

ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY BIBLE LESSONS OR SERMON OUTLINES

LESSON ONE

READ HEBREWS 9:26- HEBREWS 10:12 - I PETER 3:18 - ROMANS 10:9 AND 10
ACTS 16:31 GALATIANS 5:21 TO 26 - ROMANS 15:13 - I JOHN 3:1 TO 3.

THE FIVE F'S OF SALVATION

We call this lesson, "The Five F's of Salvation"—1-Fact. 2-Faith. 3-Fruit. 4-Feeling. 5-Future.

Note Galatians 3:26 and I John 3:2: "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

In Hebrews 9:26 - Hebrews 10:12 and I Peter 3:18, listed above, we learn first, that Christ "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." This is the fact. This is Divine truth. Christ entered heaven by His own blood, and thereby obtained eternal redemption. (Hebrews 9:12). Christ suffered once, the Just for the unjust, that we might be brought to God. (I Peter 3:18). Christ, on the cross, cried "finished." Then and there He made peace through the blood of His cross, to reconcile sinners to God. (John 19:30 and 31 - Colossians 1:20 and 21).

The FACT of salvation is, that all the work that needs to be done for the sinner's salvation Christ did and is doing, together with God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit. Christ's work was, and is, a perfect redemptive work: wholly acceptable to God. Read the "how" of salvation in II Thessalonians 2:13.

Then FAITH. "By grace are ye saved through faith." (Ephesians 2:8 and 9). Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. (Acts 16:31). Note carefully Romans 4:5:, by believing on the Justifier, the sinner's faith is counted for righteousness. This is good news. The word "believe" is used 100 times in the Gospel of John. Christ said, "Believe on Me and have eternal life." (John 6:47).

And now FRUIT. Note Ephesians 2:10 and John 15:8: "For we are His (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples." A Christian is a fruit-bearing branch abiding in the Vine, "Christ". The believer should add to his faith virtue, patience, self-control, goodness, brotherly kindness and love, so he will be fruitful. (II Peter 1:3 to 11). These additions are the fruit of the Spirit; but in Galatians 5:21 to 26, "love" comes first. We are not saved because we bear fruit: but every believer should

bear fruit because he is saved by trusting and resting in the perfect redemptive work of the Lamb of God, Who beareth away the sin of the world.

Then the FEELING. Read Romans 15:13 and 14:17: “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit.” “The Kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Salvation is not by feeling, but by faith. Not by behavior, but by belief. Filled with joy and peace is a good feeling. When the believer believes God’s Word (I John 5:13 Acts 13:39—Colossians 3:1 to 4), and walks in the ordained good works of Ephesians 2:10, and worthy of the calling of Ephesians 5:1 and 2, he will have the feeling of assurance and joy. Read Acts 13:39 and I John 5:13.

Then the FUTURE of salvation: “That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus.” (Ephesians 2:7). This is a forever, never-ending future of bliss and glory.

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.” (I Corinthians 15:51). Those who have died will be raised, and we which are alive shall be changed, and have bodies like Christ’s glorified body and appear with Him in glory (I John 3:2—Colossians 3:4—Philippians 3:20 and 21). There is a glorious never-ending FUTURE to Salvation.

But for the unsaved, eternal conscious perdition.

LESSON TWO

READ ISAIAH 45:22 - JOHN 1:29 - HEBREWS 12:1 TO 3 - TITUS 2:13

THREE “SALVATION” LOOKS

Let us read the five verses mentioned above:

“Look unto Me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth: For I am God and there is none else.”

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, Which taketh away the sin of the world.”

“ . . . let us run with patience 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 the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

As we consider these verses, let us think of Ephesians 2:10: “For we are His (God’s) workmanship, Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

God knows, what every one should know, and that is, that no man can walk in good works acceptable to God until that man is first the workmanship of God. Man must be worked upon by God before God will accept any service from that man. We are turned to God to serve God and to wait for His Son from heaven, even Jesus, Who delivered us from the wrath to come, (I Thessalonians 1:9 and 10).

Man's first look must be the look of salvation from the penalty of sin and for the new birth. In Hebrews 9:26 - Hebrews 9:24 and 28, we read of the three appearances of the Lord Jesus Christ.

First Christ appeared once in the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Hebrews 9:26)—Christ suffered for sins once, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. (I Peter 3:18). Christ entered into heaven by His blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us. (Hebrews 9:12).

So the sinner's first look is, "Behold the Lamb of God Which beareth away the sin of the world." (John 1:29).

Look to Christ on the cross, for we are redeemed, cleansed, washed and justified by His precious shed blood. (I Peter 1:18 to 20 - Matthew 26:28 - Romans 5:6 to 10 - I John 1:7 to 9).

Christ on the cross cried, "finished." All that the vilest sinner on earth needs for eternal redemption, is a saving-look of faith to Christ and Calvary. The most cultured, moral, religious sinner needs the same look or he will suffer the sorrows of the second death. (Revelation 20:9 to 14).

Then Christ is not only the Author of our salvation, but the Finisher. (Hebrews 12:1 to 3). He appears now in the presence of God for believers. (Hebrews 9:24). He is their Advocate (I John 2:1). He ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25). Having loved his own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. (John 13:1).

So the second look is to Christ at God's right hand. In this way the Christian can run a good race. Christ on the cross established our relationship. In heaven He maintains our fellowship.

Christians are also to seek those things above, where Christ is. (Colossians 3:1 to 4). Christians are confident. (Philippians 1:6). They are persuaded. (Romans 8:32 to 39). They have a strong consolation. (Hebrews 6:16 to 19).

Believers are saved from the penalty of sin. Then being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and because of the work of Christ in God's presence, believers can be saved from the power of sin. The secret of victory is told in Romans 6:6 to 19.

Christ is coming to save the believer from the presence of sin. Then Christ will present the Church to Himself as a glorious, holy, spotless Church. (Ephesians 5:26 and 27).

So the third look is Hebrews 9:28 and Titus 2:13: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God our Saviour Jesus Christ." "Then shall ye appear with Him in glory." For this, Christ prayed in John 17:20 to 25. Read John 11:42.

