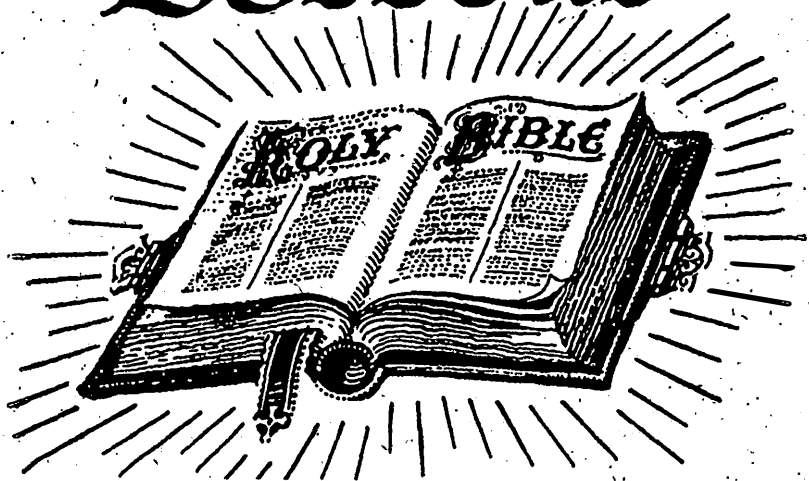


# Bible Lessons



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

**ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE**

Vol. 44, No. 4  
Oct., Nov., Dec.  
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**Volume 44**

**Oct., Nov., Dec.**

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**Publishing the Bible truths in the interest of  
Jesus Christ and His Church**

**Edited by Leslie C. Busbee and Willie E. Murphey**

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## BIBLE LESSONS FOR FOURTH QUARTER, 2012

### THEME FOR FOURTH QUARTER

We feel sweetly and richly inspired of the Holy Spirit to have a series of lessons and studies from the Holy Scriptures concerning the blessed hope that is afforded to us as mortal humanity in the great plan of God and the grace provided by the death and resurrected life of His Holy Son, Jesus Christ. We will draw from the Old Testament writings the wonderful prophecies foretelling this great blessing of His grace and goodness and follow it with the inspiring truths in the New Testament spoken by our Lord and Savior and His disciples. We pray the Lord to bless these lessons to everyone taking part.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee



OCTOBER 7, 2012

### THE HEART OF MAN YEARNING FOR HOPE

Psalm 90:1 ...LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.

3 Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

4 For a thousand years in thy sight *are but* as yesterday when it is past, and *as* a watch in the night.

5 Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are *as* a sleep: in the morning *they are* like grass *which* groweth up.

6 In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

7 For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

8 Thou has set our iniquities before thee, our secret *sins* in the light of thy countenance.

9 For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale *that is told*.

10 The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

11 Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.

12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

13 Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

14 O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

15 Make us glad according to the days *wherein* thou hast afflicted us, and the years *wherein* we have seen evil.

16 Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

17 And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us; and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

**MEMORY VERSE:** So teach us to number our days, that we may apply *our* hearts unto wisdom. Psalm 90:12.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Realizing how fleeting and soon to pass are our mortal days and that we will soon pass into eternity, we need to seek our Creator with all of our hearts for His help, mercy, and grace to overcome sin and let Him work His great salvation and hope in our hearts and lives.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 90:1, "*dwelling place*": Shelter or refuge.

2, "*from everlasting to everlasting*": From eternity through time's ages unto eternity.

3, "*turnest man to destruction*": Brought man under the sentence of death. "*Return, ye children of men*": Go back to the dust from whence ye came.

4, "*as a watch in the night*": A time of guarding and keeping in sight.

5, "*as a sleep*": Pass from this life as a man going to sleep. "*like grass*": As Isaiah 40:6 says, "All flesh is grass." The mortal state of man soon to wither and die.

7, "*consumed by thine anger*": Sentenced to die because of sin and transgression.

8, "*set our iniquities before thee*": Beholding and recognizing the sinful state of man.

9, *"spend our years as a tale that is told"*: Finish our mortal years like a murmuring sigh.

10, *"threescore years and ten"*: 70 years. *"fourscore years"*: Eighty years. *"strength"*: Pride and capability. *"fly away"*: Fade away from life.

12, *"apply our hearts unto wisdom"*: Bring before God reverence and wise submission.

13, *"let it repent thee"*: Give pity, compassion, and forgiveness.

14, *"satisfy us early"*: May we seek and find thee in our youth.

16, *"Let thy work appear"*: May we be able to behold the working of Thy grace and holiness in our hearts and lives.

17, *"And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us"*: May God's image of holiness and purity from all sin be manifested in our lives. *"establish thou the work of our hands"*: Help us that our works will be acceptable and well pleasing in Thy sight.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

The Scriptural heading of Psalm 90 says, "A prayer of Moses, the man of God." Although this has been questioned, I have been impressed with the thought, considering Moses and his situation at the age of 70 years. Stephen in Acts 7:23-30 brought out that Moses was full forty years old at the time that he fled from Egypt and was a stranger in the land of Midian for another forty years. So at the age of 70 years he probably was, as Exodus 3:1 states, keeping the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law. Perhaps he was troubled and bewildered concerning his state and the woeful bondage that his people, the children of Israel, were in down in Egypt. He was greatly concerned for them. His situation could have been a cause for him to have feelings and thoughts that this 90<sup>th</sup> Psalm express. And then think of ourselves in this world of sin and trouble. This Psalm has some valuable basic truths about God and our need for His help, mercy, and salvation.

We are needy of God's help and mercy. He is the everlasting God, and we are mortals suffering decay and coming death. God is beholding us in our sinful state, and we need to apply our hearts unto wisdom and repent of our sins and get right with Him. We need to be able to see and understand His work of salvation and victory over sin. We need the beauty of

His holiness upon us and the work of our hands to be acceptable and established in His sight. Thus we will have a blessed hope and a bright future before us.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What are all of us mortals facing in this short earthly life?
2. What is our life compared to in the Holy Scriptures?
3. What must we do to apply our hearts unto wisdom?
4. What is the work and beauty of God that we need?
5. Why do we need Him to establish the work of our hands?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Brother D. S. Warner was inspired to write the song "The Home of the Soul" and refers to the first scripture in the text of our lesson: "LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." This song, No. 30 in the Evening Light Songs, declares that "he that dwelleth in love ever dwelleth in God, sweet home never clouded by fears; and this heaven of love is our native abode through time and eternity's years." He finishes the song with the declaration that "we will enter no door that is opened by men who promise a home for the soul; for in Christ we abide in the church that will stand while ages eternally roll."

Fellowship and favor with our eternal Creator is the greatest blessing a person can have in this mortal life. God is eternal, and has shown much favor and mercy to us poor and needy, helpless mortals whom our lesson shows as being on the brink of death as the grass withers and dies. God sees and beholds our iniquities and secret sins. But He has made a wonderful provision for us in that respect. He sent His Son Jesus into the world to pay the price for our forgiveness and deliverance from the dominion of sin. We can overcome satan and his dominating power and apply our hearts to wisdom and the fear of God. We can take advantage of His mercy and find gladness and rejoicing all of our mortal days. We can understand and behold His work of grace and victory for our happiness and salvation, and manifest it to our children. And we can portray in our hearts and lives the beauty of the LORD our God and the work of our hands can be for our eternal good.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Most of us remember the song called "Wasted Years." Sadly there are many who spend their lives in wrath and the tale that is told of their life is not a pleasant experience to relate. Wasted, wasted, wasted are the hours, the minutes and the seconds of their life as people seek vain pleasures that bring no lasting reward. Internet time, telephone time, leisure time all combine to absorb huge blocks of one's life that often yield no productivity. Is it possible that our life is running in a mad tornado of vanity? If so, then today is a good time to start numbering our days and working toward building a legacy of truth and righteous works that will bring blessings in the days ahead.

Make your dwelling place in the Lord. In Christ we find everything we need to live a fulfilled and happy life. There is refuge, shelter, forgiveness, atonement, healing of soul and body, value, love and don't forget the living water that springs up into everlasting life! When we allow our minds to dwell on the profitable things of God, His Word, His goodness and mercy, then it becomes spiritual food and provides enduring strength for our souls.

As we partake of His Divine nature our life becomes a beacon of joy that shines the beauty of salvation to the world. If we work to add faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity to our lives, we are given a special promise! "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." II Peter 1:8. This is a sure formula for having the Lord to establish the work of our hands, which in reality is the beautiful work of His hands through our lives.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



OCTOBER 14, 2012

### PROPHECIES OF HOPE

Isaiah 25:1 O LORD, thou *art* my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful *things*; thy counsels of old *are* faithfulness *and* truth.

4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow

from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

6 And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

7 And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.

8 He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it.

9 And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Zechariah 9:12 Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.

Proverbs 11:4 Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.

7 When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth.

14:32 The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.

Hebrews 6:17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

**MEMORY VERSE:** The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish. Proverbs 10:28.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God has given to mankind through His Son, Jesus Christ, unfailing assurance of eternal life if we will flee from sin and worldliness and have steadfast faith to follow His example and fully trust Him all the way.



## WORD DEFINITIONS

Isaiah 25:4, "*as a storm against the wall*": The persecutions inflicted against the righteous who faithfully serve the Lord will be as a storm beating against the wall of salvation that surrounds them.

6, "*feast of fat things*": Abundance of the best and most nourishing spiritual food for the soul. "*wines of the lees*": The full strength of the wine with all of the ingredients. This is referring to spiritual nourishment of the Word and doctrine of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. "*fat things full of marrow*": Rich spiritual nourishment for the soul. "*well refined*": The very best, providing all the ingredients needed for salvation and spiritual health.

7, "*covering cast over all people*": The sentence of death upon all humanity. "*the veil that is spread over all nations*": The vain thoughts of the carnal mind that keeps the souls of men from seeing the real truth.

8, "*swallow up death in victory*": Destroy death by being resurrected unto eternal life. "*the rebuke of his people*": The reproaches and sufferings that God's people suffer from this present ungodly world.

