. They are caught in a terrible trap, and the devil makes it seem a hopeless situation. But it is not a hopeless situation. Just as sure as man fell into sin, God has sent forth One to be Saviour and Friend of sinners. Jesus can and will save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. And He invites everyone to come to Him.

—L. Busbee



January 30, 1977

### GOD CLOTHED THEM

Gen. 3:21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

I Tim. 2:9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

I Pet. 3:3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

Deut. 22:5 The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.

Isa. 3:18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon,

19 The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers,

21 The rings, and nose jewels. . . .

I Cor. 6:9b Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10b Shall inherit the kingdom of God.

I Cor. 11:4 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

5 But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.



14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?

15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.

**Memory Verse:** Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. I Cor. 10:31.

**Central Thought:** We are to adorn the soul, the inward man, with holiness and righteousness and the outward man will reflect these same virtues.

**Word Definition:** *Clothe* means "to cover; to put garments on; dress." *Modest* means "decent, virtuous." *Immodest* means to be "indecent, unchaste, shameless, bold." *Decent* means "to be free from immodesty or obscenity." *Virtuous* means "to be chaste, pure."

### LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson took place after Adam and Eve had sinned by partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden.

We want you to note that we used Scriptures in the Old Testament, but we also want to note that Peter refers to "the holy women" in "the old time" who adorned themselves in modest apparel and had the ornament of a "meek and quiet spirit." The manner in which the women of old dressed is a pattern for us today. The verses in our lesson in I Cor. 11th chapter are about the Apostle Paul dealing with the veil that the women of old wore. He said that they did not need to cover their heads with a veil because their long hair was their covering. No woman was to pray or prophesy (preach) without her head covered, in other words without having long hair.

### QUESTIONS:

1. What caused Adam and Eve to know they were naked?
2. What did God do about the clothing they fashioned from leaves?
3. Define modesty and immodesty.
4. Discuss what God says about the hair.
5. What kind of clothing do women wear that "pertaineth to a man?"
6. What about adorning the body with jewelry?
7. What is a "meek and quiet spirit"?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

When Adam and Eve sinned they had the knowledge that their bodies were naked. They lost their state of purity and holiness that they had been given by God. Sin brought shame to them. Immediately they had the knowledge of good and evil. They knew right away that it was evil to go naked and knew it was good to cover their nakedness. Their bodies became the seat of lust and they were ashamed of it. They sought to cover up. The power of self-control had been lost. This is what sin had done. They lost their innocence, and had fallen into a state of danger. Hurriedly they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. When God talked to them, they gave the reason for hiding, that they were naked. To make the point clear, God asked them how they knew they were naked? It was because they had come to some knowledge of good and evil. We notice God did not feel that the aprons were sufficient, so He made them "coats of skins, and clothed them." This is the basis for the Bible doctrine of wearing sufficient clothing. We are to cover our bodies with shamefacedness. We want to be chaste, pure, and holy in our thoughts and actions, and in the covering of our bodies. We are to wear "modest apparel." That would mean that we are to clothe, or cover our bodies.

If we will seek to dress in a manner that portrays a "meek and quiet spirit" then it will be easy for us to decide what kind of clothing we should wear. God forbid that we would dress in anyway that would cause others to sin. We want to dress in a manner to not draw attention to our bodies but we want the spirit of Christ to shine out in our lives and others to be drawn to Christ. We do not need to dress sloppy but dress in a neat becoming manner.

In the days when the text in our lesson was written, the women would weave strands of gold in their braids. This is what is meant by "broided" hair. This does not mean simple braids. We also note in our lesson that it is a shame for a man to have long hair. They are not to be "effeminate." The women are not to wear that which pertaineth to a man. The slacks or pants that women wear are something that pertaineth to a man and are condemned by God. Men should look like men and women should look like women. —M. Miles

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

How far mankind has drifted from the standard of purity and righteousness is evident in the the fact that our Supreme Court has granted legal permission for the publication and sale

of literature across our land that bears pictures of fully unclothed men and women. What a shame it is that people have become so deluded and degraded in mind and heart! God has a pure way for men and women to live and to dress themselves. It is not pleasing to God the way the world is going today. It ought not to be a touchy subject, but it is. Anyone ought to have enough understanding to realize that these bodies need to be rightly and decently clothed. God's Word forbids a man to look upon the nakedness of any woman other than his own lawfully wedded wife. This is true. All transgression of the moral and spiritual standards of the Bible will be punished. It is appalling to see women parading before the public eye clothed in the fashions that we see. It is tearing down and rotting the framework of our society. Our nation is doomed to fall from its place of honor and success. One of the main reasons for its fall is the moral decay and spiritual degradation of the hearts and minds of the people. Thank God, there are still people who are endeavoring to live and clothe themselves aright. But the number is fast decreasing. May God help everyone to strive with all his might to live to please the Lord in this evil time. The Lord is coming soon.

—L. Busbee

### **WORLDLY DRESS**

The Word of God comes even closer and lays down certain rules concerning the Christian's dress. The command of the Word is, "Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." I Cor. 6:20. We must "be holy both in body and in spirit." I Cor. 7:34. If we have holy, humble hearts, hearts free from vanity and pride, then our outward lives must in every way be consistent with the inward condition. Now, when people's hearts are full of the "pride of life," how do they manifest it? By proud actions and by worldly dress. They seek to adorn themselves with gold, pearls, diamonds, rubies, and costly array; until the beholder views a dazzling display of earrings, finger-rings, bracelets, lockets, and other ornaments; not to mention an immense amount of other costly, useless, and foolish array.

In the Scriptures just given, the Apostle Peter forbids the wearing of that outward adornment which is suggested by pride; but the Apostle Paul goes a step further and shows how Christian women must be dressed. He says, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or

pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." I Tim. 2:9,10. They must be arrayed in "modest apparel . . . not with gold, or pearls, or costly array." These articles of adornment, then, are not modest apparel. The wearing of them is prompted, not by feelings of humility and modesty, but by pride in the heart. It is plain from this Scripture that such things do not "become women professing godliness." Reader, are you a woman "professing godliness"? Are you adorned with these things? If so, then they do not "become your profession," and you are not arrayed in "modest apparel."

"Modest apparel" requires a dress that is clean and neat, so as not to become immodest, through the failure to measure up to ordinary standards of decency; but, on the other hand, it is dress that is free from useless, worldly trimmings and accompaniments, from ostentation and show. Earrings, finger-rings, necklaces, lockets, bracelets, feathers, artificial flowers, and many other like things, "are not of the Father, but are of the world," when it comes to the matter of the Christian's dress. "BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD," the Word of God brings out (Rom. 12:2), and all the pure and holy in heart are ready to say amen.

These principles apply with equal force to the male sex. The foolish, vain, and immodest styles and fashions to which the worldly-minded cater are an abomination in the sight of God and in the sight of His redeemed saints. Do not deceive yourself, reader, in the belief that you can continue to wear things which the Word of God forbids, and still be a spiritual person, filled with the grace of God. It is impossible. God's children are to be "obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance." I Pet. 1:14.

How often we meet professing Christians who are living in open violation of this part of the Bible, and who, when we mention the fact to them, are ready to excuse themselves, saying, "Oh, these things are not in my heart!" Well, if they are not in the heart, then why are they carried about on the person? When we enter the city and see a display-sign outside of a store, we naturally expect to find the goods thus advertised kept in stock in that store. Now, we know that proud people manifest their pride in their dress. If you are humble in heart, free from this worldly abomination, and do not wish to be mistaken for a proud person, then take down the sign. If you think these things are not in your heart, then it will be a very easy matter for you to prove it by obeying God's Word and

remove them from your person. When you undertake to do this, however, you may find, as thousands of others have found, that the love of such things goes deeper than you have ever imagined. Your teeth may rest so easily in your mouth that you seldom think of them; but when the dentist attempts to remove one, you become painfully aware of the fact that it has long roots and draws hard. Similarly you may be so accustomed to wearing worldly adornments that they seem perfectly natural and easy, so that you are deceived into thinking that they are all on the outside; but when you attempt to obey God's Word and discard them, you will find they are rooted in your affections and reach down deep into the soul. Jesus says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words." John 14:23. "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Luke 6:46.