LESSON THREE

READ II TIMOTHY 1:9 AND 10 - EPHESIANS 2:8 TO 10
II CORINTHIANS 9:8 - TITUS 2:11 TO 14

WHAT THE GRACE OF GOD TEACHES

It is both interesting and profitable to compare the command and program of the Lord Jesus Christ, in Matthew 10:5 to 8 and 23, with the message and program of Titus 2:11 to 14, which the same Christ gave to and through the apostle Paul some years after the commission

recorded in Matthew 10:5 to 8, some years after Christ had gone back to heaven by the way of the cross and the open sepulchre, after God raised Christ far above all heavens, far above principalities and powers. (Ephesians 4:7 to 13 . . . Ephesians 1:19 to 23).

Let us carefully and prayerfully read Titus 2:11 to 14:

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world: Looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing (the appearing in glory) of the great God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

No more important spiritual truth is pressed into any other four verses of God’s holy Scriptures. “God will have all men to be saved.” (I Timothy 2:4 to 6). It is for that reason He gave Christ and Christ gave Himself on the cross as a ransom for all. God’s “grace” salvation is expressed in these words, “by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.” (I Timothy 2:4 to 6 ... Ephesians 2:8 to 10).

Christ appeared once in the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. (Hebrews 9:26). While Christ was here on earth, before He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, He and His apostles were ministers of the circumcision. (Romans 15:8). All of them were under the law. (Galatians 4:4 and Matthew 23:1 to 3). It was then that Christ instructed His twelve apostles, “Go not in the way of the Gentiles . . . Go to Israel ... The Kingdom of heaven is at hand . . . Heal, cast out demons, raise the dead . . . Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come.” (Matthew 10:5 to 8 . . . Matthew 10:23). Now compare all of this with Titus 2:11 to 14, quoted above.

What a contrast; what a difference in these two programs. There is a great difference between “not in the way of the Gentiles,” and “to all men,” including the heathen all over the world. There is a great difference between “the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” for Israel, with signs, wonders and miracles; and “the grace of God” is at hand for Gentiles.

In Matthew 28:19 and 20 the resurrected Christ gave another command to His twelve apostles, “disciple all nations.” But they remained in Jerusalem and the land of the Jews, at least, until after the risen Christ sent Paul out with the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20:24 ... Acts 8:1 ... Acts 15:1 to 19 ... Galatians 2:1 to 12). There is no record, in the Book of Acts, that any of the twelve apostles preached “the gospel of grace” to Gentiles outside the land of the Jews. Peter had the “Kingdom Keys” and preached to a household of Gentiles in the land of the Jews. (Acts 15:7 . . . Acts 10:28 to 38). But after that even Peter refused to eat with saved Gentiles. (Galatians 2:10 to 13). He and his fellow-apostles went to Jews. (Galatians 2:9).

Christ said to Paul, “I will send you far hence to the Gentiles.” (Acts 22:21 . . . Romans 15:16 . . . Ephesians 3:8). Paul became “the apostle of the Gentiles.” (Romans 11:13). Then the Lord committed unto Paul “the dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles.” (Ephesians 3:1 to 4).

Let us know that God’s grace enables and teaches saints. (II Corinthians 12:9 . . . II Corinthians 9:8 . . . Titus 2:12). The God of all grace (I Peter 5:10) is able to make all grace abound; not for the program of Matthew 10:5 to 10, which was for another dispensation, but for the program of Titus 2:11 to 14. This abounding grace is for the redeemed sinner, who is a saint, to enable him to submit himself unto God as one who is alive from the dead, and thus reckon himself dead unto sins. (Romans 6:9 to 15).

LESSON FOUR

READ I CORINTHIANS 3:6 TO 15 - COLOSSIANS 3:16 TO 25
II CORINTHIANS 5:9 AND 10.

SALVATION AND REWARDS

In I Corinthians 15:58 and Colossians 3:17 we read: “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.”

In Titus 3:8 and Titus 3:14 believers, saved by grace, without works, are exhorted to maintain good works. They are God’s workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works and God has ordained that believers should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10). Believers are to believe Hebrews 6:10 and Colossians 3:24 and 25: “For God is not unrighteous to forget your labor of love.” “Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.” “But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.”

It is for these reasons that the Holy Spirit wrote in I Corinthians 15:58 for saints to be steadfast in good works and to know that no believer’s good works in Christ Jesus will be in vain.

There is a great difference between salvation by grace, “not by works” (Titus 3:5), “not according to our works,” (II Timothy 1:9), “not of works” (Ephesians 2:9), “to him that worketh not” (Romans 4:5), and “God’s workmanship, unto good works.”

This is why, in rightly dividing the Word or truth, believers should study the “strive” of Luke 13:24; the “endure” of Matthew 24:13 and 14; the “baptized” of Mark 16:16 and Acts 2:38; the “worketh righteousness” of Acts 10:34 and 35 and many other mixed messages in the light of the later truth which Christ revealed to Paul. Note II Timothy 1:9, “God Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” (II Timothy 1:9).

Note what the grace of God teaches saints in Titus 2:12: “Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”

In the third chapter of Colossians the believer is told just how to live such a life by the grace of God. Salvation is by the grace of God. Good works are by the grace of God. (I Corinthians 15:10).

But first let us get this truth of John 6:29 and Romans 4:5: “Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom God hath sent.” “But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” The first all-important work is the work of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ unto the saving of the soul. (Hebrews 10:39)

When we have the right start, and know “that they that are in the flesh cannot please God,” that there is no good in the flesh, (Romans 8:8 and Romans 7:18 to 20), “that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ,” (I Corinthians 3:11), that we are redeemed and forgiven on account of Christ’s shed blood and the riches of God’s grace

(Ephesians 1:6 and 7), then we should always abound in the work of the Lord, and know the truth of Colossians 3:24 and 25 and I Corinthians 3:14: "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ." "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward."

Let us be sure of our foundation before we begin to build for eternity, and for rewards. Let us even keep in mind that no flesh shall glory in God's presence, (I Corinthians 1:30 and 31). We have been forgiven, for Christ's sake. (Ephesians 4:32). Our salvation is in and by and through the Lord Jesus Christ and He must have all the glory for what we do, if our works are to abide.

LESSON FIVE

READ II CORINTHIANS 4:1 TO 7 - MARK 4:4, 8 AND 15.