Zechariah 9:12, "*strong hold*": The anchor of the gospel of Christ. "*prisoners of hope*": The pilgrims and strangers who are desiring and seeking a better, that is, a heavenly country. Hebrews 11:12-16 "*render double unto thee*": Will reward you far beyond what you may suffer.

Proverbs 14:32, "*hope in his death*": Assurance of being resurrected.

Hebrews 6:17, "*immutability*": With no danger of failure or change. "*confirmed*": Made it even stronger.

18, "*strong consolation*": Unfailing hope and intense anticipation. "*refuge*": Escape and deliverance from death and eternal damnation.

19, "*anchor*": Means of steadfast and unfailing assurance. "*within the veil*": Beyond the earthly realm into eternal life.

20, "*forerunner*": The One Who went through suffering and death to resurrection and eternal life: Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we will study several Old Testament prophecies pointing to this blessed hope in Christ and His resurrected glory and the New Testament truths of how it is so

wonderfully given to all who will follow all the way in the steps of Jesus Christ. We behold in Isaiah's bright prophecy God's goodness and grace to the poor and needy, the blessed hope of eternal life, and the swallowing up of death in victory. The apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15 expounds the glorious benefit of Christ's resurrection from the dead. He declares that all who truly believe and follow the Lord Jesus will also be a partaker of that same resurrection in that last day when Christ comes the second time. The feast of fat things and wines of the lees and the deliverance from the covering and veil upon the souls of men refer to the spiritual victory; and the swallowing up of death is the resurrection of the body to eternal life. Paul declares in I Corinthians 15:54 that the change from this corruptible to incorruption, and the change from this mortal to immortality will bring to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

Then in Hebrews 6:17-20 we have the anchor of hope presented by the promise coming through Abraham as being confirmed by God's oath. And the writer declares that these two immutable things—the promise and the oath—make it so that we who have fled from sin and this present evil world can have a refuge and a hope in Christ that is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, reaching beyond this earthly element into the eternal realm of life. It was for this purpose that our "forerunner," Jesus Christ, went through the death of the cross and was resurrected to everlasting life.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Isaiah say that God would be to the poor and needy?
2. What kind of veil over the soul will be taken away?
3. How did Paul say that death would be swallowed up in victory?
4. What are the two immutable things giving us strong consolation?
5. What veil can we enter into where Christ has entered?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

We notice in our text from Isaiah 25:4 how that God is a strength to the poor and the needy in their distress. This surely ties in with several other scriptures including our Lord's words

in Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." And we notice how that this goes along with the other things: the feast of the fat things, wines of the lees, the destruction of the covering and the veil upon the people. And we see how it foretells the blessed hope of death being swallowed up in victory. And we see this declared to be fulfilled in the great resurrection described by the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15. Death will be swallowed up in victory. As Revelations 21:4 says, "There will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." Oh, what a blessed hope we have in Christ Jesus! When He appears in His eternal glory to bring this present world to an end, the dead in Christ shall arise and meet Him in the air! They will be in immortal bodies like His! We will pass through the veil into the realm of eternal life and glory with our blessed Savior and all who have loved, obeyed, and followed Him in this short earthly life.

Jesus was our forerunner, going through the awful suffering and death of the cross, then being raised up incorruptible from the grave and ascending on up to Heaven to intercede for us until the time of our resurrection. Oh, how bright and wonderful is this hope that all who follow Christ can have! It is truly an anchor for the soul, both sure, steadfast, and unfailling. God promised it, provided it in Christ, and will surely bring it to pass for all who are faithful and true. Let us hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"He will swallow up death in victory..."

I read a mother's account of her little six-year-old son, who began to ask her, "Mama, what will it be like at the end of the world? When will we see Jesus?" She did her best to explain at the time, but as the days went by, he asked again and again. Then came the day when he went to the mailbox to get the mail. It all happened so fast; the big truck seemed to come out of nowhere and couldn't stop in time. Through the window his daddy witnessed in horror as his little son was hit. Later, as the truck driver sobbed at their kitchen table, he told how, as the child looked up just before impact, a bright smile lit up his face. They wondered: what was it he saw?

A few days later, his little cousin and close playmate confided in his mother: "Mama, Josiah didn't die. I had a dream last night, and Jesus showed me what happened. He was in the road and a big angel came and got him, right before the big truck hit him."

To the hearts of the parents overcome with grief, this simple comfort given to a child was a healing balm. It lifted that "dark veil."

Such comfort in grief must have also been given to Septimus Winner, who penned the song, *Whispering Hope*, in 1868:

*"Hope, as an anchor so steadfast, rends the dark veil for the soul,  
Whither the Master has entered, robbing the grave of its goal.  
Come then, oh, come, glad fruition, come to my sad, weary heart.  
Come, oh thou blest hope of glory; never, oh, never depart."*

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**OCTOBER 21, 2012**

### **CHRIST'S TEACHINGS ON HOPE**

Matthew 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Luke 12:15 And he (Jesus) said unto them, Take heed and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

20 But God said unto him, *Thou fool*, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Luke 20:34 ...The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

36 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.

Mark 10:29 ...Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

30 But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, or brethren, or sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

**MEMORY VERSE:** ...Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. Mark 8:34-35.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus taught plainly that if we seek for earthly wealth and human praise and honor, we will lose it all and fail to obtain the eternal treasures of eternal life in the world to come.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

Luke 12:15. "*Take heed, and beware of covetousness*": Be careful and diligent to keep back from the love of money and worldly gain.

Verse 20. *"thy soul shall be required of thee"*: This means that death is coming and his soul was to give an account of his life to God Who gave it to him. Ecclesiastes 12:7 declares: "The spirit shall return unto God Who gave it."

Luke 20:35, *"accounted worthy"*: Deemed entirely deserving.

Verse 36. *"equal unto the angels"*: Will be exactly like and of the same rank and being as the heavenly beings.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

For our lesson today we want to consider some of Christ's teachings concerning the hope of the godly and upright in the sight of God. We are persuaded by the Scriptures that this present earthly existence is but temporary, and we all as mortals are destined to an existence in the eternal world that will be after this present world passes away to nothing. Many of the things that our Lord and Savior taught have to do with our eternal existence in that world to come. Our first scripture concerns one of man's strongest temptations and greatest weaknesses. And that is the love of money and worldly possessions. The apostle Paul declared in I Timothy 6:9 and 10: "...They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." He also exhorted Timothy thus in verse 11: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." Jesus warns us about laying up treasures on earth which will deteriorate and pass away. He exhorts us rather to lay up treasures in the eternal realm. And he warns us that where our treasure is, there will be our heart also. And we can add: Where our heart is will determine our eternal destiny.

We also have the parable Jesus gave of the rich man who selfishly decided to hoard up the extra wealth he was expecting for himself instead of thinking of the poor about him and others less fortunate. Yes, he made the plans, but death came that very night and his hopes and dreams were to be taken by someone else. And, most important, his precious eternity bound soul was to give an account before the God Who made him.

Then we have the words of Jesus concerning the bright future of all who surrender their all to God and the gospel of Christ and go all the way for Him. It is surely true what Jesus said, that when we give up all to follow Him, He rewards us with many blessings in this life and will reward us with life in the world to come. And our Memory Verse joins with the joyous declaration of eternal life and gain as a reward for giving our life wholly to Him and His precious holy way.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is it such a temptation to lay up treasures on this earth?
2. What are some of the treasures that we can lay up in heaven?
3. What did the rich man overlook in his selfish plans and desires?
4. What will be the reward given to all who give all to the Lord?
5. How will we lose our life, and how can we save it?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It means so much for a person to get a vision of eternal treasures and set his heart upon what the Holy Bible reveals as wealth that is truly worth seeking for. We have a wonderful example in the Bible of a man who caught the vision of Christ and the purpose that he had in following after it. In Philippians 3:7-14 we have Paul's vision of what he must do to attain to the resurrection of the dead. He shows how he counted all but loss, "that I may win Christ." To win is to have and hold for all its value. Then he said, "be found in him with the righteousness of faith." He must follow diligently the examples of those heroes of faith before him. Then he said, "that I may know him;" that is, be closely associated and acquainted with the real Spirit of Christ." Then he said, "(to know) the power of his resurrection;" that is to experience the transforming effect of being fully in touch with the risen Christ. And that is not all. He wanted to know the "fellowship of his sufferings." He wanted to experience and share with Christ the things that He suffered while in the flesh. And then he said, "being made conformable unto His death." This means that Paul wanted to give his life and die just as his Lord suffered and died. And Paul

was desiring these things "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

And then Paul went on to say: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." He did not feel that he had reached it yet. "But," he said, "I follow after, if that I may apprehend (gain a strong hold on) that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." And then he went on to say that he did not count himself to have apprehended, "but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind,...I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." What a splendid example for us to follow! The hope of righteousness is no little matter to just take for granted and think it is going to be regardless. It is something to strive for, press for, suffer for, and die for! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

I will not forget the experience, though many years have lapsed, of having the opportunity to visit a show home in one of the nicer subdivisions of Oklahoma City—Nichols Hills. As I walked in the front door, I was met with an expansive living area. The ceilings were high and adorned with expensive crown molding. The staircase curved upstairs and was also beautifully decorated with fine woodworking. The kitchen was beautiful with every modern convenience. One thing that struck me was that the master bath and walk in closet was as big or bigger than my living room. I was awe struck with the beauty.

I remember driving home from there having a sinking feeling as I compared what I saw with what I had. I was alone and in my heart I began to question—"What am I doing with my life?" I was feeling down and unsuccessful.

Looking back, I am confident that it was the Holy Spirit that brought the words of a song of Heaven to my mind. I began to sing through the verses, and all of a sudden Heaven opened to my spirit and I was overwhelmed with its beauty and reality. By the time I reached my little home I was happy in the Lord and rejoicing, assured of a mansion over there. Heaven makes the riches and finery of this life pale into insignificance. "Ever keep Heaven in view."