—What the Bible Teaches

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**February 6, 1977**

### **THE TREE OF LIFE**

Gen. 2:9 And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

3:22 And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

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

Pro. 3:13 Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.

18 She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.

11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.

15:4 A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

Rev. 2:7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

22:1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.

14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

**Memory Verse:** And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. John 6:35.

**Central Thought:** In Eden's garden God made to grow the tree of life. Eating of this tree assured one of living forever. Because of sin man was deprived of the right to eat of this tree of life, but in full salvation through Jesus Christ, we have the privilege of partaking of the tree of life now through faith and in the world to come.

**Word Definitions:** *Cherubims:* "Winged heavenly beings; angels." *Perverseness:* "distortion, viciousness, rebellion."

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Before man fell into sin and was separated from fellowship with God, he had perfect right to eat of a tree that God had placed in the midst of the garden of Eden that would enable him to live forever. Just how this was accomplished is not clearly explained. But it was there — the tree of life. As long as man kept in favor with his Maker, this wonderful tree was at his convenience to enjoy and be blessed thereby. Perhaps the fruit was divinely blessed somehow to renew and keep man's physical condition of health and strength in top shape. It was something similar to this, anyway. Meditate upon this. What a blessing it must have been!

But the scene changes and the next picture we see is man and his wife being driven from the garden. No more are they permitted to partake of the blessed tree of life! Now they must till the ground from which they were made to be able to

survive. Their survival now will be but for a time. The blessed tree of life can no more renew and sustain their life. They have become mortals, where once they could have been immortals. An angel with a flaming sword drives away anyone who would put forth his hands to that sacred tree.

From the proverbs of Solomon comes a ray of hope concerning the tree of life. He is pointing men and women to wisdom and understanding. This is turning man's heart away from his sins toward God again. And then behold the beautiful scene that John was permitted to see as recorded in the book of Revelation. Jesus has come to open up the way to the tree of life again. If we will believe in Him, follow and obey Him, we can and will experience partaking of the tree of life. All thanks and praise be to God for His great mercy and love!

—L. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Where was the tree of life first placed?
2. What was it like?
3. Why was man deprived of partaking of the tree of life?
4. What was going to have to be done for man to be restored?
5. Who brought back to us the right to the tree of life?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Let us meditate upon this beautiful and inspiring subject of the Tree of Life. Think of what it meant to live and have access to this blessed source of life and immortality! By eating of its precious fruit, health, vigor, and strength were maintained at a perfect level. There was no danger of disease, weakness, injury, or death. Life could go on forever and ever! If a mishap or any trouble might occur, the tree of life afforded healing and restoration. This is what Adam and Eve forfeited from their lives when they listened to the devil and disobeyed God. How foolish and heedless they were. Satan did not tell them this when he was tempting them to sin. So yet he does to unsuspecting, unwary souls. He paints his picture of enticement which makes evil and wrong seem good and desirable. But the consequences are always far beyond what we thought they would be. Behold Adam and Eve in sorrow departing from their lovely garden home. Perhaps they looked back at the angel with the flaming sword and wept sorely as they recalled their foolish and costly error.

To think of such a tree ever existing almost seems like fantasy, doesn't it? But it did happen and there surely was such

a tree. But more than that, and most wonderful to us, is the truth that there is yet such a tree to be found. In a great and wholesome figure, Jesus becomes the tree of life to the believing

heart of man who has repented and turned from his sins. As we hear the gospel, forsake our foolish and erring ways to go to Christ, and take up our cross and follow Him, we become partakers of the tree of life through Him. New life comes into our souls, and we are made new creatures. Old things (of sin) pass away, and all things become new. This is wisdom and understanding, and it becomes a tree of life to us. The tree of life is now in the midst of the paradise of God. It stands in the spiritual world. In a measure we partake of it now, but oh, glory! Beyond this world of toil and strife is a better world. Therein shall be the tree of life. We will see it lining the avenues of the New Jerusalem in glory, and it will be growing along the pure river of water of life. What a beautiful hope we have! It will be worth all we ever suffer or endure in this life. May God grant each one grace to overcome sin and Satan, that we may reign with Christ forever and ever. —L. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Let us rejoice today because through Christ, we have access to the Tree of Life. There is only one way to get to it. We can't walk up to it unless we pass by the cherubims, and the flaming sword, which turns in every direction. There is not one chance of anyone getting to it because it is closely guarded.

In Christ, we have everything the soul of mankind longs for. Christ has peace, comfort, satisfaction, healing for the body, and complete salvation for the soul. As we look upon Him, we long to partake of all these graces. How can we find the way to the Tree of Life? Jesus has said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." Then we hear the Apostle Paul proclaiming, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12. To get to the Tree of Life, we have to pass the sword, which is a sharp sword. It turns every way and doesn't leave any place uncut.

As we read the Word of God it cuts off one thing and then another out of our lives. As we measure up to the Word, and say "amen" to the Lord from the depths of our hearts, then we can move on up to the Tree of Life.



When the sword gets through with us, there is no sin in our lives and there is a separation from the worldly spirit. Then and only then, can we eat of the Tree of Life and have our souls fully satisfied. Praise God! —M. Miles

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February 13, 1977

### THE PROGRESS OF SIN

Gen. 4:3 And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

6 And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

9 And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?

10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

11 And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

13 And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

1 John 3:12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

**Memory Verse:** By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that

he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. Hebrews 11:4.

**Central Thought:** No sooner is a sin committed than the dawning light of the divine presence of God appears and the sin is questioned by Him. Every sinner must listen to God when He speaks.

**Word Definition:** The name *Cain* signifies "Possession." *Abel* signifies "vanity." *Envy* means "a feeling of discontent and ill will because of another's advantages, possessions, etc." *Jealousy* means "resentfully envious; resentfully suspicious, as of a rival." *Vagabond* means "moving from place to place; wandering; drifting; having no fixed abode."

### LESSON BACKGROUND

Eve regarded her firstborn with delight. The name *Cain* signifies "possession." These first parents regarded their child as a gift of God. This should be the feeling of all parents when their children arrive. Children should increase the spiritual value of the home to which they belong. They are as a twig which should be trained to grow up straight and be useful in this life. Their second child was named Abel which meant vanity. No doubt, these first parents were getting into the painful experiences of life and therefore, they gathered up all the sorrows and the history of their past and put it in the name of their second child.

Notice that the boys were not allowed to idle their time away, but were given useful employment. An idle brain is the devil's workshop. Parents should keep their children busy, yet they should have some time to play and some time to be to themselves. Love for each other should be taught to children. Sharing and unselfishness taught in the home prepares children for the outside world and responsibilities, as well as many other virtues that are, or should be, taught.

God taught Adam and Eve how to offer the "firstlings" of the flock, as an offering for their sins. It might have been when he "made them coats of skins" for a covering for their bodies. We note that Abel understood what to offer unto God.

—M. Miles

### QUESTIONS:

1. What was the true offering that was acceptable to God?
2. Which did God question—Cain's offering or Cain's attitude?
3. Notice that the first difference came through their religious worship. How can differences in the meeting together of

God's people kill the offerings unto the Lord? What about a look or a word?

4. Are we our brother's keeper?
5. Discuss false worship and true worship.

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Both Cain and Abel came to worship God. Just so today the true and the false among men come to worship God. The false worshippers come because it is the custom of the land to do so. They are creatures of habit. They feel that they must bring their first fruits of religious service to God or they are not better than the heathen. By doing this, they silence their conscience, preserve their reputation in their own eyes and the eyes of others and they feel they are moral and respectable people. These are the false worshippers and sanctuaries of the world are crowded with them. They present their offerings of money to ease their conscience. They are Cainites. But thank God there are those who are true worshippers. They come together with a heart filled with praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord. The Holy Spirit is in their midst, to move upon the hearts of the worshippers, who from pure hearts glorify and honor their Saviour, Jesus Christ. They joyfully offer their firstlings to the Lord. They are animated by the true spirit of devotion. They are followers of Abel. They present their offerings unto God, thus laying up treasures in heaven.