THE OPPOSITION OF SATAN

Satan is the god of this age. (II Corinthians 4:4). Satan gathers the seed that falls by the wayside. (Mark 4:15). The lake of fire is prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matthew 25:41). The devil is accused of deceiving the whole world. (Revelation 12:9). Christ declared that no man could take the strong man's house until first he had bound the strong man. (Matthew 12:29). Note the mission on which the Lord Jesus sent the apostle Paul: "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me." Satan as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour. (I Peter 5:8 - Acts 26:18).

God will have all men to be saved. (I Timothy 2:4). God has one way by which believing sinners are saved in this age and dispensation of grace. That way is the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20:24). "By grace through faith"; "brought nigh to God by the blood of Christ." (Ephesians 2:8 and 9 and Ephesians 2:13).

In Romans 1:16 we read that the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth.

In I Corinthians 15:1 to 4 we read that the gospel by which the believing sinner is saved is the truth, that Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, that He was raised from the dead.

Now let us compare I Timothy 1:11 with II Corinthians 4:3 and 4: "According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my (Paul's) trust." "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Satan is always on the alert. He is every active with tricks and devices with both sinners and saints.

So we see that Satan, the god of this age, does not want any sinner to believe the gospel and be saved. There is no other way for the sinner to be delivered from Satan's power.

Note how far Satan will go to keep sinners from being saved: "And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works." Just

imagine the devil transformed into an angel of light to make religious people believe they are saved and on the way to glory when they are on the way to eternal perdition.

Satan is very tricky, a very dangerous deadly enemy.

What is the Christian's part in this great redemptive work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (II Corinthians 4:5 to 7).

Christians are to preach Christ and live Christ, thus giving to sinners the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Sinners cannot be saved unless they believe. They cannot believe unless they hear. (Romans 10:12 to 15). Knowing the terror of the Lord, Christians persuade men. (II Corinthians 5:11). For it is a fearful thing for a "Christless" sinner to fall into God's hands. (Hebrews 10:26 to 32).

Christians are not to handle the Word of God deceitfully: "but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." (II Corinthians 4:1 and 2). We are told in Revelation 12:11, of saints who overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.

LESSON SIX

READ I CORINTHIANS 10:12 - ROMANS 11:11 - 20 AND 21
ROMANS 5:12 - 14:4 - JUDE 24 - GALATIANS 5:1 AND 4
HEBREWS 6:4 TO 6 - II THESSALONIANS 2:13 - II PETER 1:10 - 3:17

STANDING AND FALLING

Note I Corinthians 10:12 - Romans 11:11 - Hebrews 6:4 to 6: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." "I say then, Have they (Israel) stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their (Israel's) fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them (Israel) to jealousy." "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame."

In Galatians 5:1 and 4, Christians were told to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had set them free, and not to get under the law; that "whosoever of you is justified by the law, is fallen from grace." Here they are told to stand and not fall. This is quite different from I Corinthians 10:12, "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." In this admonition the Holy Spirit was not thinking of Christians going back under the law. But here is given the example of the fall of Israel under Moses, as we have in Hebrews 4:1 to 11. We remember Peter's boast that he would never deny the Lord, even if others did, and Peter had quite a fall. (Matthew 26:33 to 35). This does not mean that Peter lost his salvation. But Christians should be

humble and boast only in Christ, and profit by the failures and falls of others. (I Corinthians 1:31 - Galatians 6:14).

In II Peter 1:4 to 10 we are told how Christians can be fruitful Christians and keep from being near-sighted and from falling. When they obey these instructions they will not forget that they were cleansed from sin. This is by adding several virtues to faith. It is not the additions, or the failure to add them, that saves; but the faith to which they are added. (Ephesians 2:8 to 10 - Romans 4:4 and 5). But Christians who do not add may fall. Christians stand in grace (Romans 5:2). God is able to keep them from falling (Jude 24); and make them stand. (Romans 14:4).

The Hebrews wanted to return to the sacrifices of Israel's "shadow" days, to supplement the finished work of Christ with the old testament offerings. (Hebrews 10:1 to 10). The Holy Spirit told them there was no more sacrifice for sin. (Hebrews 10:18 - 10:26).

If those Hebrews could have fallen away after trusting in Christ's shed blood, they could not have been renewed after having fallen away, if they had believed unto the saving of their soul (Hebrews 10:39). But the worshipper once purged should have no more conscience of sin. (Hebrews 10:2).

Therefore, Hebrews 6:4 to 6 could not mean that a person once out of Adam into Christ (II Corinthians 5:17 and I Corinthians 12:13), would fall away, if he should backslide; for the Holy Spirit tells spiritual Christians to restore such a one to the Lord. (Galatians 6:1 and 2). In Hebrews 6:4 to 6 the fallen cannot be renewed. So this does not teach that one in Christ can fall out of Christ. God is able to make them stand (Romans 14:4). A Christian can never be condemned with the world. (I Corinthians 11:32).

There are two Greek words translated "fall" in Romans 11:11 - "I say then, Have they stumbled that they should FALL? God forbid: but rather through their FALL salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy." The second "fall" is trespass.

Believing Jews were in the remnant according to the election of grace. (Romans 11:5 to 9). The rest were blinded. They fell through unbelief. Through their "trespass", salvation was sent to Gentiles, who are to stand by faith. (Romans 11:20 and 21).

There is to be a great falling away, but this will be a falling away of professors who believe not. (II Thessalonians 2:1 to 12). And on them the great Stone of Matthew 21:44 will fall and grind them to powder.

LESSON SEVEN

READ PHILIPPIANS 2:5 TO 10

CHRIST THE GOD-MAN

The Divine truth recorded in Philippians 2:5 to 9 has been called "the greatest story of the ages."

1. Christ was in the form of God.
2. Christ thought it not a thing to be grasped after to be equal with God.
3. Christ made Himself of no reputation and became a servant.
4. Christ became a Man to be obedient unto the death of the cross.

5. God hath highly exalted Christ and given Him a name which is above every name that men might acknowledge His Deity and worship and honor Him.

In Colossians 1:17 and 16 we read that Christ is before all things and by Him all things consist and that all things in heaven and on earth were created by Christ and for Christ.

In Hebrews 1:3 we read that Christ is the express image of God's Person and the effulgence of God's glory.

In Romans 8:3 we read that Christ was made in the likeness of sinful flesh.