—Bro. Bob Wilson



**OCTOBER 28, 2012**

**DEATH UPON ALL BECAUSE OF SIN**

Romans 3:19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

5:12 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:

13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is by one man, Jesus Christ*, hath abounded unto many.

16 And not as *it was* by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

18 Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Because the first man, Adam, sinned and was put out of the garden of Eden, barred from the tree of life, and made subject to have to suffer physical death, passing it on to all mankind, God promised to send a Savior who would restore man to purity, holiness, and fellowship with Him, and give us a hope of being resurrected from the dead to eternal life.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Romans 3:19. *"every mouth may be stopped"*: Silence all justifying of one's self. *"guilty before God"*: Under judgment and condemnation to God.

20. *"by the law is the knowledge of sin"*: By means of the law man will have full knowledge and perception of his sinful condition.

23. *"come short"*: Fall and be deficient and below the standard of holiness that pleases God.

Romans 5:12. *"by one man"*: Through the disobedience of Adam. *"death passed upon all men"*: The guilt of sin and physical death became the sad plight of mankind.

13. *"not imputed"*: Not reckoned nor held against.

14. *"death reigned"*: Everyone had to die. *"not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression"*: Adam's sin was disobedience to a well known commandment. But the nature and influence of sin continued to be a dominating force in people's lives even when there was no law or commandment given. There were people who gained favor with God through their faith such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham, but were not condemned or judged for sin. But they still had to die, except for Enoch, whose faith and fellowship with God made him worthy of being translated and not seeing death. *"the figure of him that was to come"*: Adam brought sin into the world, just as Christ brought righteousness and holiness into the world.

15. *"not as the offence, so also is the free gift"*: Just as the offence was passed upon all men, so the free gift is passed unto all men, but only to those who will have faith and be obedient to the will of God.

16, "*justification*": Forgiveness from the guilt and condemnation.

17, "*reign in life*": Overcome sin and live pure, holy, and sinless before God.

19, "*obedience of one*": The obedience of one Man, Jesus Christ, who was faithfully subject to the will of God in allowing Himself to be crucified for the sins of mankind.

20, "*Moreover the law entered*": The law was given along with faith. "*that the offence might abound*": God wanted sin to have a heavy bearing upon the heart of man, so that he would be more willing to be delivered from its dominion. He wanted the awfulness of sin to be more clearly seen and felt.

21, "*grace reign*": The grace of God in Christ will help man to overcome sinful habits and ways to live holy and righteous before God.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

When Adam and Eve disobeyed the command of the Creator and partook of the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they plunged their following generation into the ways and habits of life that were displeasing to Him. There were those who sought the LORD God and very earnestly tried to please Him, such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham. We can see in the account of their faith and obedience to God how they were rewarded. But the general run of humanity was in the paths of sin and disobedience. As the Old Testament brings out, it became such a terrible condition that God brought the flood to destroy the wicked society.

God found a man in Abraham who would trust, believe, and obey Him. Then in Moses He chose to give His holy Law and in this His purpose was, as our lesson brings out, to help man to be conscious and aware of his sinful condition. It was God's wisdom and goodness that He worked in this way. If God had given the law first, man would have been hopelessly condemned. But He established in Abel, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham (along with others) the principles of faith and confidence in His love and goodness. Then, when He gave the law, this faith and confidence helped man to be of good courage to hold fast to God and to deal with the principle of sin.

So with unwavering faith and a zeal to love and obey God's holy and gracious Law men have been able to have fellowship

with God. There were sacrifices and burnt offerings rendered to God through the years, but they were types and shadows of the true Sacrifice that would one day be given by the Son of God on Mount Calvary. God was very wise and gracious in His place and workings for the good of mankind.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What was God's purpose in giving man His holy Law?
2. Why did God want man to be aware of His sinful condition?
3. How did God help man to overcome the dominion of sin?
4. By whose obedience was help given to help us to be obedient?
5. What can we do through the abundance of God's grace?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

We can see the goodness and wisdom of a just and merciful God in the way that He carried out His working plan through the ages! It is evident that God had from before the creation a purpose for the good and well being of His creation. This was "the mystery" and "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Ephesians 3:9-11. It is evident that God wanted man to be obedient to Him. But He would not force man to obey. It had to be fruits of man's will. And God had a plan to help man to overcome even if sin did take over. So we can see that in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer, God has provided the help and grace to enable us to overcome sin and the allurements of Satan and be able to reign victorious for Him in this life.

We can be as Abel, who chose to offer the acceptable sacrifice to God, disregarding the opposition of his brother, Cain, who chose to go his own way, and who killed his brother. We can be as Enoch, who chose to walk with God and please Him through faith. We can and will attain to what Enoch was blessed with in the resurrection at the last day if we will be true and faithful. We can be as Noah who obeyed God in preparing for the awful flood. We can prepare for the last great day and fiery coming of our Savior, which will destroy this present evil world. And we can be as Abraham, also. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Guilt is the emotion through which humans feel and understand condemnation. It is a function of the conscience and helps one determine the difference between right and wrong. A conscience that is properly trained can be a real blessing to the Christian. It's pricks point him to the truth of God's Word.

There is a report of an official, Albert Speer, in Hitler's military who in his testimony accepted responsibility for his actions and was sentenced in the Nuremberg trials for war crimes and crimes against humanity. This man was sentenced to, and served, 20 years in the Spandau prison. After his release he was interviewed by a news reporter and asked if he still felt guilt because of his crimes. He responded that he had fulfilled his prison term and paid his debt to society for his wrongdoing, but even yet he felt pain from the guilt of his conscience and supposed that he always would.

No doubt, there are many who have committed crimes against other people and served their "time" for the misdeed, yet are still suffering from the condemnation of their sin. There is only one remedy for sin and the guilt that results from its commission, that is the atonement of the precious blood of Jesus Christ. If we omit the atonement from our lives, our sin remains and we are hopelessly lost.

"Oh, the precious blood of Jesus—will set you free!"

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



NOVEMBER 4, 2012

### LOOKING BEYOND THE TEMPORAL TO THE ETERNAL

II Corinthians 4:13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord;

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

**MEMORY VERSE:** While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal. II Corinthians 4:18.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** This mortal body is but a temporary dwelling, like a tent, which will one day be laid aside. But through Christ we have hope of an immortal everlasting body that will be given to all who are faithful and true to Him in this earthly pilgrimage of mortal life.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

II Corinthians 4:13, "*believe*": To be persuaded in one's mind and heart; to give the proper credit that is due; to trust fully with no doubt or question; to be fully convicted as true; to fully rely and depend on; and to be steadfast and unmovable in what is believed.

Verse 14, "*Knowing*": Fully understanding. "*present us with you*": Exhibit and make manifest together with all the holy Saints of God.

Verse 15, "*for your sakes*": For your eternal good and blessing. "*through the thanksgiving of many*": Because of the honor and praise given to God by the great host of the righteous Saints that Revelation 7:9 declares to be a number which no man could number. "*redound*": Increase and abound more and more abundantly.

Verse 16, "*renewed*": Kept fresh and strong.

Verse 17, "*light affliction*": Though weighty, difficult, and lengthy in the flesh, the things we suffer as a Christian are very light compared to the glory which we will enjoy hereafter.

Verse 18, "*temporal*": Soon will be over and come to an end.

II Corinthians 5:1, "*tabernacle*": A tent; a temporary dwelling. "*building of God*": A permanent and eternal immortal body.

Verse 2, "*groan*": Sigh in suffering and adversity. "*our house from heaven*": Our immortal body that we will receive at the Lord's coming.

Verse 3, "*naked*": Destitute of eternal life and sentenced to everlasting punishment.

Verse 4, "*being burdened*": Weighed down with adverse conditions and persecutions suffered because of our faith. "*clothed upon*": Be changed from this mortal phase to immortality.

Verse 6, "*at home in the body*": Still in this mortal flesh. "*absent from the Lord*": Separated from the eternal presence of Christ.

Verse 7, "*walk by faith*": While in this mortal body we live and move in full assurance of what we will have eternally. "*not by sight*": Not according to the outward, material, earthly evidences.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Just previous to the text we have in our lesson today, the apostle Paul had joyfully spoken of how God had shone in the hearts of His Saints "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This was and still is a joyful and blessed experience we can have through the inspiration

and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. But then he spoke of us having this treasure in earthen vessels, these mortal bodies, and how we are troubled on every side, perplexed, persecuted, and cast down, but yet not distressed, in despair, nor forsaken or destroyed. He went on to say that we are always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. But this was so that the resurrected life of Christ could be manifested in this mortal flesh. And this was because we have the same spirit of faith that was mentioned in Psalm 116:10 by the writer who had suffered for the Lord. "I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted."

It is and has been proven and repeated over and over in the lives of godly and faithful saints down through the ages, that this present mortal life is attended by much adversity, affliction, suffering, hardships, and heavy burdens. But it all can be and is successfully carried through the faith and trust we can have in God and in the grace and victory accomplished by His Son, our Lord and Savior, Who intercedes for us in Heaven at the right hand of God.

Then Paul makes mention and testifies something that we can know without a doubt. Yes, this earthly tent is going to be taken down by the hand of death. No matter how strong or beautiful people think they are, this human flesh is corruptible and soon to be "dissolved." And everything associated with this mortal phase is doomed to pass away on that final day. As II Peter 3:11, 12 says, "*Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting (eagerly desiring it to hurry up and come) unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.*" Oh, what a blessed hope we have, as the children of the Almighty!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What is it that we are persuaded of concerning our future?
2. What did Paul compare this mortal body with?
3. What are the eternal things not seen that we hope for?
4. How will having immortality keep us from being naked?
5. Why is the child of God willing rather to be absent from the body?



## COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

How sad that so many poor deluded people in this world are carried away with the lusts and desires of this corruptible "tent" that our lesson pictures our mortal body to be likened unto! Pleasure, money, houses, lands, styles, fads, fashions, and all the lusts and appetites of this earthly body rule the habits and ways of the general current of society. And we have many man-made inventions to soak up our interests and concerns. Think of the automobiles, airplanes, big semi-trucks, buildings, stadiums, and all of the other products of the worldly minded man. It is all to pass away in the "twinkling of an eye," as I Corinthians 15:52 declares. All of these things just absorb the heart and mind of humanity from day to day. Death comes, life goes, and very little thought is employed to help bring man to vaster issues of consideration. There is the sun that God created and placed in orbit across these earthly skies. It testifies of the great power and wisdom of our Creator. And so does the lovely moon in its beauty and monthly change. Yet mankind goes on day by day giving little or no thought to the testimony that these wonders bring forth without fail. So taken up is current of humanity with fleshly pursuits that they have little or no time for anything else.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

To me, the key words in our lesson are *knowing* and *we know*. We believe, and speak and testify, because of something we *know*. And what is that? We know, we are convinced, that Jesus was resurrected and the same One Who raised Him up will also resurrect us. Immerse yourself in this basic truth. Let it sink deep within you. It is the foundation of your whole experience. If you are not convinced of this, you will not have the blessed experience he speaks of in the next verses: being *always confident*.

It is this knowledge, that Jesus WILL raise us, that we HAVE an eternal building of God secured for us when this body, this "tabernacle" is taken down, that anchors us in all the storms of life. We can go through anything. We can endure. We can survive. We are not moved by affliction, distress, disappointment, or grief. It affects us, we cry, we sit in darkness at times, but the Lord is a light to us in that

darkness. We know our trials are *working for us*. The picture made by the weaving of our lives, of dark and light patterns, though unseen by us today, will be clear and beautiful in God's tomorrow.

These are not just beautiful words. These are not feelings or dreams. This is not a castle in the clouds, a "pie in the sky." This is experiential and definite KNOWLEDGE.

Today—do you KNOW?

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**NOVEMBER 11, 2012**

### **PRESSING TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE PRIZE**

I Corinthians 9:24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.

27 But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Philippians 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but dung*, that I may win Christ.

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death:

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this one thing I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

**MEMORY VERSE:** ...Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13-14.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** To be accounted worthy of being a partaker of Christ's eternal glory we must give up our selfish pursuits and the vanities of this world and seek earnestly to possess Christ, His holiness and righteousness, His resurrected power and grace, to partake of His sufferings, and be willing to give our lives as He did.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

I Corinthians 9:24, "*in a race*": In the sports and stadium races. "*run all*": They all indeed run.

Verse 25, "*striveth for the mastery*": Seeks earnestly to win. "*is temperate in all things*": Controls himself in every part of his life.

Verse 26, "*not as uncertainly*": Being fully conscious of what I am striving for. "*not as one that beateth the air*": Not missing the mark.

Verse 27, "*keep under my body*": Subdue and keep under control my thoughts, feelings, appetites, and passions. "*be a castaway*": Miss the mark and be rejected.

Philippians 3:8, "*Yea, doubtless*": Surely without any doubt or question. "*dung*": Worthless trash; manure. "*win Christ*": Gain and personally possess Jesus Christ and all He has to offer for my eternal hope and salvation.

Verse 9, "*be found in him*": Secure a place in Christ's eternal kingdom.

Verse 10, "*know him*": Be personally acquainted with Him.

*"power of his resurrection"*: What Christ's resurrection is able to accomplish. *"fellowship of his sufferings"*: Suffer just as He suffered. *"conformable unto his death"*: Suffer and die as He died for me.

Verse 11, *"If by any means"*: Employing every means required. *"attain unto the resurrection"*: Gain possession of the immortality that Christ has.

Verse 12, *"apprehend"*: Lay hold of and possess.

Verse 14, *"press"*: Pursue and strive earnestly for.

Verse 20, *"conversation"*: Citizenship. Paul was a Roman citizen, but he was striving to have and be accounted worthy of a heavenly citizenship.

Verse 21, *"vile body"*: This corruptible mortal flesh.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In our lesson today we have the words of the apostle Paul that portrays the true Christian life likened to a race to run, a goal to strive to reach, and heights of glory to strive to attain to and be accounted worthy of. This shows clearly that being a true, faithful, and successful Saint of God is much more than merely professing with the mouth one's faith in Jesus Christ. It is compared to those who run in the races, who fight in battles, and who strive for the mastery in earthly gain and success. One must strive lawfully with self-control and diligent effort in earthly fields of accomplishments. How much more must there be such in striving to attain to the great reward promised to those who will meet the required standards in following the Lord Jesus. Self-control in habits, conversation, and service for the Lord is indispensable in being successful and well pleasing to God.

In our text from Philippians 3:7-21 is found a very accurate recipe for being successful in attaining to the great reward of resurrection from the dead. Paul itemizes what his vision of it all includes. First, he had to give up his ways and thoughts and be willing to take Christ's way of faith, humility, and obedience. What he had gained had to be thrown away, and Christ was to be His objective. "That I may win Christ," "and be found in Him," "that I may know him," "that I may know the power of His resurrection," "that I may know the fellowship of his sufferings," and "being made conformable to his death": all of these were the things he sought and pressed

for. He did not count himself to have already attained to these things, but kept seeking to experience them more and more. He was a citizen of Rome, but he had a better and more valuable citizenship to possess: a heavenly one. He pressed for immortality with earnest prayer, faithful living, and following the leading of the Holy Spirit that Jesus had provided for Him to have in his heart.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the prize that Paul was pressing toward the mark for?
2. What was the mark that he was pressing to reach and gain?
3. What were the things that he was seeking to lay hold of?
4. What all does "keeping the body in subjection" take in?
5. What does our "heavenly citizenship" give us hope of?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

There are two main points in Paul's decisive recipe for attaining to the resurrection of the dead. The first was concerning himself. "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection." He had to have strict self-control, which is the definition of the word "temperance." The term temperance was one of the things that II Peter 1:5-7 lists as being vital in having an abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom of Christ, as verse 11 says.

The other point was the application of his life to Christ and following in His steps. And to do this requires faithful obedience to our Lord and Savior and conforming to His standard of self-denial and willingness to die. Paul's desire was to possess Christ personally in his heart and life. He wanted to be "found in Him," that is, to be counted as being so in God's eyes. He desired to have the righteousness of faith, the same righteousness manifested by Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and other Saints of old. He desired to "know" Christ, that is, to be enlightened by His Word and Spirit. And he wanted to experience the power of Christ's resurrection, working in his heart and life on a daily basis. He also purposed to fellowship and be a joint-partaker of Christ's sufferings. It was not that he would purposely get in trouble and adversity, but would bear meekly what providentially came to him. Circumstances, people, and human difficulties will bring plenty of hard times

that we have to humble our hearts and strengthen our decision to follow in the steps of our Savior and Lord. Perplexities, distress, adversity, sickness, and other unpleasant scenes will pass upon the scroll of life. We will be many times "at our wits' end," but we must take advantage of the throne of grace that Christ is so graciously seated upon. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." These words stir in my heart and remind me of the words, "The kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force." In the old testament, when the cup of iniquity waxed full, God would pronounce the death penalty on man, woman, and child. The army of the Lord was to execute vengeance. Victory was to be thorough and complete. Babies grow up and women seduce.

Our warfare is not carnal or fleshly but it is still a warfare. God wants our victories to be complete and thorough. If we let things live (in our lives) that God has placed the death penalty on, we will get into trouble as Saul of old. Little things grow into big things—small foxes spoil the vine. We will lack in vision, spiritual strength, and discernment.

A team with a good defense may do fairly well, but they will not win many games without an offensive. The enemy would like for us to be always on the defensive.

However, spiritual ground is only gained by an offensive of going forward. Are we willing to fight? Are we willing to fight to gain Heaven for the souls of our loved ones, our own souls? Has the enemy stolen some of your victory? Are you willing to fight to get it back? The stakes are high. We must use force when dealing with self and the devil. The violent take it by force.

—Bro. Bob Wilson



**NOVEMBER 18, 2012**

## PILGRIMS AND STRANGERS IN THIS LIFE

Psalm 39:12 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

13 O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

Isaiah 57:1 The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.

2 He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.

Hebrews 11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 1 Peter 2:11.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** This earthly mortal life we are in now is temporary and soon to pass away to nothing. We are pilgrims, just passing through, strangers, foreign to the current of society. But, in Jesus Christ and His great salvation and victory over sin and death, we have a hope of something eternal and far, far better in the world to come.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 39:12, "*sojourner*": One who lives in a land but is really a citizen of another country he is hoping to go to.

Verse 13, "*recover strength*": Become strong in the inner man and be prepared to die in the faith.

Isaiah 57:1, "*no man layeth it to heart*": No one has any care, concern, or feeling about it. "*taken away*": Taken from this earthly life. "*evil to come*": The sad and woeful suffering experienced in this wicked world.

Verse 2, "*enter into peace*": Be ushered into the paradise of heaven. As Revelation 14:13 says, "...Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." "*walking in his uprightness*": Existing in the presence of God in the holiness and purity he possessed in this earthly life.

Hebrews 11:9, "*tabernacles*": Temporary dwellings such as tents. God had promised them the land of Canaan but they did not possess it in this earthly life. God was pointing them to a future inheritance of eternal life.

Verse 10, "*looked for a city*": Possessed confidence of a better and eternal country and dwelling place.

Verse 12, "*sprang there even of one*": From one man there came into being. "*him as good as dead*": This was Abraham who passed from this earthly life, but possessed steadfast hope in an eternal inheritance.

Verse 13, "*died in faith*": Passed from this life in the way of faith and hope and trust in God. "*persuaded of them*": Had no doubt but believed with all their heart. "*embraced them*": Received and welcomed the promises with joy and gladness. "*confessed*": Acknowledged with thanksgiving.



Verse 14, "*declare plainly*": Make it clear. "*a country*": A fatherland.

Verse 15, "*mindful*": Happy and content.

Verse 16, "*not ashamed*": Well pleased.

1 Peter 1:3, "*begotten us again*": Regenerated us in full salvation. "*lively hope*": Hope alive with full joyful faith and assurance.