God accepted the offering of Abel but rejected the fruits that Cain offered. This caused envy to fill the heart of Cain. Strange to say that the worship of God was the first occasion of difference among men. How sad when the devil will come to meeting with God's people, and because the Lord is blessing another in a great manner, some will be filled with envy and make remarks, or in some way try to put a damper on that one! We are to "rejoice with them that rejoice." Entering into the blessing of another will bring a blessing to one's soul. The devil wants that person's reputation murdered or his value as a worker for God killed. A person can murder or slay another just by a look, or a word, as well as a weapon. How sad! May God rebuke Satan, who dares to enter into the sanctuary of the Lord to lead God's children into such a sin, should be our prayer.

In the garden we saw that sin consisted in a wandering thought from the Word of God, and also in disobedience to the divine command; now we behold it in full development by envy and jealousy leading to murder. Sin is a progress in the history of men. Our lesson today teaches us that sin makes men

wretched and is a loss, rather than a gain, not only in this life but in the life to come.

—M. Miles

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The attitude of Cain was bad from the start. He did not seem to be very sincere or earnest in his approach to God. He was not hungering and thirsting for righteousness. He had a covetous attitude and nature sprouting out in his life. He was a tiller of the ground. Let us note what the Jewish historian, Josephus, says about Cain at this point. "The two brethren (Cain and Abel) were pleased with different courses of life: for Abel, the younger, was a lover of righteousness; and believing that God was present at all his actions, he excelled in virtue; and his employment was that of a shepherd. But Cain was not only very wicked in other respects, but was wholly intent upon getting (gain); and he first contrived to plough the ground." Cain was covetous and greedy. His heart was not inclined toward God. Thus when he was rejected of God, instead of amending his way and seeking to repent, he became angry and embittered toward Abel. Thus in his anger he killed him. When affronted by God, his attitude was, "Am I my brother's keeper?" When punishment was put upon him, his attitude was, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." God was good and merciful to Cain, but Cain did not let it work for his betterment. Listen to what else Josephus said about him after this. "He did not accept his punishment in order to amend his ways, but to increase his wickedness; for he only aimed to procure every thing that was for his own bodily pleasure, though it obliged him to be injurious to his neighbors. He augmented his household substance with much wealth by fraud and violence; he influenced his acquaintance to get pleasures and spoils by robbery, and became a great leader of men into wicked courses. He also introduced a change in that way of simplicity wherein men lived before; and was the author of measures and weights. Whereas they lived innocently and generously while they knew nothing of such arts, he changed the world into cunning craftiness. He set boundaries about lands, and built a city and fortified it with walls and compelled his family to come and live there." This was sin being intensified and increased. It has gathered in strength and more evil ever since and is yet abounding more and more.

—L. Busbee

**(NOTICE! It is important that we have your order for the next quarter by March 1, 1977. Please order early.)**

**February 20, 1977**

**ENOCH WALKED WITH GOD**

Gen. 5:21 And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah:

22 And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:

24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

Heb.11:5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Jude 14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

16 These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

John 1:5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

**Memory Verse:** This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. Gal. 5:16.

**Central Thought:** Enoch walked with God, and then one day walked right into heaven. All those who have part of heaven within them will be taken where the complete fullness of heaven can be enjoyed when the soul leaves this earthly body.

**Word Definition:** *Translate* means "to change from one place, position, or condition to another; to convey or remove

from earth to heaven without natural death." *Testimony* means "an affirmation or declaration."

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Enoch was the father of Methuselah who was the oldest man that ever lived. Methuselah died at the age of 969 years. Enoch was translated at the age of 365. We want to remember that Methuselah knew Adam and Methuselah knew Noah. The accounts that transpired from Adam down to Noah were repeated, and a record was kept. Moses wrote the book of Genesis from these records. Moses also talked to God in the mountain and I am sure that God filled in anything that was lacking. Jesus says that if we do not believe the words of Moses we do not believe in him. (John 5:46,47).

There is a book by the name of Enoch that historians say is as old as the Epistles, but it has been tampered with and therefore cannot be trusted as authentic. We do have in our lesson the sayings of Enoch recorded by Jude. In reading these, we wonder if Enoch was greatly persecuted in his day? He lived in a day of great wickedness, just before the great flood sent by God.

The Apostle Paul also refers to Enoch, whom he says, was translated by faith, and refers to the testimony that he left. May this be our testimony at the end of our journey here on this earth. This should be our prayer and aim. —M. Miles

### QUESTIONS:

1. Explain the difference between death and being translated.
2. Who else was translated and what is the reward of the righteous in death?
3. Enoch was comparatively young at the age of 363 when his son lived to be 969 years of age. Is salvation good for the young as well as for the old? Discuss the advantages of being in touch with God from your youth.
4. How did Enoch's walk and testimony affect God?
5. How should we walk to please God?
6. What does Jude tell us that Enoch prophesied? Discuss.

### ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

"Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him." The words, "was not" suggests that he was missed and sought for. Such a good man would be missed in the world of wickedness that he lived in. He was a light that shined in the darkness. Good, in the midst of evil, beams forth as a warning,

a beacon of light which would lead to God, a help to the downhearted and a source of information for the sin-laden soul. His words of warning and encouragement were heard and they continued to echo in the conscience of the hearers. No wonder this good man was missed when God took him out of this wicked world.

Enoch was a busy man. He had a family and you might say he was comparatively young considering that his own son lived to be almost a thousand years old. Some people seem to think that serving God is for little children, women who are comparatively unoccupied, the aged, or for sickly men. This surely is an absurdity and such a thought should be banished. Living for God is for the most active businessman who needs guidance, and spiritual refreshment daily. Young men need God to guide them in their decisions, the use of their natural strength and abilities, and to help them truly walk with God. People of all ages need God; they need to seek and enter into the heavenly walk so gladly enjoyed by Enoch.

Enoch preached to his generation. He pointed them to God who would execute judgment upon all who had committed ungodly deeds. Those who spoke harshly and made fun of God's people would feel the wrath of God upon them. Those who walked not in the heavenly way, but walked "after their own lusts," would face God when He came "with ten thousands of his saints." What a great day that will be! Surely that day is coming and all need to prepare to meet their God. Our walk here on earth will be examined by that Great Judge in that day. Are we walking honestly and with open hearts as we read God's Word? We will be judged by the Words of God written in the Bible. It will pay us to take time to check our daily walk and see if we are measured up to the standards of God's Word. We need to be sure that we are walking in the Spirit and in the light of God's Word. Jesus is our light and we need to walk in His footsteps.

—M. Miles

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Our God does not work and bless without a cause. There is a just reason for everything that He does. He had a reason for striking Saul of Tarsus down on the road to Damascus. He had a reason for not allowing David to build Him a house. He had a reason for sending His Son down into this world to die. He had a reason for allowing Israel to go down into Egypt and sojourn there. In the case of Enoch, God had a good and wholesome reason for translating him. What would that reason have been?

How could a man in that evil time attain to such blessing and favor with God? This we know, that he possessed great faith in God. He left a testimony in the hearts and minds of those around him that He pleased God. That is what they could say about him truthfully. There was no doubt or wonder about where he stood. What kind of testimony are we leaving with folks? I would dare to say that some people endeavoring to live a Christian life have not held their faith and confidence in God as they should before their fellow men; thus, God is ashamed to do anything outstanding to, or for them. It would be a reproach to His cause. David had shed much blood in his time and killed many of his enemies among the nations around about so that God was not willing for David to build the house upon which His holy and righteous name was to rest. There is a clue here worth getting hold of. God wants to be glorified in all that He does. We are exhorted in the Word to "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." Col. 1:10. We are not worthy of anything God does, but we are exhorted to WALK worthy. You can at least walk worthy even if you are not legally or lawfully worthy. Here was Enoch's prevailing. If we are to expect God to do spectacular and outstanding things for us in the eyes of the world, then we had better be careful what we do.