In Colossians 2:9 we read that in Christ dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

In John 17:5 and 25 we read that Christ had glory with the Father and was loved by the Father before the foundation of the world.

In John 1:18 we read that Christ was in the bosom of the Father.

In I John 1:2 the apostle John testifies concerning Christ "that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us."

In John 6:38 - John 6:33 - John 6:50 and 51 and 58 the Lord Jesus Christ, in no uncertain language, said that He came down from heaven.

In John 1:10 we read that Christ was in the world; that the world was made by Christ; and that the world knew not Christ.

In John 1:1 to 4 we read that Christ was God (the Word), and that all things were made by Him; and that without Him nothing was made.

In John 1:14 we read that the Word became flesh and tabernacled among men. In Hebrews 1:8 God calls His Son, "God."

In John 10:31 to 34 Christ said, "I and Father are one." Christ's own nation stoned Him; "because being a Man thou makest Thyself God."

In John 20:28 Thomas saw the resurrected Christ and said, "My Lord and my God."

In Revelation 1:8 we read the Lord's own testimony: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

In Romans 10:9 and 10 we read the condition of salvation; acknowledging the eternal Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ and believing in His bodily resurrection. Confessing that Jesus Christ was a very good man, even the best of men, and claiming to believe that He experienced some kind of a spiritual resurrection, but that He is not now in a glorified body which was raised from the dead, is wholly inadequate and brings no salvation. Christ said, "if ye believe not that 'I AM', ye shall die in your sins". (John 8:24); "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father." (John 14:9). Several times the Scriptures call Christ, "God". Read Isaiah 9:6 and Romans 9:4 to 6 in addition to the other Scriptures we have mentioned. Christ calls Himself the "I AM" more than 20 times in John's Gospel, in which Gospel He speaks of Himself 684 times in the first person pronoun. Thomas was right, "My Lord and my God." It is most interesting to read Job 9:32 and 33 - as we consider Christ as the "GodMan." Job said God is not a man, that I should answer Him, that we should come together in judgment - "Neither is there any DAYSMAN betwixt us, who might lay His hand upon both of us." A daysman is one appointed to arbitrate in arguments, to settle disputes. Job wanted a Divine human Person. "When the fulness of time was come God sent forth His Son, made of a woman to be the Redeemer. (Galatians 4:4). On the cross Christ was indeed the DAYSMAN when He was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. (II Corinthians 5:21).

LESSON EIGHT

READ HEBREWS 13:6 - LUKE 1:26 TO 33 - ACTS 2:22 - COLOSSIANS 1:27

JESUS CHRIST THE SAME FOREVER

Many Christians have been considerably confused as to the meaning of the statement that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Hebrews 13:8).

In Colossians 2:9 we read that in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. In John 1:1 to 4 and Colossians 1:15 to 17 and Philippians 2:5 and 6, we read, that Christ, before His incarnation, was in the form of God, 'that He was God,' that He was the Creator. As the preexistent uncreated Christ and in His humility, death, exaltation, as to His eternal, and essential Deity, truly He is forever the same.

In John 1:14 and in Hebrews 2:14, we read, that God became flesh, a partaker of flesh and blood. In Luke 24:39 Christ said, "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have."

Is there a difference between a body of flesh and blood and a body of flesh and bones? What kind of a body did Christ have before God prepared for Him that body mentioned in Hebrews 10:5? When Christ was in the bosom of the Father (John 1:18) Christ had God's form, but not a human body. Later He was made in "the likeness of sinful flesh." (Philippians 2:5 to 9 - Romans 8:3).

Was not Christ on earth "the King of Israel" "the King of the Jews"? (John 1:49 - Matthew 2:2). Is He not now the Head of the Church in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile, as such? (Ephesians 1:19 to 23 - Ephesians 2:16 to 21).

We read in Galatians 4:4 and Romans 15:8 that Jesus Christ was a Minister of the circumcision made under the law. Is Christ now under the law? God's people are under grace and Christ is dealing with Jews and Gentiles under the dispensation of grace. (Romans 6:14 - Ephesians 3:1 to 4). Is Christ now a minister of Israel as He was here on earth, sent only to Israel? (Matthew 15:24).

Now compare Acts 2:22 with Colossians 1:27; for the Holy Spirit instructs believers to test things that differ. Jesus of Nazareth in the midst of Israel, here on earth as a Man, witnessing with miracles, His credentials, is quite different from Christ in the Gentiles, the hope of glory, a mystery by revelation.

When God gave the full revelation of the great mystery then His program of miracles ceased. Read II Corinthians 5:16. Different gifts were given unto believers. Compare I Corinthians 12:8 to 11 and Ephesians 4:9 to 13.

While Christ had a body of flesh and blood He was God. (Hebrews 1:8). When Christ had a body, of flesh and bones Thomas said, "my Lord and my God". (John 20:28). Christ was God before He had either body. His essential and eternal Deity never changes.

So Christ is the same as to His Deity. But think of the difference between Christ now in heaven as a Priest after the order of Melchisedec (Hebrews 7:1 to 3) and as He was in heaven before He became Jesus of Nazareth. Christ is the same but He changes as to His form and His ministry. He is now far above all heavens on His Father's throne while God is building the Church, or Body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:9 to 13). After the Body has been completed Christ will return and build again the tabernacle of David and sit, as Prince of Peace, on the throne of His glory, as King and Judge. (Amos 9:11 to 15 - Isaiah 9:6 and 7) (Matthew 25:31 to 35).

When Christ came the first time He submitted Himself unto the judgment of men. When He comes the second time, apart from sin, (Hebrews 9:28), He will do the judging of men. (Acts 17:31 - II Thessalonians 1:7 to 10).

So we should think how Christ changes in form and ministry when we read Hebrews 1:12 and Hebrews 1:8 and Hebrews 13:8.

LESSON NINE

READ GALATIANS 2:21 - GALATIANS 3:23 - ROMANS 4:4 AND 5
ROMANS 4:4 AND 10 - II CORINTHIANS 5:21

RIGHTEOUSNESS NOT BY THE LAW

From these and other Scriptures we learn that there is no righteousness for the sinner by law-keeping. No one can get into heaven by obeying the ten commandments. If righteousness come by the law, Christ died in vain. (Galatians 2:21). If there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. (Galatians 3:21). But Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Romans 10:4). On the cross of Calvary the sinless Christ, Who knew no sin, was made sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. (II Corinthians 5:21). With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. (Romans 10:9 and 10). To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. (Romans 4:5).