Verse 4, "*incorruptible*": Will not deteriorate or dim in value.

1 Peter 2:11, "*strangers and pilgrims*": Sojourners and aliens. "*war against the soul*": These fleshly passions that dominate the major part of our society are foreign and destructive to the spirit part of man that needs to be holy and without blame before God.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our lesson today deals with the state we as human beings are in. Recognizing that death will soon come, bringing an end to our life on this earth, we are made aware of the scriptural truth that we are but sojourners, pilgrims, and strangers down here. Our first scripture is from the 39<sup>th</sup> Psalm, one of the psalms of David, a very impressive writing. He speaks at first how he said he would take heed to his ways and keep his mouth and tongue, and was dumb with silence, and in this musing state, the fire burned. And then when he spake with his tongue it was a prayer for God to help him to realize how short his time was and how frail he was. And he ended with a plea to God as a sojourner on earth. Then we have Isaiah's words concerning how the righteous and merciful men are taken away from this life, but that they would enter into peace and rest.

Then we have the message in Hebrews 11 about Abraham, the father of the faithful, and the long line of those who walked in his steps and died in faith of the expectation of the fulfillment of God's promises being seen afar off, and who therefore confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims here. This is a great message to us today. These sojourners were of the spiritual seed of Abraham, who we recognize as our spiritual father and example of the faith that pleases God and qualifies us to be His true children. It is a very important factor in being a true child of God today. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. How should we look on this earthly life?
2. Why does the world have such an attraction?
3. How should the hope of Christ draw our minds?
4. What did Abraham's seed set their hearts upon?
5. Why are God's Saints called pilgrims and strangers?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

We live in a world and a society that is given over to the lusts, wealth, pleasure, and worldly love. It means much to go against the grain and influence of this ungodly age and purposely follow the Word of God and the Spirit of God, taking heed to the message thereby given to us. We should weigh the matter we have before us carefully and earnestly. Eternal values are at stake. The influence of the world beguiles so many, yes, even the majority of humanity. As Jesus said, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:14. It takes a strong and keenly felt decision in one's heart to turn away from the temptations of this present world and set one's affections on things above, on things unseen to the fleshly eye. It takes faith, steadfastly believing with no doubt or wavering. When you live in a society that is wholly given over to the fleshly passions and financial prosperity, it takes courage and strong determination and persuasion to really make eternal treasures our aim and center of our affections. May God help us and may we all take diligent heed. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Jesus told of the rich young ruler that came to him and wanted to know what he would have to do to be a part of the Kingdom of God. Jesus spoke to him about the commandments that had been given to Moses, and the man replied that he had kept those from his youth up. Yet in his heart he knew there must be something more than what he had been doing and he inquired of the Lord what that might be. Jesus looked on that young man and loved him. He then told him what he needed to do to find the peace that his soul was crying for—"...go sell that thou hast and give to the poor, then come and follow me." This man, though he may have been considered

wealthy by the standards of the world, was poor because he failed to see the value of possessing Christ in his life.

What we need today is a greater vision of the eternal value of Christ and His kingdom, and what it means for us to be a partaker of that kingdom. When we have a proper vision of Christ, it will be much easier to turn loose of the things of the world and follow after Him. Those in our lesson today saw something that inspired and called to the depths of their souls to follow after the Lord. Therefore they were willing to undock from the fleshly protocols of the world and reach for the glory of the eternal things of God.

Recently I was attempting to make room in the refrigerator for a package and I discovered a cantaloupe that had obviously been stored beyond its "expiration date." It was promptly disposed of. Somebody made some money by selling it to us, but we stored it too long and it ruined. Wouldn't it be good to invest some of the resources that God has allowed to come into our hands and convert them into eternal riches before they perish and spoil? There are a few wise souls who are doing that and their vision of Christ is becoming brighter and clearer each day.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



**NOVEMBER 25, 2012**

### **THE RIGHTEOUS IN EVERLASTING REMEMBRANCE**

Job 14:13 O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

14 If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

15 Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

Psalms 112:1 Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man *that* feareth the LORD, *that* delighteth greatly in his commandments.

2 His seed shall be mighty upon the earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

3 Wealth and riches *shall be* in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: *he* is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

5 A good man showeth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

6 Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

7 He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

8 His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see *his desire* upon his enemies.

9 He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honor.

10 The wicked shall see *it*, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away; the desire of the wicked shall perish.

Malachi 3:16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

**MEMORY VERSE:** ...The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD. Psalm 112:6-7.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The souls of men who follow after godliness, righteousness, and holiness will triumph over this lustful evil society and be remembered forever to inherit eternal life with our Lord and Savior in that blessed world to come.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Job 14:13. "*keep me secret*": Preserve me from the destruction of the wicked. "*a set time*": A promised day of eternal reward.

Verse 14. "*till my change come*": Until I am resurrected from suffering and death unto life eternal.

Verse 15. "*have a desire to the work of thine hands*": Fulfill Thy good will for the salvation of Thy created beings.

Psalm 112:2, "*mighty upon the earth*": Strong in faith and obedience to the will of God.

Verse 3, "*wealth and riches*": The true riches of faith, love, hope, righteousness, godliness, and holiness.

Verse 4, "*arise in the darkness*": The illumination of God's spiritual blessings in the midst of earthly tribulation and suffering.

Verse 5, "*guide his affairs*": Maintain his position in life. "*with discretion*": Wise and righteous decisions.

Verse 6, "*not be moved for ever*": Not be permanently shaken. He may suffer adversity and upset conditions, but he will recover from it all. "*everlasting remembrance*": After all of this fleeting world is passed away, the righteous will be shining forth in God's kingdom, as Jesus said in Matthew 13:41-43 concerning that final day of judgment: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity; And shall cast them in a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father...."

Verse 7, "*not be afraid of evil tidings*": Not be bothered and upset by bad news and distressful happenings in the world. "*fixed*": Erect, with courage, and unaffected.

Verse 8, "*established*": Unmoveable, will not be changed.

Verse 9, "*dispersed*": Given of his means to help others. "*his horn*": His strength and shining light. "*exalted with honor*": Will stand in God's approval and blessing. "*The wicked shall see it*": Jesus said in Luke 13:28, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."

Malachi 3:17, "*jewels*": Very special treasure. "*spare them*": Deliver them from eternal death and destruction.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We continue on our series of Bible Lessons on the subject of the blessed hope of the holy Saints of God that our Lord Jesus Christ has made available. Our first scripture is from the book of Job and is a part of Job's conversation with his three friends who had come to comfort him after hearing of the great sorrow and afflictions he was bearing. These men had spoke quite a number of words to Job. And in this 14<sup>th</sup> chapter

Job expresses the hope that he had in his heart toward the God that he had served and held on to in his life. The first part of this chapter presents the view of man being short of days and soon to come to his mortal end. But Job expresses a very touching confidence of something beyond death, God's remembrance of him and the change that will come in glory beyond this life.

Then in Psalm 112 we find some beautiful expressions of God's blessings upon those who walk in godly fear and delightful obedience to His commandments. It surely shows the advantage that one can have in this life over troubles and hard places because of the help and favor of the Lord. In verse 9 the writer speaks about the giving of one's means to help the poor and needy. This particular scripture is quoted in the New Testament in II Corinthians 9:9 after Paul had assured the Corinthians of God's blessings and favor to them in their giving to His cause. He said in verse 8 that God is able to make all grace abound toward them, that they, "...always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." Then he quoted from Psalm 112:9.

Our final scripture from Malachi 3:16-18 is a beautiful and inspiring declaration of God's goodness and remembrance of those who fear Him and think upon His name. Such, he stated, the Lord would make up as His jewels. So it all sums up to point us to what God is preparing in heaven for those who will fear Him and be obedient to His perfect will.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What blessing was Job assured of beyond this earthly life?
2. What kind of wealth and riches will the righteous be blessed with?
3. Why will the godly not be afraid of evil tidings?
4. How will those who give to help the poor be rewarded?
5. How will God especially remember those who fear Him?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It surely pays to serve Jesus in this short earthly life! Not only will He care for us in our earthly burdens and needs, but He is preparing a dwelling in the eternal world to come for all who are faithful to Him in this life. Job was a God-fearing man who God blessed and favored because of his faith in the

sorrows and losses of earthly substance. Job went through the controversy he had with his friends and at the end God testified of His goodness and rewarded him with many blessings. So has it been with so many down through the ages of time! It pays to serve Jesus and be faithful to Him regardless of what we might suffer for His sake. I remember a visit I had with some of the holy Saints of God during which we got to talking about God's goodness and how precious He is to us. Our conversation was fragrant with joy and blessing, and I recall how suddenly I felt the precious and awesome presence of God in the room. Oh, it was so rich and sweet! And then this scripture in Malachi 3:16 came so forcibly to my mind. We were speaking to one another in the love and fear of God, and His presence drew near to richly bless our hearts together. I cherish that sweet memory! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I have, several times, as a memorial gift in honor of the passing of a loved one, purchased an evergreen tree for the family. My hope is that as they plant the tree, it will be a reminder, in summer and winter, for years to come, of their dear loved one. I always secretly pray and desire that nothing would happen to the tree, that it would live on and on, as a fitting token of the accompanying Scripture I had written on the tag: *"The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance..."*

One day I heard words I did not want to hear. "The tree died." My friend had watered faithfully, but the scorching summer with three-digit temperatures for weeks had taken its toll. It would have to be replaced.

But, thank God, HOPE did not die with that tree, because she knew, and I knew, that temporal things are fleeting. Even though the tree was an evergreen, it too was subject to disease, drought, or unforeseen circumstances. A token or symbol

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given in hope that it would bring some comfort to the loved one, yes, but it was only that—a token. The real substance of our hope is God's Word and promise. It can never die, or change, or disappear. And the everlasting remembrance of God's Saints is truly *everlasting*. Every righteous person, though unknown or even despised here on earth, will shine like the stars. They will be eternally remembered. What a precious comfort!