—L. Busbee

## CAN PRAYER SAVE AMERICA?



In the days of the Civil War, a personal friend of Abraham Lincoln was a visitor at the White House. "I had been spending three weeks with Mr. Lincoln as his guest. One night—it was just after the Battle of Bull Run—I was restless and could not sleep . . . from the private room where the president slept, I heard low tones, for the door was partly open. Instinctively I wandered in, and there I saw a sight which I have never forgotten. It was the president, kneeling before an open Bible . . . his back was toward me. I shall never forget his prayer: 'Oh, thou God, who heard Solomon in the night when he prayed and cried for wisdom, hear me. I cannot lead these people, I cannot guide the affairs of this nation without Thy help. . . . O God, hear me and save this nation.' "

George Washington, our first president, who prayed in the snow at Valley Forge said, "The event is in the hands of God." When the tide of battle was unfavorable, Washington said, "How will it end? God will direct."



When the leaders of our country assembled to write the constitution, it was proposed by Benjamin Franklin that each session be opened with prayer. Franklin said, "I have lived a long time, and the longer I live the more convincing proof I see of this truth—that God governs the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it possible that an empire can rise without His aid?"

Our nation today is great because it was founded by men who feared God and men who believed in prayer. But in our generation, prayer has been replaced by political intrigue, materialism and a mistaken notion that our private and national affairs can be run without God.

This whole nation must be moved to prayer. So great are the dangers, so grave the perils, so tremendous the political problems, so important the election issues, that it is imperative that we lay hold upon the Lord God in prayer for His will.

Let us each one lay hold of this tremendous promise given by God: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (II Chron. 7:14).

—Sel.

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**February 27, 1977**

## **THE ANTEDILUVIAN WORLD**

Gen. 6:1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

3 And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

6 And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

7 And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the

creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

II Pet. 2:4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

Luke 17:26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

**Memory Verse:** The longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. I Peter 3:20b.

**Central Thought:** What is God's testimony of our nation and of the world? Is it better than the antediluvian world? God sees and knows all things and has the power to let live, or destroy.

**Word Definition:** *Strive* means "to make great efforts." *Imagination* means "the act or power of forming mental images of what is not actually present, or experienced; creating new images or ideas by combining previous experiences."

### LESSON BACKGROUND

We see the progress of sin. A few ages ago it only existed in two hearts, now we see sin as a universal thing. There is a terrible contagion in moral evil. Sin spreads from the individual to the community; on and on it spreads like the waves on the ocean. It affects all that it touches.

There were giants in those early days and no doubt they had no regard for the poor; the weak were despised and injured; the good, if any were to be found, were persecuted. Force was the supreme law of the age. It was indeed a reign of terror. Force is the very essence of sin. Moral defilement of a nation reflects a violent government.

The words of Jesus cause us to look around at the day we are living in. "As in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the

days of the Son of man." We see the fast decay of the home life which brings a defiled government. —M. Miles

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the greatest attraction of the giants and men of the wicked antediluvian world?
2. Discuss what should be the attraction of a man or woman who is seeking a companion for life?
3. What about the thoughts of the people of that day and who knew what they were thinking?
4. What did Peter mean when he said that "angels sinned"?
5. Compare the day of Noah with today.

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Man was made a little lower than the angels. Angels do not have a free moral agency. Man has a choice as to how he wants to live. Adam and Eve had a choice to obey God or to obey the devil. They made their choice and even though they were God's crowning creation, He did not spare them from punishment. No doubt His great heart of love was grieved, yet He was too just and too holy to let any kind of sin go by unnoticed. Sin has to be punished and that is a law of God. Those who have been ministers of the Word of God, but have sinned are the "angels that sinned, . . . and are delivered . . . into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." (Angels are ministers or pastors. See Rev. 1:20; 2:1.) It is a serious thing for those who have once known God and turned away "counting the blood of Jesus an unholy thing." They are waiting in chains of darkness for the judgment. How sad, and oh, if souls would only awaken and repent before it is too late!

God saw a world in which marriage was abused. Physical beauty was made the basis of matrimonial selection; thus, passion was the basis of the matrimonial life of that age. The beauty of the face will soon fade, thus a man needs to seek a greater reason for choosing a wife. Man needs moral elevation and sympathy from his companion for life, and these are not always associated with physical beauty, nor will physical beauty compensate for their absence. Our young people should make thoughtful selections of their partners, seeking those who have a firm faith in God, with a life of holiness to back that testimony; seek those who have thrifty habits, are of genial spirit, of cultivated thought, and unselfish character. When a nation loses the purity of its domestic life, its national glory will

soon depart. The divorce court is a true but sad index to the worth of our national character.

God saw the wickedness, the rejection of the Spirit of God, the imaginations of the thoughts of men's hearts, which were evil continually and He repented that He had made man. He decided He would destroy mankind from off the face of the earth, but He saw Noah, who was righteous, and who found "grace in the eyes of the Lord." It surely pays to be righteous because that attracts the eyes of the Lord.

—M. Miles

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Men began to multiply upon the earth. As men multiplied, so did sin and evil. Lust and greed began to be turned loose with no restraint or divine regard. We find that Cain's descendants were loosed from any godly knowledge or restraint, and the descendants of Adam through Seth endeavored to keep the knowledge of God. See Genesis 4:16-26. In our lesson it seems evident that the sons of God (those of Adam's posterity who had been more inclined to worship God) were being allured from divine favor by the attractiveness of women. Instead of seeking God's guidance in this matter they took them wives of all which THEY chose. It was here that God seemed to give prediction of the final wind-up of things, and the coming necessity of having to destroy the earth. We find the helpmeet that God gave to man serving an entirely different purpose than that for which she was intended. Instead of using her womanly beauty and grace to comfort and cheer her lawful and God-given husband, womankind has so often been the means of degrading man from purity and holiness. Behold how a woman could have easily ruined the beautiful development of Joseph and his great service to the world. See how women were the downfall of the strongest physical man in the world, Samson. Look at Solomon and his lustful pursuit of women who caused him to sin. Josephus tells us that when Baalam refused to curse Israel at Balak's request, he gave counsel to Balak to have some of the young women of his nation parade out before the young men of Israel and thus allure them to sin against God. The plan worked. Women can either be a blessing to society and mankind, or they can be a curse. Look at our world today. Women, having gotten out of their place has a big part to play in the moral, financial, and spiritual condition of the world today. This Women's Liberation Movement is of the devil. People's hearts are far from God and

what they ought to be. God has a pure and holy plan for womankind and has a noble and honorable place for women to fill. —L. Busbee

## REX HARDING'S 'PRECIOUS'

*Railroad story from Nova Scotia*

Rex Harding was a railroad engineer in Nova Scotia. He slowed up and blew the whistle of his engine when he came to a certain curve; not because of any particular danger at this spot, but because of its being to him the most interesting landmark that he passed during his travels.

Rex Harding's dark eyes were ever intent for danger signals. But when he neared this curve, the dark, danger look faded, and a light shone with tender love in the eyes that pierced the landscape, for a white cottage nestled among a bower of birch trees.

Rex Harding had named this sacred spot "The Birches" when eight years before he had taken his pretty bride there to be queen of their first home. A garden patch on one side of "The Birches" faced the railway. Hollyhocks, dahlias, and sunflowers grew high against a whitewashed fence surrounding the garden.

There was an all-important break in this regular and very white fence where a picket was missing! It may seem of very little import to you that a picket was missing, whether by accident or design; but to Rex Harding it was a matter of lasting consequence.

A tiny white hand never failed to wave to him through that hollow gap, and Rex Harding always experienced the same glad thrill upon seeing that frail hand waving to Daddy.