From these and many other Scriptures we learn that righteousness, which is acceptable to God, is not a human attainment; that no person can earn it or purchase it, or merit it by good religious behaviour, or by ritual, ceremony or human endeavor. Righteousness is God's free gift to believing sinners. The only place in the universe of God where the sinner can find that righteousness is in Christ Jesus on the cross of Calvary.

No person can become righteous by trying to obey the teachings of Jesus Christ the Righteous, or by trying to follow Him, the great Example, or by trying to practice the ethics of Christ, or by struggling with the Sermon on the Mount or by striving to obey the Golden Rule. We must receive the nature of Christ at Calvary before we can practice the ethics of Christ.

In Galatians 3:14 and Romans 4:21 to 25 we learn that the blessing of Abraham is for every sinner who will do what Abram did for his righteousness, believe God Who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, Who was delivered for our offences and raised up for our justification.

Paul was a conscientious, zealous, sincere, law-keeping, religious man. He gave up all of this, that he might win Christ 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." (Philippians 3:9).

The great truth concerning the reign of grace, righteousness and eternal life, is told in Romans 5:21: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 5:21).

God's righteousness is available for any kind of a sinner, religious or otherwise, who will, by faith, receive the grace of God and the Son of God and His precious blood.

At the time God gives His righteousness to the believing sinner He also gives him the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 3:14 - Ephesians 1:13 and 14). Then by the Spirit's power the righteous believer can and should fulfill the righteousness of the law, by walking in the Spirit. (Romans 8:4).

Man's righteousness, apart from the grace of God and faith in the redemptive work of Christ, is as filthy rags in God's sight; and man's works of righteousness will not produce saving righteousness. (Compare Isaiah 64:6 - Ezekiel 33:13 to 15 with Titus 3:5 to 8 and II Corinthians 5:21).

In closing let us consider the GREAT "IF'S" of Matthew 26:39 - John 11:48 - I Corinthians 15:17, 18, 32 - Galatians 2:21 - Galatians 3:21 - John 8:24, John 12:26 - Romans 10:9 and 10 - II Timothy 2:21. "IF it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." "IF we leave Christ alone the Romans will act." "IF Christ be not raised from the dead." "IF righteousness come by man's works, Christ died for naught." "IF ye believe not that Christ is the I AM, ye shall die in your sins." "IF you confess Him and believe, you will receive righteousness and salvation." "IF you purge yourself, you shall be in God's. House a vessel of honour."

LESSON TEN

READ JAMES 2:17 TO 26 - PHILIPPIANS 2:12 - TITUS 1:16
HEBREWS 6:17 TO 20 GENESIS 15:6 AND GENESIS 22:16.

ARE BELIEVERS JUSTIFIED BY WORKS?

If you desire real profit and a genuine blessing in this Bible study, be sure to read all of the Scriptures mentioned above.

In Romans 4:4 and 5 Paul states positively that good works contribute nothing whatever to a believer's righteousness or justification. Justification by faith is to him that worketh not. In Ephesians 2:10 Paul shows the place for good works, following salvation without works.

Note the plain statements in Romans 3:28 and Romans 3:24, that because of the perfect redemptive work of the perfect Christ, the believing sinner is justified without the deeds of the law, even (dorian) without a cause, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 2:16).

In James 2:24 and 21 we read: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac, his son upon the altar?"

At first Paul and James seem to teach contradictory doctrine. We know that James addressed the twelve tribes of Israel (James 1:1), that James was the Lord's messenger to Israel (Galatians 2:9), that James caused Paul to shave his head and become a Jew in Jerusalem, that James caused Peter to refuse to eat with Gentile Christians, (Acts 21:18 and 23 to 27 - Galatians 2:11 to 13). We know what James said in Acts 15:19; that God, during the "Acts" period had one order for believing Jews and another for believing Gentiles. (Acts 21:25). But we must find in other Scriptures the explanation for this seeming contradiction.

We have heard that Martin Luther and others could not reconcile Paul's Epistle to the Galatians with the truth in the Epistle of James, and so they doubted whether II Timothy 3:16

could apply to the Epistle of James. The Epistle of James is not only an inspired Epistle, but one with much valuable and practical teaching. James, addressed to “the twelve tribes”, like Matthew, Mark and Luke, and the first chapters of Acts, must be interpreted and applied in the light of Paul’s “grace” messages to members of the Body of Christ. (Ephesians 3:1 to 8).

Some explain James 2:17 to 26 to mean that man is justified by faith before God, and that man is justified by works before men. It is true that the believer should prove the reality of Christ and Christianity by good works, but certainly the Christian need do nothing to prove to God that he has been saved. God knows. (II Timothy 2:19).

Justified before men is not the explanation of James 2:17 to 26. Paul wrote of the covenant of promise, the gospel which God preached to Abram. (Read Galatians 3:8 Galatians 3:16 to 19). Paul wrote that Abraham was justified by faith, without works, in uncircumcision. (Romans 4:1 to 11) (Compare Genesis 15:6 - Genesis 17:24 and Genesis 22:16).

In Hebrews 6:17 to 20 we learn that God confirmed His covenant with an oath, And that the covenant and the oath are called “the two immutable things”. In Galatians 3:8 we learn that God preached the gospel to Abram (24 years before he became circumcised Abraham) at the time God gave Abram the covenant of promise. (Galatians 3:16 to 18). Abram believed God and that belief was counted to Abram for righteousness about forty years before God confirmed the covenant with an oath at the time Isaac was on the altar and Abraham was justified by works. Abram was just as righteous before He offered Isaac as thereafter. Paul referred to the covenant - James referred to the oath.

LESSON ELEVEN

READ I CORINTHIANS 12:13 - EPHESIANS 2:13 TO 20
EPHESIANS 3:6

THE LORD’S ONE CHURCH

In I Corinthians 12:13, we read one of the most comprehensive messages in all of the Bible. Here we have truth as to who is included in salvation, in this present age and reign of grace and who is excluded: “For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

We know that in this age and dispensation of grace, the Jews have no priority rights or special spiritual privileges. The gospel of the kingdom is to be preached when the Jews are in favor with God. This means the “rise” of Israel. The gospel of the grace of God is now being preached because Israel is in disfavor with God. This means the “fall” of Israel. (Romans 11:11 - Romans 11:25 - Romans 11:30). However, the majority of the first members of the Body of Christ were Jews. Later on the Gentile converts out-numbered the Jews. But all believers, Jews and Gentiles, were baptized into the Church, called in Ephesians 3:6, “the JointBody.” This is still God’s way for the Jew or the Gentile to become a “Church-member”.