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**DECEMBER 2, 2012**

### **LOOKING FOR THAT BLESSED HOPE**

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope,

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.



23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. Galatians 5:5.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** As children of God being filled and led by His Holy Spirit, we possess a living hope of being delivered from this corruptible mortal body to have an incorruptible immortal body. While we groan and suffer now in this tabernacle of clay, we are joyful in earnest expectation of the future glory of eternal life with Jesus Christ in Heaven

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Titus 2:11, "*the grace of God*": The unmerited saving favour of our heavenly Father. "*appeared*": Shone brightly forth in the gospel of Jesus.

Verse 12, "*Teaching*": Admonishing and instructing. "*denying*": Fully renouncing and ceasing to partake of. "*worldly lusts*": Fleshly passions and desires that transgress the laws of righteousness and holiness. "*soberly*": Prudently and solemnly. "*godly*": From the word "pious" which means intense and fervent love and respect for God.

Verse 13, "*glorious appearing*": This is referring to the brilliant and powerful presence of Almighty God and His Son Jesus Christ with the saints and angels that will break upon this fleeting earthly realm.

Verse 14, "*peculiar people*": A special people, above and beyond the worldly crowd, who are washed and made pure by the Word of God and the blood of Jesus Christ. "*zealous*": Fervently devoted for.

Romans 8:18, "*not worthy*": Far beyond comparison.

Verse 19, "*earnest expectation*": Intense and fervent anticipation. "*manifestation*": Fully bringing to pass and making known.

Verse 20, "*made subject to vanity*": Placed under mortal frailty and death. "*not willingly*": Not as we would desire. "*subjected in hope*": Placed under with bright anticipation of something far better to come.

Verse 21, "*bondage of corruption*": Bonds and limits of suffering and death. "*glorious liberty*": Deliverance from this mortal to immortality.

Verse 22, "*whole creation*": The complete earthly state. "*travaileth in pain together*": All suffer and yearn for a better day.

Verse 23, "*groan*": Being in hard, close, and difficult places that makes one sigh, murmur, and pray. "*waiting*": Looking for with eager anticipation. "*adoption*": The final reward of being sons and daughters of God. "*to wit*": Added words which mean "which is." "*redemption of our body*": The change from this corruptible state to an incorruptible eternal body.

Verse 24, "*saved by hope*": This means the final blessing of being saved, the change from this corruptible flesh to an immortal eternal body.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our first scripture in our lesson today is from the apostle Paul's inspiring epistle to Titus, his own son in the Gospel. In this second chapter he gave very vital things for Titus to speak concerning the various stages of life that people are in. These included the aged men and women, the young men and women, and servants. These things he encouraged them all to strive for are very vital for success in the Christian life and the work of the Lord, and a very important means of being ready to meet the Lord and be accounted worthy of His eternal reward for the faithful. These things: soberness, gravity, temperance, patience, holiness, discretion, chastity, are greatly to be sought for and exercised in. And by these things we can adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. For that is why God sent His Son into the world to bring about a plan and provision for men and women, boys and girls, to be saved from sin and ungodliness to a life of holiness and well pleasing in His sight. And we must work at these things with bright expectation of that blessed hope of the coming of that last great

day when the glory of God and His Son will break forth upon this mortal state.

For the last part of our lesson we have Paul's wonderful words concerning this blessed hope to the Romans. It is good to study and ponder the wonderful words concerning our earnest expectation of eternal life and glory that God wills for us to be a partaker of. This old fleshly body is going to be changed to an immortal and everlasting temple for us to inhabit in the world to come. It is our hope, our glorious expectation that is worth far, far more than this fleeting earthly habitation. Oh, let us study and imprint in our minds and hearts the beauty and value of it all. It can and will truly be an anchor of our soul, both sure and steadfast, reaching into the eternal world.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What does the grace of God bringing salvation teach us?
2. Why is the way we live such a serious and important matter?
3. Is it all that necessary to be careful how we live in this world?
4. What are the requirements for us to be saved by hope?
5. What will happen to this earthly mortal body we live in now?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Our lesson is summed up in the final scriptures with the words: "We are saved by hope." We have had in a previous lesson that we are "prisoners of hope," and that hope is "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." The scriptural substance of the meaning of this word hope is a grand and wonderful truth. There is something better to live for than just this fleeting mortal flesh and its appetites and welfare. The real and most important thing to strive for and to attain to is not in these vain earthly substances and possessions. They are all going to pass away in a twinkling of an eye. How sad to see the world around us so carried away with fleshly pleasures and treasures! How wonderful that we have the truth of the Gospel and the precious Holy Spirit to enlighten us to the reality of eternal values! How sad that many come to the end of this

earthly pilgrimage with no testimony of eternal life and possessions. It does not have to be that way. Our lesson today and the other lessons of this quarter show forth the eternal wealth that we need to be concerned about and seeking for. People's minds and activities are taken up with material things such as houses, lands, bank accounts, television, internet, traveling, money, eating, drinking, and other vanities. Sure, we have to have some of the earthly commodities, but we must not let them have absolute rule over our lives. We must set our affection on things above, and not on these earthly vanities. We must live lives of prayer and communion with God through His Word and Holy Spirit, diligently pursue these eternal things, thus grow and progress in the possession of this blessed hope.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Yesterday, I stopped by the little cemetery in Meno, OK. Nothing fancy, just a small country cemetery on the windy Oklahoma prairie. The earthly temples of my mother, uncle, grandparents, great grandparents and other family members are buried there. Like you, I usually reflect on the love they shared and the many precious memories they gave. Naturally, I miss them, their comfort, voice, smile. I usually shed some tears as I am reminded that their time and allotment on this earth has ended, my time is now, but will be soon ended like theirs. The stone of my great grandparents has the inscription—Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord.

Corinthians holds very comforting truths. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Again, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed...O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

Song #198 has also been an inspiration:

*Have we any hope within us of a life beyond the grave,  
In the sweet and vernal lands?*

*'Do we know if this, our tabernacle, were to be dissolved,  
We've a house not made with hands?*

Thank God for that blessed hope that has been given to us  
through our Lord and Savior—Jesus Christ.

—Bro. Bob Wilson



**DECEMBER 9, 2012**

### **SUFFERING AS A CHRISTIAN**

1 Peter 1:6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

8 Whom having not seen, ye love: in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

4:1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin:

2 That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3 For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*:

5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings: that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

16 Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

17 For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

**MEMORY VERSE:** But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. 1 Peter 4:13.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** As Christians and true followers of Christ we will encounter times when we will suffer persecution and mistreatment from the contrary world society around us. But let us remember how that Christ suffered in the flesh also, and that we will share in His eternal glory if we be faithful to Him in what we suffer for His sake.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

1 Peter 1:6, "*for a season*": For a little time. "*if need be*": If it is necessary in following Christ for our spiritual good. "*heaviness*": Distress and adversity. " *manifold temptations*": Various kinds of difficult trials.

Verse 7, "*trial of your faith*": Testing of your confidence in God. "*might be found*": Will result or show clearly. "*at the appearing of Jesus Christ*": At His final coming.

1 Peter 4:1, "*arm yourselves*": Fortify your souls. "*hath ceased from sin*": It is not that suffering adversity is a sign that we are really free from sin, but it means that we who are willing to follow Christ and suffer with Him are determined to no longer live in sin like the world, as verse 2 states.

Verse 3, "*may suffice us*": We have had enough of sin, and are ready to stand firmly against it. "*wrought*": Followed after. "*lasciviousness*": Uncontrolled passions. "*revellings*": Different kinds of worldly get-togethers. "*banquetings*," Drinking parties. "*abominable idolatries*": Various forms of idol worship.

Verse 4, "*think it strange*": Are surprised and displeased. "*excess of riot*": Overrun with sinful passions.

Verse 5, "*the quick and the dead*": Those still alive and those who have passed away.

Verse 12, "*think it not strange*": Do not be alarmed. "*fiery trial*" Heated times of adversity.

Verse 14, "*reproached*": Rejected and cast out as evil.

Verse 15, "*busybody*": One who meddles with other people's affairs.

Verse 16, "*on this behalf*": Concerning this.

Verse 17, "*judgment must begin at the house of God*": Those who endure trials and sufferings for Christ are bearing God's righteous judgment now, and will be ready and able to escape the final judgment.

Verse 18, "*scarcely be saved*": Saved through suffering and adversity.

Verse 19, "*commit the keeping of their souls*": Be confident and assured of God's faithful care and protection for them and that all things work together for good to them that love God. (Romans 8:28.)

## LESSON BACKGROUND

For our lesson today we have Peter's words of encouragement concerning the suffering that we will meet and bear along life's pilgrim way. We had 1 Peter 1:3-5 in a previous lesson so we begin with verse 6 that speaks of the trials and temptations we will encounter on our pilgrim way. We greatly rejoice in the blessed hope of eternal inheritance, but we are still in this wicked world and are sure to meet and suffer many things because we have renounced the world and are living a life contrary to the world around. But Peter shows that the trial of our faith is a great benefit and a treasure far above the worldly wealth. What we suffer as a Christian will be found

unto praise and honor and glory at Christ's glorious appearing. We have lived by faith, believing in things unseen by these mortal eyes.