The proud father's whole soul seemed to bound through that empty place in the white fence to his goldenlocked "Precious" hidden among the hollyhocks and dahlias on the other side. One day after the Ocean Limited had gone thundering over the rails past "The Birches," a stranger walking the tracks had witnessed the pretty sight, and stopping at the siding he called up cheerily, "What is your name, dear little fairy child?"

"Muriel Precious!" answered the little one promptly.

"Precious?" questioned the stranger. "That's an odd name, isn't it?"

"My daddy calls me his Precious," answered the child, with a stress laid upon the pet name, indicating its great value.

"Precious!" said the old stranger removing his hat and gazing into the blue sky above the child's head; and then he added as though communing with an unseen friend, "Unto you therefore which believe, He is precious."

"Do you mean Jesus?" called a sweet childish voice.

"Yes, little one; don't ever forget that He is your precious Saviour." The old man went upon his way, while the child stood thinking. Then standing upon her tiny tiptoes, that she might see a line of blue upon the far side of the garden fence where the sky touched the ocean, she peered thoughtfully outward, then upward. Her eyes glowed with a new emotion.

"My precious Saviour," she murmured softly; "wonder if Daddy calls Him 'Precious Saviour'?"

The day was fading into golden rays of sunset hues when Rex Harding took the curve at lightning speed, thundering over the rails beneath the gap in his picket fence. He looked up with the glad anticipation of seeing the never-failing little hand waving to her daddy. Fearfully, the love-light faded from his face and a troubled look that seemed to predict danger ahead brooded in his piercing dark eyes; and his great heart stopped a beat as with fearful forboding he realized that Precious had failed him. There was no tiny beckoning hand in the gap in the picket fence today!

When off duty the engine-driver hurried anxiously to his home, there to find his bitterest fears were only too real. "Precious," like a fragrant withered rosebud, lay cradled in her mother's arms, with the light of heaven shining on her brow.

"Hush, Rex, dear love!" whispered his wife. "Don't try to make her speak; her tiny feet are nearly through the dark river! The Good Shepherd is going to gather His lamb in His arms and carry her in His bosom."

"Give her to me!" he cried with a dull heavy sob. "I can't let her go—she is mine—mine!"

He had seized the beautiful, fragile casement of the soul that fluttered upon this side of the palaces.

"Speak to me, my Precious!" he cried.

Her large blue eyes slowly opened and fixed their full gaze upon his face.

"Daddy!" she breathed contentedly; "I'll be waving—for—you—through—the picket—fence of heaven!"

Then she tried to raise her tiny hand to illustrate her words, but the hand fell limp on the arm that pressed her to his heart. The tender eyes of blue slowly closed. Still her lips moved in a last message this side of the gates—

"Jesus — pull — picket — off fence — I'll — be — waving  
— for you, Daddy!"

Rex Harding nears the crossing and blows the whistle within sight of "The Birches" on the hillside by the railway. Ten years have passed, in which time he has learned the value of trusting a precious Saviour. He knows the truth of the verse, "Unto you therefore which believe, He is precious."

Other little hands wave to him since; but Rex Harding always looks above the gap in his picket fence.

"I'm coming!" he breathes assuredly. "Not because I'm worthy, but because I believe in Him who is precious."

"Who plucked that flower?"

" 'I,' said the Master;

And the gardener was silent!"

"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.



**March 6, 1977**

## **THE FAITH OF NOAH**

Gen. 6:9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

17 And, behold, I even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.

18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.

20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

21 And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

22 Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

Gen. 7:11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

16 And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the Lord shut him in.

23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.

Heb. 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

**Memory Verse:** Thus did Noah according to all that God commanded him, so did he. Gen. 6:22

**Central Thought:** If men would have salvation they must work out the Divine plan that God quietly places in their minds; they must earnestly co-operate with those silent influences of the Holy Spirit, and with the workings of the Divine Providence in daily life, with the Word of God for their guide.

**Word Definition:** *Gopher wood*, probably "cypress; pitch-trees, resinous trees; a hard, strong tree, precise kind unknown."  
—Clarke's Commentary

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We talked about Enoch walking with God and now we note that Noah walked with God. Enoch was taken out of the world of wickedness because of his righteousness, but God devised a different plan for righteous Noah. God is never at loss to achieve means for the welfare of His saints. He can accomplish them by a direct agency, as in the case of Daniel, when an angel stopped the mouths of the lions; or as in the case of Jonah, when the great fish was made to preserve the prophet's life; or He can teach men how to achieve their safety by their own natural and daily effort. God arranged the plans for the safety of



Noah from the deluge. God was the architect of the ark, and Noah was the builder. No doubt the idea was hard for him to envision. Not only would it be immensely costly, but it would take years of hard, continuous work. God gave the inspiration and Noah gave himself up to God's command without hesitation. God can inspire a man to build an ark, as well as to write an article, a book, preach a message, deliver a personal message to others, show love, do an act of charity, return good for evil, or to display all the graces of God. God is the divine planner and the willing servant carries out those plans, being careful to do as Noah did; "according to all that God commanded him, so did he." —M. Miles

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What plan does God have for those who walk with Him?
2. If the people in Noah's day had believed a flood was coming, do you think they could have devised a plan to escape God's wrath such as God had given to Noah?
3. Today there is impending destruction of the world by fire. Could mankind have knowledge enough to devise a plan that would appease the wrath of God?
4. Discuss what kind of sources God used to cause the flood?
5. Discuss what God could use to cause our world to be destroyed by fire, (mere speculation).
6. Who will be ready to be delivered in the last day's destruction?
7. Discuss Noah's faith and our faith for today.

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

God gave explicit orders to Noah as to how to build the ark. Noah did not build the ark after his own imagination, nor according to the dictates of his own reason, but from a pattern given him by God. Noah could never have, with his wildest imaginations, known just what the impending flood would bring. It had never rained upon the earth before the flood. It would never have occurred to Noah to build an ark because he did not know, only through revelation from God, that there was going to be a flood. As for the men of Noah's time, they were totally ignorant of, and were equally unconcerned about the threats and purposes of God's pronouncements. Even if the world had become aware of the impending danger, it would have been altogether impotent in the sad emergency. The world could not have saved itself.

The ancient world is but a type of woeful, sinful, fallen humanity today. Only through the revelation of God does man

know that he is a sinner. He has broken the original law of his being, lost his primitive innocence, and through the operation of many causes, has become altogether degenerate. Man contains none of the factors to devise a plan for his salvation from the wrath of God, and the judgments to which his own wickedness have rendered him liable. He does not have sufficient insight into the purposes of God to plan a way of deliverance. In the secular sphere of life, man is capable of sublime inventions, and is able to solve most difficult problems. His great discoveries are a great asset to humanity. They increase our comfort, are helpful in commerce, etc. When it comes to the moral sphere of life, we find man utterly destitute of any idea as to what will constitute his future safety from the wrath of God.

The perfect plan of salvation was designed by God, as was the plan for Noah to build an ark. Only God knew that it would take His only begotten Son to bring salvation to mankind and to appease the wrath of God. This plan can be traced all through the ages; first in a dim outline, and then in sublime completion. Through the inspiration of prophecy, little by little revelation was given to mankind of God's plan for a Saviour who was to come and be the ark that would save the righteous from a world that would be destroyed by fire. We, of course, know that no one can fathom, or comprehend all the depths of the plan of salvation, but all is revealed that is necessary for man to know. God, by His Holy Spirit, will lead and guide all who will follow the truth which will lead them into heaven. —M. Miles

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

“Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.” What a great statement to say about Noah. It meant a great deal to obey the command that God had given to him. Remember, all this was done in faith with nothing seen as yet to make it plausible. Now we do not know just how easy it was for him to get all of those animals in the ark, but we do know that he accomplished that part of it. Think of the food that had to be stored in the ark, enough for Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives; and also enough for all the animals—enough food to last them for a whole year and a little extra time. That is how long they ended up being in that ark. Think about this. This was no small undertaking. And with an ungodly world looking on, scorning and ridiculing, persecuting and deriding, it was surely a great job. The ark being about 450 feet long, about 75 feet wide, and about 45 ft. high was no small

matter to build. Think how it had to be covered with pitch within and without. "Rooms shalt thou make in the ark." Think what planning and forethought this must have taken. Think of the sanitation and cleanliness that had to be taken into consideration. Oh, this was a great and serious undertaking! And to think that it was all done by faith in obedience to God's command. Our faith in Christ has just as much or even more importance to us. To believe in Christ means we give up and leave this old world with all its pride and pleasure. We are living for another world. This present world is going to be destroyed. We have started out for Him by faith. It may cost us dearly before we get through with our journey. It is no easy thing. It means hard work, holding on under pressure, and day by day faithfulness and staying on the job. But there is a day of reward coming. Let us keep that in mind. God will not forget the faith and love we have had for Him in this world. Let us be true to Him and make all preparation for that great day which is to come.