We read concerning Israel, (The Jews), in Romans 11:20 and 23: “because of unbelief they were broken off. “God is able to graft them in again.” “For God hath concluded them all (Gentiles and Jews) in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all.” (Romans 11:32).

There is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile in this age of grace. (Romans 10:12). There was a very great difference between the Jews and Gentiles while Christ was in the midst of Israel on earth. (Mark 7:27 - Matthew 15:24 to 28 - Acts 2:22).

Christ on the cross took that difference out of the way (Ephesians 2:13 to 19). And how plain is God's Word, that whether the Gentile or the Jew is saved and made a member of God's Church, which He purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28), it is all by the operation of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. No Gentile and no Jew can join himself to God's Church. Believing Gentiles and believing Jews are baptized by one Spirit into one Body. God gives the increase. Salvation is of the Lord. He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit. (I Corinthians 6:17). The one Body is called, "the Joint-Body" in Ephesians 3:6.

Note what Christ's perfect redemptive work on the cross has accomplished for believing Gentiles and believing Jews. That He (Christ) might reconcile both (Gentiles and Jews) in one Body by the cross, "and came and preached peace to you which were afar off (Gentiles) and to them that were nigh (Jews)." (Ephesians 2:16 and 17).

By this Divine operation Gentiles are no longer strangers but fellow-citizens with the saints in the Household of God, and all the believing Jews and believing Gentiles make up the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6. (Ephesians 2:19). This is to be the filling-up of Christ, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. (Ephesians 1:23 and Ephesians 4:13).

Surely after reading this simple, but profound, truth no person will believe that he can be saved by joining some local assembly, or church organization. "They two shall be one flesh. I speak concerning Christ and the Church." (Ephesians 5:31 and 32).

God exhorts His people "not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is." (Hebrews 10:25) Peter and John, "being let go, they went to their own company." (Acts 4:23). Every Christian should have his own company. But no person should think he is going to heaven because he attends irregularly or regularly "church" services. Outside of the invisible Organism, which is quite different from some sectarian visible organization, there is no salvation during this age and dispensation of grace. Read carefully I Timothy 3:15 and 16 and obey the instructions, "behave thyself in the House of God", the Church of the living God."

LESSON TWELVE

READ II TIMOTHY 2:1 TO 26.

VESSELS IN GOD'S HOUSE

In II Timothy 2:1 , the servant of the Lord is exhorted to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

In II Timothy 2:3 the servant of the Lord is exhorted to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

In II Timothy 2:15 the servant of the Lord is expected to study to show himself approved unto God and rightly divide the Word of truth.

In II Timothy 2:19 the servant of the Lord is exhorted to depart from iniquity.

In II Timothy 4:2 and 5 the servant of the Lord is told to preach the Word and to do the work of an evangelist.

If the servant of the Lord will faithfully obey these exhortations, he will be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work. (II Timothy 2:21).

Every member of the Body of Christ is a vessel in a House (a great House). (II Timothy 2:20).

In I Timothy 3:15 the servant of the Lord is told how he should behave in the House of God which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Those same instructions are stated in different language in Ephesians 4:1: "That ye walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye are called."

It is beyond human imagination what the Church of the living God, as the pillar and ground of the truth, could do, if members of that Church would be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, if they would endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, if they would rightly divide the Word of truth, if they would depart from iniquity.

Members of the Church of the living God, Which He purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28), are certainly vessels in a great House. Think of the price that was paid for this House and the glorious future of this House: "... Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word. That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that is should be holy and without blemish."

Surely every Christian should desire to be a vessel of honor in this great House, sanctified and easily used for the Lord Jesus Christ, Who said, "if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor." (John 12:26).

We read concerning Christ as the Chief Corner Stone in this great House, "In Whom all the Building fitly framed (joined) together groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord. In Whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:21 and 22). "The Household of God." (Ephesians 2:20). What an honour to be in this Household, this Temple, this Building! To be "in Christ" in this age of grace, means to be a member of. God's Family, a child of God, an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ. (Romans 8:15 and 16).

It is possible to be saved so as by fire and not be a vessel of honour in this great House, sanctified and meet for the Master's use. (I Corinthians 3:15). But why not have the very best that God has for us?

Reader, if you feel that you have been a failure and consider your case about hopeless, read Jeremiah's visit to the potter's house in Jeremiah 18:1 to 6 and see how God's prophet saw the potter "re-make" the marred vessel. Then read God's word; that He could do the same with a marred sinner. Turn from this scene to Judas and the potter's field in Matthew 27:3 to 10. God is the Great Potter. We are the vessels. If you are a sinner, let God save you, by His grace and His Son. If you are a saint, let God use you. "Purge yourself from these." Be a vessel of honour in God's Great House. Remember I Corinthians 15:58 and I Corinthians 3:13 to 15. God is a Great God. He gives eternal life to receivers. Then He pays well for service.

LESSON THIRTEEN

READ ROMANS 5:12 TO 21,

UNDER THE LAW OR IN CHRIST

In Romans 8:2 to 4 we read of the three great laws of the Bible:

1. The law of sin and death. 2. The law given at Sinai. 3. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Let us read Romans 5:18 - II Corinthians 3:9 and John 3:18: "Therefore as by the offence of one (Adam) judgment came upon all men to CONDEMNATION; even so by the righteousness of one (Christ) the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." "For if the ministration of CONDEMNATION be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." "He that believeth on Him (Christ) is not condemned: but he that believeth not is CONDEMNED already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Here we learn that the people to whom Peter preached on the day of Pentecost were thrice condemned.

1. They were condemned in Adam.
2. They were condemned by the Ten Commandments.
3. They were condemned because they rejected Jesus Christ as Saviour.