Thus we are encouraged to be strong and be like Jesus was in what He endured while here in the flesh. We must brave the contrary influences of the lustful and ignorant society around us, and stand firm against it. Every age in this Christian dispensation has been a time of conflict against the true way of holiness and the world of lust and sin. Saints of God have suffered persecution, mistreatment, and even death because of their faith in Christ. But, as our lesson says, we will live up to and bear the judgment of God upon us now, but will reap the eternal reward in the final glorious day when Christ brings this wicked world to an end. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What causes the sufferings that Saints of God bear in this world?
2. What does the trial of our faith really amount to?
3. Why can we be happy when reproached for His name?
4. How will the righteous scarcely be saved?
5. What must we do that suffer according to the will of God?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It surely follows and proves to be true that as Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior suffered here in the flesh from the ignorant and lustful and proud world He lived in, then all who truly follow His example will likewise suffer. As Hebrews 12:1-3 states: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience (enduring the suffering we encounter) the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising (counting lightly) the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." History shows that



the true children of God who followed Him in righteousness and holiness down through the ages have had to suffer as He suffered. Think of the fifty million martyrs, and the many others who will make up that great number that no man can number, who came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb! (Revelation 7:9-17.) What a day that will be when we all gather before the throne of God and our blessed Jesus, robed in immortality to live and love and worship Him together eternally!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Through the passage of time there have been many who suffered for the cause of Christ and their suffering has brought praise, honor and glory to their blessed Savior, even before His return. Consider the powerful testimony that has been given to the world concerning the resurrection of Jesus carried by those disciples who were willing to sacrifice their life. The message they boldly presented to the world of the news of Jesus Christ was signed by their blood. If the resurrection story was a myth they certainly would not have died to spread it, their sacrifice confirms and seals this fundamental truth of the Gospel.

All of us have been blessed by the writings of the Apostle Paul. Because he was willing to suffer, and go to Rome, untold numbers of people have reaped a great spiritual reward. John Bunyan was locked away in Bedford jail for a long time because He preached the Gospel without license from the authorities. Today we still enjoy spiritual motivation from the literary works he created during his confinement. I personally owe him a debt of gratitude, for the "Pilgrim's Progress" has been a blessing even to me.

There have been those who were threatened to be burned and strangled, and yet without regard for their lives, they toiled into the night hours to give us a translation of the Bible that we could read in our own language. The laborer's lives were eventually snuffed out by the haters of truth, but their work remains a glorious testimony of Jesus Christ. The blessing we enjoy by being able to hold a Bible in our lap today adds to the glory and honor of their toils and suffering.

If we will be willing to go the second mile with someone in need or put forth an extra effort to help someone, who knows what fruit will come from that sacrifice in the future. God will likely put opportunities in your way to suffer for Him that have the potential to produce gold mines of blessings for people of future generations. Just think how we would feel when we become aware of that potential and we weaseled out of the suffering. Oh the shame we would feel! Let us not draw back from the will of the Lord for our lives, even if we are called to suffer for His name. For, as the songwriter said, "...with Thy blessing pain is pleasure, we will glory in Thy cross."

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



**DECEMBER 16, 2012**

### **HOPE IN THE FACE OF DESPAIR**

Lamentations 3:18 And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD:

19 Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall.

20 My soul hath *them* still in remembrance, and is humbled in me.

21 This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.

22 *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*

23 *They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

24 The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

25 The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul *that seeketh him.*

26 *It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.*

27 *It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.*

28 He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne *it* upon him.

29 He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.

30 He giveth *his* cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach.

- 31 For the Lord will not cast off for ever:  
 32 But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.  
 33 For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.  
 40 Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.  
 41 Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.

**MEMORY VERSE:** *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*" Lamentations 3:22-23.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The Almighty God deals mercifully and justly with us poor human creatures. He permits trouble and affliction to come upon us, but we must not get down hearted and in despair, but look up to Him with hope and faith that He only permits what is best and that He will bring us out to victory and deliverance in His own good time.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Lamentations 3:18, "*is perished from the LORD*": Is not being manifest at the present. The prophet Jeremiah was in great straits of suffering and trouble, and it appeared as though God had forsaken him. But in the scriptures following he expresses his confidence that God was truly with him. The word "Lamentations" means expressions of grief and sorrow.

Verse 19, "*Remembering*": Beholding and considering. "*wormwood and the gall*": Poisonous and bitter surroundings and influences.

Verse 20, "*still in remembrance*": Cannot put them off of my mind. "*humbled*": Bowed down in brokenness and sorrow.

Verse 21, "*This I recall*": This I make to return to my heart. And then the next few verses speaks of what helps him to have hope for God's help.

Verse 24, "*my portion*": Everything I will need in life.

Verse 27, "*bear the yoke*": Learn to meet adversity with unfailing faith. "*in his youth*": It is good for a person to learn patience and endurance early in life.

Verse 28, "*sitteth alone and keepeth silence*": Stills all grief and despair.

Verse 32, "*cause grief*": Permits suffering and adversity.

Verse 33, "*doth not afflict willingly*": Does not cause sorrow except it be for our good.

Verse 40, "*search and try our ways*": Examine closely the course we are taking in life, and the attitudes and thoughts of our hearts.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The book of Lamentations of Jeremiah was written concerning the sad condition that prevailed in Israel and Jerusalem because of the sins of the people and their departure from the good pleasure of the LORD God. He was God's prophet in the days of Josiah, king of Judah until the carrying away of Jerusalem to captivity. It was a sad time and Jeremiah is known as a weeping prophet, as he expressed in Jeremiah 9: 1, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" This book of Lamentations has so much of Jeremiah's expressions of sorrow about it all. But we find in the midst of the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter some very impressive and encouraging words that we today can be blessed and inspired in our souls by.

The first two chapters speak of the woe and sorrow prevailing in Jeremiah's time because of Israel's sad state because of sin and transgression. Then in the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter Jeremiah begins to express the sorrow that he was suffering because of what had happened to the nation that God had saved from Egypt and who were the offspring of His Friend Abraham. It was grief and anguish to his own spirit, and Jeremiah felt that God's anger was being poured out upon him personally. He felt that way because he loved the nation of Israel and shared in his feelings the woe that had come upon them. We start our lesson in verse 18 as it begins to introduce the encouraging words that the Lord had inspired him with about it all. And these words are so encouraging to us now in the midst of the burdens and sorrows that we meet in the world and while being engaged in the service of God. The word "hope" is in verses 18, 21, 24, 26, and 29. Hope for God's help and

deliverance was springing up in Jeremiah's heart. This wonderful comfort can be ours today as we live in this wicked world with all of its sorrows, disappointments, and evil influences. And, as Jeremiah did, so can we. Let us take note especially of our Memory Verse.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. What did Jeremiah feel that God's mercies had done?
2. What hope did he have concerning the sad conditions prevailing?
3. Why did he feel that God's compassions would not fail?
4. What things did he say was good for a man to do?
5. What did Jeremiah say we should do for our soul's good?

### COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

I want to include in my comments the words of a song that has inspired my heart through the years. The title is "Great Is Thy Faithfulness," taken from the expression in verse 23 of our lesson. It was written by Thomas O. Chisholm who wrote several other wonderful inspiring hymns.

1. *Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father!*  
*There is no shadow of turning with Thee;*  
*'Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not:*  
*As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.*

*Chorus: Great is Thy faithfulness!*  
*Great is Thy faithfulness!*  
*Morning by morning new mercies I see.*  
*All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—*  
*Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!*

2. *Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,*  
*Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,*  
*Join with all nature in manifold witness*  
*'To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.*
3. *Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,*  
*'Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,*  
*Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow—*  
*'Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!*

This song has been a wonderful blessing in my soul! I think about the second verse that speaks of the courses of nature and the seasons, and also of the sun, moon, and stars. These wonderful works of our God's mighty power and Word are "manifold witness of God's great faithfulness, mercy, and love." Yes, there they are up in the sky shining each day and each night. And, as Psalm 19:1-2 says, "...The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament showeth his handywork. Day unto day (day after day) uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." This witness of God's faithfulness and goodness is seen all over the world. It is an undeniable witness and testimony of the reality and goodness of the great Creator. And this gracious Heavenly Father is faithful and we can put our trust and set our hope in Him and the gospel of His Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And Jesus Himself declared in Matthew 5:45 that our Father in heaven "...maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." And then Paul told the folks at Lystra in Acts 14:17 that God "...left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." God Almighty is worthy of our trust, obedience, worship, devotion, praise, honor, and loving service every day, all day, and in every way! Great is His faithfulness! He will reward all who are faithful to Him with a blessed fulfillment of the hope that He has given to us through His Son. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It has been a great comfort to us many times, going through days and days of prolonged illness in the family, to call to mind our memory verse today. It comes to me as a song: "The steadfast love of the Lord never changes. His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning, great is Thy faithfulness: the steadfast love of the Lord never changes."

*New every morning.* With the dawn of each new day, even though the night was long with pain, there is new hope, and new grace. We know that there is just enough pain and hardship given to each day—not too much, but enough. "Sufficient" is what the Lord Jesus said. Praise God, something else is "sufficient" too, is it not? His grace is sufficient.

So we have sufficient "evil," as Jesus put it, for the day, but sufficient grace to meet it.

Once the thought came in a moment of despair, "Lord, how can we go through years and years of this torment?" The Lord immediately answered, "You don't have to go through years and years. Just one day. Can you make it through one day?"

"Yes, Lord, we can make it one day."

"And that's all I ask."

*"Day by day, and with each passing moment,  
Strength I find to meet my trials here.  
Trusting in my Father's wise bestowment,  
I've no cause for worry or for fear.  
He Whose heart is kind beyond all measure  
Gives unto each day what He deems best,  
Lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure,  
Mingling toil with peace and rest."*

*By Karolina W. Sandell-Berg, 1865*

*—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck*



**DECEMBER 23, 2012**

### **EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT**

Matthew 13:41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity;

42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Mark 9:43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

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

8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

**MEMORY VERSE:** And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:14-15.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God's Word teaches clearly that all who refuse to believe in Jesus Christ and to follow His teachings will be cast into a lake of burning fire to be forever punished.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

Matthew 13:41. "*offend*": Are displeasing to God. "*iniquity*": That which is contrary to God's holy law.

Verse 42, "*wailing*": Loud crying. "*gnashing of teeth*": Terrible pain and suffering.



Mark 9:43, "*if thy hand offend thee*": The term "thy hand" is referring to something more than one's physical hand. It really is meaning fleshly desires and lusts for fleshly pleasure, material wealth, and worldly prosperity. These are things we must cut off and cease from reaching after. This corresponds with "the lust of the flesh" in 1 John 2:16. "*hell*": The Greek word is "Gehenna," which means everlasting punishment.

Verse 44, "*worm*": Tormenting and suffering regret.