—L. Busbee

### **THE OPEN DOOR THAT CLOSED**

*"And the Lord shut him in!" Genesis 7:16.*

The door of the ark stood open for a long time. The people got accustomed to seeing it standing open. It stood open so long that no one felt any alarm. It always seemed there was plenty of time, just because it stood open so long.

While the door stood open, Noah delivered his warning message. He warned men of a coming world flood because of world-wide wickedness. He preached the righteousness of God, and called upon men to repent. While he preached, the Spirit strove with men. Noah's message fell on pleasure-loving, sin-hardened ears. Men gave themselves to gluttony—to eating and drinking in excess—and to marrying and giving in marriage—a life of legalized lust, void of the sacredness of the marriage tie. Man had filled the earth with violence, and man's wickedness was very great.

While Noah preached, the door of the ark stood open—and the weeks grew into months, and the months grew into years, and men grew in sin, and matured in transgressions, and ripened in iniquity, making of God's long suffering mercy an occasion to sin yet more and more.

Doubtless some thought that, IF it rained, the ark would be a nice place to be in—but, of course, it would not rain since it never had rained. (Gen. 2:5,6). Possibly some thought that if they went in, and it did not rain, they would be laughed at.

While Noah preached, he labored—his preaching and work all telling the same story—**THE FLOOD WAS COMING!**

While they laughed, he labored—and while they jeered, he joined timbers—while they mocked, he mortised beams—while they danced, he daubed seams with pitch—while they feasted, no doubt he fasted.

The constant sunshine never discouraged Noah—he spent no time looking for clouds, or listening for thunder. He never lost faith in his message.

God had been patient and long-suffering—but the 120 years of grace finally drew to a close. When the time for the flood came, the fowls, and the cattle, and the beasts, and the creeping things were gathered into the ark to restock the earth, and God said to Noah, “Come thou and all thy house into the ark.” Genesis 7:1.

Up to that time the sun shone just as brightly, the birds sang just as sweetly, men plied their callings and pursued their pleasure with no omens or sense of impending disaster. Sin was just as bold and rampant and defiant—the mocking and jeering at the ark and its builder was unabated.

Then!— then!!— THEN!!!— a mysterious and awful thing happened!—the door that stood open so long began to swing slowly shut!— closing tightly!— and “**THE LORD SHUT HIM IN!**”

Then the air grew hazy—and the sky became overcast with clouds, the gentle breezes sighed and moaned, became fitful and angry, increasing to gales and shrieking tempests and tearing tornadoes. Dazzling lightnings leaped across the gathering blackness, and pealing thunders rumbled and roared—and **THEN CAME THE RAIN!**—showers and sheets and torrents and cloud-bursts; and “the same day were all the fountains of the deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.” Gen. 7:11.

In the meantime, **THE DOOR WAS SHUT!** The same door that shut Noah and his family **IN**, shut all that unbelieving generation **OUT!**

The time came when every one of them **believed!**—but **THE DOOR WAS SHUT!**

The time came when they pleaded and prayed for admittance, and beat their fists upon the ark—**AFTER THE DOOR WAS SHUT!**

Outside the ark the “**King of Terrors**” held universal sway. Retributive Justice had transformed a world of life into a world of death, destruction, worldwide and mountain-high, engulfing the earth in universal ruin. A fair creation that once

called from its Maker the superlative note of praise, was now by the same Omnipotent hand turned into a chaos of ruin—because of man's SIN.

Above this carnival of destruction, with its nameless tragedies unseen and unheard—rode the ark with its precious cargo of life, bound for the Port of Hope in a renewed world.

The destruction was not instantaneous, but gradual. The lowlands were first inundated and deserted. Perhaps few perished there—most fled to the uplands. As the flood crept upward, submerging the elevations, men and beasts and great snakes fought for possession of little islands just above the rising waters. Gradually and relentlessly that ever-increasing menace pursued and overtook them one by one—and there came the hush of a great silence, unbroken by frenzied appeal or supplication of prayer—hushed was the voice of ridicule—silenced the mockings of unbelief—stilled were the wise men and their arguments that there would be no flood.

Infidels would have us believe that the story of the flood is but a superstition—a baseless legend—an invention of priest-craft. Let Earth bear her own testimony to the flood. Spread over the tops of highest mountains are sea shells and skeletons of fish and deep-sea monsters—HOW CAME THEY THERE? Skeletons of elephants and whales were found buried in England, skeletons of crocodiles in Germany—HOW CAME THEY THERE? In Artic Siberia, elephants that cannot live in a cold climate are found frozen in the ice with their flesh so well preserved that dogs and wolves eat of it greedily, and in several instances scientists have had a meal of this ancient meat which has been kept in cold storage down through the centuries. The question is—HOW DID IT COME THERE? Butterflies have been found in glacial ice at Cardovo, Alaska—HOW CAME THEY THERE? The FLOOD is the answer to all these questions—they were washed there by the flood.

The story of the ark and of the flood is a vital story of our time. Jesus' chief use of it was as a type of the spiritual blindness and pleasure loving spirit that will characterize the time of His coming.

Jesus said: "For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered in the ark, and KNEW not until the flood came and took them all away, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:38,39.

For 120 years Noah had been preaching the coming of the flood—yet they “KNEW NOT,” until it came—evidently, they BELIEVED NOT—yet it came! This story reveals the enormity of sin—its prevalence and judgment. It reveals God’s mercy that bears long with the wicked that they might repent. It reveals God’s uniform way in dealing with the wicked to amply warn them before judgment.

“But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.” Luke 17:29,30.

The ark is a type of Christ. As the ark carried over from the old world the citizens for the new, just so, Christ will carry over from this world the citizens of the “new Heavens and new Earth.”

Has my reader engaged **PASSAGE?**

—Sel.

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March 13, 1977

### FAITH’S REWARD

Gen. 8:1 And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged;

13 And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry.

14 And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

20 And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

21 And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

Gen. 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

Heb. 10:35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

**Memory Verse:** For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. Isa. 54:9.

**Central Thought:** By faith Noah built the ark and went inside. By faith he waited until the waters went down. That faith was rewarded.

**Word Definition:** *Covenant* means (1) "two or more individuals are to do, or keep from doing, a specified thing; a compact, (2) promises made by God to man, as recorded in the Bible." Web. Dic. *Rainbow* is the "arc containing the colors of the spectrum in consecutive bands, formed in the sky by the refraction, reflection and dispersion of the sun's rays in falling rain or mist."

## LESSON BACKGROUND

A powerful and similar instinct took possession of all the animals, fowls, every creeping thing, and two by two they went into the ark. This was accomplished by the power of God. God said to Noah and his family, "Come . . . into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Gen. 7:1. God still had mercy and waited seven days and then He shut the door.

The breaking up of the fountains of the great deep, and the raining 40 days and nights, had raised the waters 15 cubits (a cubit is about 18 inches which would make it about 22 feet) above the highest mountain; after 40 days it appears to have continued at this height for 150 more days. Gen. 7:21. "Noah

was in the ark a complete solar year, or 365 days." Clarke Commentary.

God had waited 120 years upon that generation to repent after the preaching of Noah, but they continued on in their sins. Sad but true, the wicked will be punished.