In and by and through Adam the whole world is ruined and guilty before God, condemned, unrighteous, alienated and dead in trespasses and sins. There is no hope for the worst or the best person who remains in Adam. By Adam sin entered - death entered - death passed upon all men. (Romans 5:12). By Adam "the entrance of sin." The law entered by Moses that the offence that entered by Adam might abound (Romans 5:20). By the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight. By the law (Moses) "the knowledge of sin." (Romans 3:19 and 20).

The law was Israel's schoolmaster to bring them to Christ that they might be justified by faith; and justified, they were no longer under the schoolmaster (the law). (Galatians 3:24 and 25). Members of Christ's Body are under grace; not under the law. (Romans 6:14).

Now hear the good news in Christ Jesus: "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:4). "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 5:21). "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man (Christ) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts 13:38 and 39). Dwell on this blessed and glorious good news. The heathen to whom Paul preached were not under the law before they were saved by grace, and certainly not thereafter. (I Corinthians 9:20 to 25).

1. By Adam is the entrance of sin.
2. By Moses is the knowledge of sin.
3. By Christ Jesus is the forgiveness of sin.

Upon the human race sin and death reign by Adam and Moses, the law of sin and death and the law of the Ten Commandments, the ministration of death, ordained unto death. (II Corinthians 3:7 and Romans 7:10).

But there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1), because of the efficacy, value and power of the law of life in Christ Jesus, in accordance with Romans 8:3 - John 10:17 and 18 and 28 - and II Timothy 1:10.

“For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did: by the which we draw nigh unto God.” (Hebrews 7:19). “What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh”, Christ did do. (Romans 8:3). “Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” (Ephesians 2:13). Which is better “in Christ” or “under the law”? (Romans 6:14).

LESSON FOURTEEN

READ EZEKIEL 36:21 TO 32 - ROMANS 11:26 TO 29 - EPHESIANS 4:32

GOD’S GIFTS ARE WITHOUT REPENTANCE

Whether or not this lesson is of great interest to you, it is one of the most important lessons in all the Bible for those who would know God’s past, present and future dealings with Jews and Gentiles. We should know that the Jew is one of the important keys to the Bible.

In our Scripture reading we note, 1. For Jehovah’s SAKE. 2. For the Gentiles’ SAKE. 3. For the fathers’ (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) SAKE. 4. For Christ’s SAKE.

Now let us read prayerfully and spiritually Ezekiel 36:21 , 22, 24, 28, and 32: “But I had pity for Mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.” “Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your SAKES, O house of Israel, but for Mine holy name’s SAKE which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.” “For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.” “And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.” “Not for your SAKES do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel.” Now Romans 11:26 to 29, “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written. There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for YOUR SAKES: but as touching the election they are beloved for THE FATHERS’ SAKE. FOR THE GIFTS AND CALLING OF GOD ARE WITHOUT REPENTANCE.”

Now let us compare Ephesians 4:32 and Matthew 6:15: “And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ’s SAKE hath forgiven you.” “But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Here we have the difference between “grace” forgiveness and “law” forgiveness.

The above Scripture should be self-explanatory. Let us emphasize Romans 11:29: “FOR THE GIFTS AND THE CALLING OF GOD ARE WITHOUT REPENTANCE.”

When the Holy Spirit said, “All Israel shall be saved” (Romans 11:26), He did not mean that the individual Israelites, who reject Christ and His gospel in this age and dispensation of grace, or those who died before in sin and unbelief, will be saved; for in this same chapter we read of the severity and goodness of God; goodness with a condition, (Romans 11:22 and 23). Israel, as a nation, is to be restored. (Isaiah 62:1 to 4 - Amos 9:11 to 15). But the eternal wrath of God against lost Jews is told in Romans 2.

God has a future glorious program for this earth, and Israel is to have a prominent place in that program. Israel committed four great sins and God set them aside temporarily: 1. Israel killed the prophets. 2. Israel killed the Prince of Life. 3. Israel blasphemed and resisted the Holy Spirit. 4. Israel forbade the apostles to preach to Gentiles. (Matthew 23:31 to 33 - Matthew 21:34 to 40 - Acts 7:51 to 55 - Acts 18:5 - I Thessalonians 2:14 and 15).

Then Israel fell under God's judgment of blindness, and they became enemies of the gospel for the Gentiles' sake. (Romans 11:28).

How much time have you spent studying Romans 11:28 to 30? What have you done for the Jews, in obedience to Romans 11:31 ?

Then the Gentiles obtained mercy because of Israel's unbelief, blindness and fall. (Romans 11:8 to 11 - 26 and Romans 11:30).

With Israel's disobedience unbelief, blindness and fall began the reign of grace, The alienated heathen were forgiven all their sins FOR CHRIST'S SAKE. (Ephesians 2:1 to 9 - Ephesians 4:32 - Colossians 2:13).

When God again saves Israel it will be FOR THE FATHERS' SAKE (Romans 11:27 to 29). It will be for Jehovah's SAKE. (Ezekiel 36:22 and 32). So we want to cry with Paul Romans 11:33 and 34 - Read it: And believe Ephesians 1:11. As you read of God's free gift in Romans 6:23, remember "without repentance."

LESSON FIFTEEN

READ LUKE 16:16 - GALATIANS 4:4
MATTHEW 23:1 TO 3 - COLOSSIANS 2:13 TO 16.

WHEN DID THE REIGN OF LAW CEASE?

Many Christians have been much confused as to the meaning of Christ's words in Luke 16:16 - "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."

Some Bible teachers have tried to prove from this verse two errors, which they have taught; first, that the reign of law ceased when John the Baptist began his public ministry and then and there the reign of grace and the kingdom of God, which is the Body of Christ, began.

We learn from Luke 2:39 that, before John the Baptist came out from the wilderness, what was done for the Holy Child Jesus was in accordance with the law of Moses. But after John announced his mission and preached to Israel, we read in Luke 4:16: "And He (Christ) came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read."

Then, we note, in Christ's ministry to Israel, the truth of Matthew 8:4 - Matthew 5:24 and Matthew 23:1 to 3: "Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." "Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to His disciples, Saying, The scribes and

the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not."

From these, and other Scriptures, we get something of the meaning of the words of Christ, in Matthew 5:17, and the words concerning Christ, in Galatians 4:4 - "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, under the law."