Verse 45, "*foot*": This refers to the way one walks before God and man. This corresponds with the pride of life mentioned in 1 John 2:16. And also goes well with Micah 6:8, "...What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with they God?"

Verse 47, "*eye*": This corresponds with the lust of the eyes in 1 John 2:16. It refers to the love and desire that one has for outward show and fleshly adornment and beauty that is so prevalent in our world.

Revelation 21:7, "*overcometh*": Have victory over sin and transgression to live holy and unspotted from the world.

Verse 8, "*abominable*": Those who do things which God is very displeased with. "*whoremongers*": Those who commit fornication and adultery. "*sorcerers*": The Greek word is "pharmacist" which includes drug producers. "*idolaters*": Ephesians 5:5 labels a covetous man to be an idolater, and Colossians 3:5 labels covetousness as idolatry.

Revelation 20:8, "*brimstone*": Burning stones like sulfur. "*second death*": Man's final eternal state in hell separated from all hope and mercy.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we are inspired to dwell on the sad future that will be the result of a person's failure to follow and obey the will of God in this earthly life. We have been richly blessed in the Scriptures and what they teach about the blessed hope of the righteous. But now we are moved in heart to look into what the Bible teaches about those who are condemned to eternity who chose to go their own fleshly way instead of following the Lord Jesus and His holy way.

We begin with the teachings of Christ in the parables He brought forth in Matthew 13, picking up the final thoughts of

the parable of the tares in the field that was sowed among the wheat. This is referring to the wheat that Christ sowed as the children of the kingdom of God and the tares (sowed by the devil) as the wicked ones. The harvest is the end of the world and the reapers are the angels. And as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world. Notice the fearful terms: "furnace of fire," and "wailing and gnashing of teeth." Oh, what a terrible picture! While the righteous are shining forth as the sun in the eternal heavenly world, the wicked are suffering the vengeance of the holy God they refused to follow and obey.

Our scripture from Mark 9:43-48 gives the warning of not letting one's hand, foot, or eye be a cause for offence. In reference to the fire that never shall be quenched Jesus quoted from Isaiah 66:24, which mentions the men who transgressed against God whose worm would not die and whose fire would not be quenched. Surely the Scriptures are clear and plain in warning us to be diligent to follow the steps of the Savior and be found in eternal glory with Him rather than in the horrible lake of fire.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What will take place at the end of this present world?
2. What does the hand, foot, and eye stand for in our lesson?
3. What does it mean to cast them off?
4. Who are the ones who will be cast into the lake of fire?
5. What must we do to not be cast into everlasting punishment?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

There are no doubt many, many people in this world who do not believe in a burning hell that the Bible speaks so clearly of. Satan is very sly about keeping people in the dark about the horrible end of those who refuse to do the will of God and follow after self and the fleshly lusts of mankind. But the Holy Scriptures are very plain concerning this matter. In fact, there is really more in the Bible spoken of Hell than of Heaven. Our scripture from Mark 9:43-48 is from the very words of our Lord Jesus Christ. And He quotes from Isaiah 66:24 about this

important truth of the torment and fire on the inhabitants of eternal hell and damnation. And it is startling to read in this passage that those blessed ones in the new heaven and new earth would be able to go forth and look upon those who had transgressed against God, "and they shall be an abhorring (a repulsive sight) unto all flesh." Now, that is a solemn thought, is it not?

And then let us consider our scripture in Revelation 21:8 where it names out the various kinds of people who will have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. Notice the first one mentioned: "the fearful." The meaning of the Greek word implies "faithless." It is the same word spoken by Jesus to His disciples in Matthew 8:26 when they were out on the sea during the storm and awoke Jesus, saying, Lord, save us, we perish. "And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" It is so important that we be on our guard, watch and pray for God's help to be able to overcome all the powers of unbelief and worldly lusts. We must make a firm decision for the Lord and stay with it all of our days. And notice, "all liars" will have their part, too. We can firmly conclude in all of this that it is going to mean much for us to escape the damnation of hell and prove faithful and true to Him Who gave His life to save us from that awful place!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

We as people often think of eternity as something way off into the future. We usually don't think about God taking us just as we are, but often cherish thoughts of getting another opportunity to get our hearts right with Him before we die. However, many times this is not how it works, for we don't know the day or the hour when our time will come.

Work and live so that you are not the "bad" that God has to cast away. Take this life and this time that God has given you to be a holy and faithful servant so that when He calls you, He can take you home.

—Sis. Kristen Wilson



**DECEMBER 30. 2012**  
**THE FINAL JUDGMENT**

Ecclesiastes 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole *duty* of man.

14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Romans 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

II Thessalonians 1:6 Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done in his body*, according to that he hath done, whether *it be good or bad*. II Corinthians 5:10.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The final judgment day will take place when Christ will suddenly appear in glory and power to destroy this present earth and heaven and bring all men before Him to be judged according to how each man has lived in this time world.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Ecclesiastes 12:13, "*conclusion*": Final word or statement. "*whole duty*": That which every man is responsible of before God.

Acts 17:30, "*winked at*": Overlooked in the past, "*repent*": Reconsider and acknowledge the real truth.

Verse 31, "*that man whom he hath ordained*": The Man whom God has appointed to be the judge of all: Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords. "*assurance*": Absolute and undeniable proof.

Romans 14:10, "*set at nought*": Despise or count lightly.

Verse 11, "*confess to God*": Acknowledge God to be just and right.

Revelation 20:11, "*fled away*": Vanished and passed out of sight.

Verse 12, "*books were opened*": Every man's life was shown.

Verse 13, "*hell*": The Greek word is "hades," which refers to the realm of spirits of men who have lived and died.

Verse 14, "*second death*": The final eternal separation from God.

Verse 15, "*book of life*": The record before God of all who are right with Him.

2 Thessalonians 1:7, "*rest with us*" Eternal relief and safety with all the redeemed.

Verse 9, "*punished*": Will pay the penalty.

Verse 10, "*glorified*": Praised, honored, adored, and worshipped forever. "*admired*": Beheld with wonder and admiration.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

For our final lesson in this series of studies about the blessed hope of the righteous we feel inspired to bring various scriptures concerning the great judgment that every person must face at the ending of this present earth and heaven. It is a serious and solemn thought that we must all face up to. As another scripture from Paul's writing in I Timothy 5:24-25 says: "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some *men* they follow after. Likewise also the good works of *some* are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid." The Holy Bible, the Word of God is very plain about this serious matter. We are going to have to give an account to God for the way we have lived in this mortal life and how we have responded to His warnings and counsels. That is why we need to take heed, get down to business with God, and seek Him for His deliverance from sin and the hope of righteousness that Christ came to make available for us.

Our first scripture is the final conclusion of Solomon's writings concerning the vanity of this present world and what wisdom says that we should do concerning it all. It is sad to think that, after all Solomon brought out, he would fall a prey himself to lust and vanity and die out of favor with his Creator. That is the terrible danger that we must be diligent to avoid. The other scriptures in the New Testament bring it out very plainly of what we are to face after this life. The scene in Revelation 20 presents the solemnity of it all. The book of our life is going to be opened and made manifest. Surely it would pay everyone of us to be seriously affected and set our hearts to take the needed action to secure hope in the face of the coming judgment.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What is everyone of us going to face at the last judgment?
2. What must we do to prepare for that solemn day?
3. What will be the fate of those who are not right?
4. What will be the reward of the faithful and true?
5. Who is going to be the great Judge in that day?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Here are the words of an anonymous writer: "I dreamed that the great judgment morning had dawned, and the trumpet had blown; I dreamed that the nations had gathered to judgment before the white throne. From the throne came a bright shining angel and stood on the land and the sea, and swore with his hand raised to heaven, that time was no longer to be.

"The rich man was there, but his money had melted and vanished away; a pauper he stood at the judgment, his debts were too many to pay. The great man was there, but his greatness when death came was left far behind; the angel that opened the records no trace of his greatness could find.

"The widow was there and the orphans; God heard and remembered their cries; No sorrow in heaven forever, God wiped all the tears from their eyes. The gambler was there and the drunkard, and they who had sold them the drink, with the people who gave him the license—Together in hell they did sink.

"The moral man came to the judgment, but his self-righteous rags would not do; The men who had crucified Jesus had passed off as moral men, too. The souls that had put off salvation—"Not tonight, I'll get saved by and by; No time now to think of religion," At last they found time to die.

"And, O what a weeping and wailing as the lost were told of their fate, They cried for the rocks and the mountains, they prayed but their prayers were too late."

Surely this presents a vivid picture of that great and awful day! Let us close out with the words of our Savior in Luke 21:34-36: "And take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For

as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

While considering the thoughts presented in this lesson about the final judgment my attention focused on the liberal use of the word *every*. "...*every* knee shall bow to me, and *every* tongue shall confess to God." "...*every* one of us shall give account of himself to God." "...God shall bring *every* work into judgment, with *every* secret thing...." Another verse says that, "...and *every* eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him:..." With wording in the Holy Scriptures so specific, surely no one would have the idea that they will not be included in this final judgment of God. If that be true, then everyone should be making preparations for that great day and make sure their sins have been forgiven before they must meet the Righteous Judge in judgment.

Many people are not thinking about the Judgment of God. It is not that they haven't heard, it is that they just put it out of their mind and go on with their life. They continue to live in a careless, sinful way without thought of the reality that they will meet their deeds again before a holy God. How sad that their foolish way of living will one day bring them into such serious trouble. Putting the thought out of our minds will not prevent this day from coming, it only increases and prolongs the risk of being unprepared when it does.

Some people have heard about the second coming of Christ all of their lives and they have begun to discount the warnings of God's people with the thought, "Oh, I have heard that all my life and it hasn't happened." This is a sad mistake for even if the Lord has not called the world into judgment yet, thousands are being ushered out of this world on a daily basis by the angel of death. Their opportunity to repent and make their wrongs right before that day arrives is forever gone.

May the Lord solemnize every heart and motivate each one to be prepared to meet this great day that we all have an appointment with.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



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