Noah sent out a raven first to check the conditions of the world. Some commentators feel that the raven ate from floating food and must have rested on the ark, but was not admitted, as it would be impossible for the raven to fly 21 days. Our text is not sufficient to enlighten us. The dove came back and then seven days later was sent forth again. This time the dove returned with an olive leaf in its mouth. This made Noah know that the waters were a few feet from the ground.

—M. Miles

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Discuss some things God said that He remembered. Does God ever forget? Why does He speak of remembering?
2. Discuss the reward of Noah's faith and our reward of faith. What are the necessary things we need to do to receive the reward in the end?
3. What was the first thing that Noah did, and what should be the first thing we do when entering into any new day, or new venture, etc.?
4. What is a covenant and discuss God's covenant He made and the sign given?
5. Can man dictate to God?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

When we see the rainbow today we think of God's promises. What a wonderful manifestation of sealing His covenant with Noah and his posterity, that He would never destroy all of mankind by a flood again! God is a master at doing things in such a beautiful way. It seems that God loves colors. He has given us so many to enjoy in such varied ways. God was pleased with Noah for he offered up the sacrifices as soon as he came out of the ark. This was the new start in a brand new world.

Let our minds dwell upon the thought of how much patience, faith, and confidence it took for Noah to do as he did. If we were in Noah's place would we have been just as faithful to move step by step as he did? God said it would rain but Noah had never seen rain. God said there would be a flood, but Noah had never seen a flood. God said that he should make an ark



big enough for him to live in and for all the animals, but Noah didn't understand all about that. What if the animals didn't come in and how could he get them in? Surely there were many questions Noah could have had, that would have hindered his faith and he easily could have thrown away his confidence in God's Word. But faithful Noah went right ahead and did all that God told him. Now his faith was rewarded.

Are your problems in life beyond your understanding? Has God called you to do those things that may seem to you very hard and beyond your ability? Does the mountain of difficulties look beyond surmounting? Have faith in God! Do not cast away your confidence in God. Have patience, after you have done the will of God, you will receive the "great recompence of reward." Praise God!

The usual meaning of *covenant* is, "a compact entered into by two parties, with engagements on both sides, and ratified in solemn form." But the covenant here signifies God's gracious promises to men, whereby He engages to grant them certain blessings on His own terms. Man has no right to dictate to God and He reserves the power to bestow goodness. The character of God leads us to expect the advances of His goodness towards men. When God enters into a covenant with His creatures He binds Himself. The covenant that He entered into with Noah was an act of pure grace and it was outward, but full of deep and precious meaning. God said He would "look upon it [rainbow] that I may remember." This was said for our benefit, yet some things God has said he would remember, stand out from others. He remembers the acts and signs of faith, the deeds of love. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper is an example. It is for us, so we may fix our heart with delight, devotion, and with humility upon the things that Jesus suffered for us.

—M. Miles

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Think of the joy that filled the hearts of Noah and his wife and their three sons and their wives! They had endured what had to be endured, and fulfilled what God had required of them. Now the darksome flood was past, and the waters had receded to the point that it was safe for this company of faithful ones to emerge from the ark, which had been their dwelling for over a year. Just imagine the wild joy of the animals as they came forth to sunlight and fresh air, once again to be free and live as they had before. What gratitude filled the hearts of Noah and his family as they stepped foot on the firm, solid, dry ground again! It

was the normal and rightful thing to do as they prepared an altar for a special sacrifice of thanksgiving and worship to God. This they did. An altar was built and the sacrifice was offered upon it. This pleased God. He was near to the heart of this righteous man who had faithfully obeyed His command. Words of comfort and promises of future blessings are breathed from His great loving heart.

As they stood beside the burning sacrifice, watching the smoke rising to the skies they probably heard the voice of God speaking to them. Looking toward the heavens, think of the wonder, praise, admiration, and joy they felt in their hearts as they beheld the beautiful bow of colors spreading across their raptured view! This is a sacred and touching scene. How glad they were that they obeyed the Lord! How blessed they felt in their souls. Their faith had saved them. A clean, new world was before them. Their hearts were filled with joy and anticipation of future blessings even though much work awaited them.

Will it not be thus with us when we reach our heavenly goal after being true and keeping the faith for God and Christ? You can be sure it will. This joy will be eternal. How glad and thankful we will be to join with the saved of all ages in singing glory and honour and thanksgiving to Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever. Amen.

—L. Busbee

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March 20, 1977

### FROM BABEL (CONFUSION) TO PENTECOST

Gen. 11:1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.

3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

6 And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

8 So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

**Memory Verse:** For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. James 3:16.

**Central Thought:** It is not through man's ideas that unity will prevail between mankind, but through the workings of the Holy Spirit, dwelling in each individual who has been cleansed and filled with God's power by the Holy Spirit.

**Word Definition:** "The name *Bable* is connected with the Hebrew meaning 'to confound, and would mean properly, confusion.' But the native etymology is Bab IL, the gate of IL, or El— 'the gate of God.' " —Hom. Com. The term, *confound their language*, here rendered confound "means to pour together, in a way to produce confusion of sounds or dialects." *Bricks:* The bricks were burned, not just dried in the sun, which made them last longer. The country abounded in whitish clay soil, but was deficient in stones.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We have skipped some accounts about Noah and his apparent sin. Noah had been busy in preparing the ark but now that work was over. Activity with a worthy end in view is the best preservative of virtue. Everyone should have one great purpose in life and keep busy at accomplishing it. Ease and gratification of success bring dangers to the soul. Noah rested in one work accomplished, forgetting that the great purpose of life still

remained. Adam fell through sensual indulgence and so did Noah. Noah sinned by excessive indulgence in drinking the fruit of the vine. While helpless with excess of wine, his son dishonors him by a shameless deed. His two brothers did an act of kindness. Love covers, evil uncovers. No doubt Noah offered more sacrifices unto God for his sin.

Noah made a prophecy about the descendants of his three sons. Ham, who sinned against his father was given a curse. Ham's descendants were the Babylonians, Phoenicians, Carthaginians and Egyptians. They flourished for years but were brought under by the Assyrians, who were Shemites. The Persians, Macedonians and the Romans were all Japhethites. Japheth was enlarged. He was the progenitor of the inhabitants of Europe, Asia, and America. (Homilitic Com.) Through Shem, Jesus Christ was to come. More could be written but we will leave it at this point. —M. Miles

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. How many times is the word "us" used in verses three and four. What does the Bible tell us to say about our plans?
2. Did God only look at the building or did He look at the hearts of those who built the Tower of Babel? What did he see?
3. What did God do about the plans of the people?
4. What happened when God sent the Holy Spirit into the hearts of saved people and the church on the day of Pentecost?
5. Did the language barrier hinder the glorious plan of God being scattered abroad?
6. Discuss the difference between God's unity and man's unity.

#### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

God's purpose was for men to spread over the world, by conquering difficulties and subduing all things to their use. The builders of Babel thought they would prevent such a result, devise a plan by which the people would be one—a compact brotherhood. God's plan was that true unity of the human race should be spiritual—an invisible tie by which men are bound to Himself and to one another by the bonds of faith, obedience, and love for righteousness. The plan of the builders was to make themselves great in the land and make for themselves a name. They wanted to attain glory without God, by human wisdom and might. Unscrupulous men will go to great lengths to make for themselves a name. We have that in this day. Notice the work, the expended energy, schemes and money many politicians will use, just to make a name for themselves. Such pride was in

the people in the days of the Tower of Babel. Men will dishonor God to make a name for themselves. Any name which men can make, without the help and approval of God cannot be lasting.

"The Lord came down" to look at what man was building, to look at their hearts and the purposes of their works. He saw their rebellion, pride, and ambitions. They wanted to get to heaven by their works. What a sad picture God saw! What does God see today in the so-called Christian world? Many are filled with pride in their works. Their conscience hurts when they think of their sin, rebellion and pride, so they give a huge amount of money so their name will look good, and they feel that surely God will overlook some of their sins. But works will not get a person to heaven. Works without faith are not noticed by God to the extent of influencing Him to overlook sin. Works that come from a heart filled with love for God and prompted by Him will be accepted by God.

There came a day when God wanted to bring souls together in unity. After Jesus ascended to heaven, and the 120 were in the upper room on the day of Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit into their hearts and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and fire. God gave them the gift of speaking in tongues and every nation under heaven heard the truths from God in their own language. What a glorious miracle that was! It was God's doing and not man's.

—M. Miles

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Because of man's highmindedness and sinful imaginations to do things unrestrained, God was constrained to step in and intervene with things that man had intended to do. It was a wise move God made when He confounded the speech, the sole means of the people's communicating with one another. The people were so united and co-operating so well with each other that the work was no doubt progressing efficiently. But when they began to talk in different tongues, they became barbarous to one another. The work stopped. They could not go on. They began to scatter out here and there with any and all of those who were of like tongue. Thus the work designed by man's vanity and pride was brought to naught.

Man has endeavored at various times down through the course of time to devise ways and means of bringing man into harmony and unity again. Every effort has fallen short of success but one. That has been the New Testament plan of salvation that has been brought to us by Jesus Christ. Instead of dividing people, Christ unites them in Himself. Our relationship with

Christ fixes our relationship with one another. If we truly love Christ and are led by His Spirit, we will be one with all who are of like precious faith. It really works that way. The many doctrines and numerous divisions among professed Christians are but the fruits of Babel, confusion. It is not God's plan for people to be thus divided. Pentecost brings people into one; it did back in the days of the apostles, and it will now. Entire sanctification of the Spirit will unite believers into one heart, one soul, and one mind. At Babel they were divided because of their sin, but at Pentecost they were united because of righteousness.

—L. Busbee

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March 27, 1977

### COME OUT OF BABEL CONFUSION

Rev. 18:1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

II Cor. 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Heb. 12:22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Rom. 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

**Memory Verse:** For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. I Cor. 14:33.

**Central Thought:** Protestantism or the many false corrupt churches or sects of the day have fallen and God is calling every honest-hearted person to come out of her and become separate, and not be partaker of her sins.

**Word Definition:** *Belial* means "evil, ungodly (men), wicked." Strong's' Con. *Yoked* means "something that binds, unites; to join together; to marry."

## LESSON BACKGROUND

As all Bible readers know, Revelation is written in symbols. The word Babylon comes from the name *Babel*, which means "confusion." The ancient city of Babylon often mentioned in the old Testament, ages before John wrote, had ceased to be inhabited. The only dwellers among the ruins were beasts and serpents. John, in our lesson refers not to old Babylon, but to some power yet unseen when he was upon the earth. Of course we know that the old Babylon persecuted the people of God, destroyed the temple in Jerusalem and carried God's people into captivity. "The Old Babylon was a mighty, resistless universal empire." Babylon was a haughty, oppressive empire full of idolatry, and persecuted God's people.

We want to note that the 17th chapter of Revelation discusses the apostate church by the symbol of a woman who had a name written on her forehead which also described her true character. It was "Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." Catholicism was Babylon, yet it mentions that she is the "mother of harlots," which would be the corrupt churches, who are her children. "A

careful study of the prophecy now under consideration will show that it has particular reference to the Protestant division of Babylon. It contained many of God's children; whereas Paganism was always a false religion and never held any of God's saints. . . . The description of this apostate church given in the preceding chapter shows clearly that instead of being partly composed of God's saints, she was their most bitter and relentless persecutor, yea, was 'drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.' This is definite proof that the present phase of Babylon under consideration is the Protestant division; and her moral fall is the grand signal for the escape of God's people who have partly composed her number, as the fall of ancient Babylon was for the escape of the Israelites."—(F. G. Smith). With this fact in mind we will further study our lesson. —M. Miles

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What does Babylon in ancient times mean and what is the prophetic symbol in our lesson?
2. Discuss the rise and fall of Protestantism.
3. What is the call to all children of God who are yoked up together with Protestantism or sectism?
4. What do the children of God come to, and what are their freedoms in Zion?
5. Discuss the end of fallen, false churches or movements.

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

In the days of the apostles the early church was pure and undefiled, but as time went on there came a falling away. Peter speaks of false prophets among the people who would bring in damnable heresies. II Peter 2:1,2. The Apostle Paul speaks of "a falling away" and the "man of sin" who would call himself God and be worshipped. He exalts himself above all. II Thess. 2:3,4. Out of the seeds of this apostasy the Catholic church arose. Revelation lets us know that the dragon (paganism) "gave power unto the beast" (Catholicism). The beast (Catholicism) made "war with the saints," (Rev. 13:7) in the prophetic time described as, "time, and times, and half time." Dan. 4:25. This would be 1260 years. The dividing date of the early church, and the period of the "falling away" would be in the year of 270 A. D., then the reign of Catholicism, being 1260 years, would bring it to 1530 A. D. (Augsburg Confession). Then we see the rise of Protestantism, which also killed millions. From the year of 1530, the people began to lose sight of the



Word and the Spirit of God as governors. They organized themselves into sects, made their own regulations, creeds and disciplines. This became just another form of apostasy, and gained its position and influence in the world largely through political power. Protestantism is also referred to in Revelation as the "false prophet." (16:13; 19:20; 20:10). The mother and her daughters show a close relation between Rome and Protestantism.

In the beginning of the Protestant era there was a great reformation in which God did work mightily in the salvation of men and women. But Protestantism did not restore all of the primitive truths of the early church and Christianity. They made an image—organized themselves into ecclesiastical bodies with their own rules and disciplines. Spirituality began to decline and soon the movement was dead and cold without Holy Spirit leadership, yet this "false prophet" performed mighty works or miracles as prophesied, to deceive the people.

In 1880, the trumpet began to sound "come out of her my people, be ye separate, sayeth the Lord." Brother D. S. Warner and others began to preach the whole truth. They taught the unity of God's people, justification, sanctification, divine healing, and holiness. Many heard the call and came out from sectism. They came unto Mount Zion, "unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." They came rejoicing, declaring their freedom from man-made churches and freedom in the spirit to worship God without man-rule. They rejoiced in being filled with the Holy Spirit and separation from the world. Their names were written in heaven and not on man's books. God gave them peace; they were free from strife, worshipping the Lord in righteousness, peace, and with joy in the Holy Ghost. They came out of Babel confusion, which had fallen and had become the habitation of every foul spirit, and of devils. They did not want to partake of her plagues nor be partakers of her sins.

—M. Miles

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

God hates division. He hates more the thing that brings about division and necessitates it. Because of the sinful and proud disposition of men's hearts at the tower of Babel, God was forced to cause division to develop in their midst. This was to retard the development of their evil plans which needed mutual co-operation to be fulfilled. We think the world is evil and so it is. But we have not seen the depth of evil that could be, if man were united in his aims and pursuits. The jangling and tearing at each other that goes on among the human race, helps to keep man

from going to the extremity on his downward path of development of sin and rebellion against God. Every false and evil movement in the world, whether it be religious or civil, has been frustrated and overthrown by dissensions and strife within its own structure. God has had a hand in this. In Acts 23:6-9 we find Paul before the Jewish council in Jerusalem. They were trying to condemn him, when he looked upon the group and observed something. He saw that the group of people persecuting him were in confusion and did not agree on the matter of the resurrection of the dead. He had only to make one brief statement of his faith, and it split the group wide open, cleaving it asunder in such turmoil of dissension that it stopped the whole affair. In the olden times when an army of much smaller size was against another foe, one plan of attack was to cause dissension among the enemy and fear and consternation so that they would begin to slay one another. Victory was easy. Can we not see why God ordained His Church to be one? Unity binds us together and assures us of success in the work of the Lord. It is the devil's joy to get some confusion going among a congregation. He knows that it will do more damage than anything else. May God help us today to strive for the unity of the faith, and keep the unity of the Spirit.

—L. Busbee

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