Jesus Christ was made under the law. He and His twelve apostles lived and ministered under the law, while He was on earth as the minister of the circumcision (Romans 15:8). Christ, on earth, did not instruct either saved or unsaved Israelites to abandon the feasts of - Jehovah (Leviticus 23) or the sacrifice of animals. The truth of John 4:23 and 24 was not understood until after the beginning of the reign of grace. In Matthew 23:1 to 3 Christ told His apostles to respect the "law" seat of Moses. In Colossians 2:14 we read when the law was taken out of the way. "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross."

Therefore, when Christ preached the Sermon on the Mount the law had not been blotted out and the Golden Rule is the very essence of the law; (Matthew 7:12); and so is Matthew 6:14 and 15. Concerning the Golden Rule, Christ said, "This is the law." Matthew 7:12. Note 6:14 and 15: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matthew 6:14 and 15.

Even the messenger whom God sent to Saul of Tarsus, after Calvary, was a devout man according to the law (Acts 22:12). The transition from "under the law" to "under grace" was after Christ died and became the end of the law for righteousness, and even then it was gradual and not sudden. And surely the Body of Christ did not begin in the days of John the Baptist.

LESSON SIXTEEN

READ EPHESIANS 5:18 - EPHESIANS 1:3 - EPHESIANS 1:19 TO 23
ROMANS 8:4 - GALATIANS 5:22 TO 26.

HOW BELIEVERS RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

We are told in Galatians 3:14 and Ephesians 1:13 that Christ died on the cross that believers might receive the Holy Spirit by faith. "After that ye believed" in Ephesians 1:13 is the Greek participle (pisteusantes) and should be translated "believing." "Believing, ye received the Holy Spirit."

Note the questions in Galatians 3:2 and 3: "... Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you foolish? having begun in the Spirit are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"

The Holy Spirit, like eternal life, salvation and God's righteousness, is God's free gift to any believing sinner who will receive God's grace and God's Son.

It is sad, but true, that there are many really saved people who say that they do not know if they have, or have not, received the Holy Spirit. Some Christians misinterpret the question of Paul in Acts 19:2, "believing, received ye the Holy Spirit" and doubt whether the Holy Spirit is

given to any who do not obey Luke 24:49, and tarry for the Holy Spirit. "Since ye believed" in Acts 19:2, is also from the Greek "pisteusantes", "believing."

In this age and dispensation of grace Ephesians 2:8 to 10 is altogether true, salvation is by grace without works, religious or otherwise, without praying or agonizing. Also we should believe Ephesians 1:3 and 1:19 and 20. Note these statements: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with ALL spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ." "And what is the exceeding greatness of HIS POWER TO USWARD who believe, according to the working of His mighty power; "Which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies."

If the believer, saved by grace, is blessed with ALL spiritual blessings in the heavenlies, and the MIGHTY POWER OR GOD is his, because he is a believer, then with ALL blessings, why seek a second blessing? If too the believer is provided with ALL POWER and all grace (II Corinthians 9:8), why seek for more? Let us not seek a second blessing until we exhaust the ALL blessings. God's way is: "Be it unto you according to your faith." Unlimited spiritual resources are on deposit for the believer who is in Christ. All believers are in Christ, So, spiritually, the believer in Christ is a multimillionaire and can never exhaust his riches and blessings and power and grace in Christ. Christ's riches are the believer's riches.

In this age of grace believers do not receive the Holy Spirit and Holy Spirit baptism on the installment plan. A Christian is a "Christ one" - one anointed and sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption, (II Corinthians 1:21 to 23) (Ephesians 1:14 - 4:30).

There are no short cuts to the Spirit - filled life. Walk in the Spirit is God's instruction. (Galatians 5:24 and 25 - Romans 8:4).

What is necessary for the development of the physical man? Good Food - Good Water - Good Air - Good Exercise - Good Rest.

What is necessary for the believer who would be filled with the Holy Spirit? Regular and systematic Holy Spirit Bible Study. Much Prayer. Do not pray or tarry or agonize for more of the Holy Spirit Who is a Person, but that the Holy Spirit may have more of you as you obey Romans 8:4. Real Holy Spirit worship. Remember Mary and Martha. Mary chose the better part. Worship first and then service - (I Thessalonians 1:19 and 10). Assembling with other saints for public worship. Walking in the good works of Ephesians 2:10. Witnessing, walking and waiting for God's Son from heaven, as we walk in the Spirit and manifest the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:16 to 26).

You cannot be filled with the Holy Spirit by responding to altar calls, or second blessings calls, unless that response means obedience to God's spiritual laws. Development from childhood to manhood, whether physical or spiritual, is gradual and unceasing obedience to certain laws or rules.

LESSON SEVENTEEN

READ I CORINTHIANS 15:45- I CORINTHIANS 15:47
I CORINTHIANS 15:21 TO 23.

IN ADAM - IN CHRIST

In these Scriptures we learn that the first man whom God created is called, “the first man” and “the first Adam,” and that the Lord Jesus Christ is called, “the second Man from heaven,” “the last Adam”.

We learn that the history of the human race is told in the words “in Adam” and “in Christ.” The history of the human race is the story of the first man and the second Man.

By the first man came death. By the Second Man came the resurrection of the dead. (I Corinthians 15:20 to 22).

In Adam all die. Note how this is told in Romans 5:12: “Wherefore as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

In John 5:24 we have the words of the Lord Jesus: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth in Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

This is the way this same truth is stated in Colossians 2:13 and in Ephesians 2:5 and 6: “And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He made alive together with Him (Christ), having forgiven you all trespasses.” “Even when we were dead in sins, hath made us alive us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved), And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.”

This is the confirmation of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in John 11:25 and 26: “I am the resurrection and the life, He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.”

This refers to the believer’s spiritual resurrection right here and now, and to His bodily resurrection when the Lord Jesus Christ comes for His saints, as described in I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18.

Out of Adam into Christ means out of death into life, out of darkness into light, out of the world into the Body of Christ. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new.” (II Corinthians 5:17). “Baptized by one Spirit into one Body.” (I Corinthians 12:13).

“In Christ” is the place of eternal life, security, Divine blessing, yea, all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies. (Ephesians 1:3). In His Epistles the apostle Paul used the words “in Christ” or the equivalent, about eighty times.

The believer is God’s workmanship created in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:10). He has been made alive. (Ephesians 2:5 - Colossians 2:13). He is alive from the dead. (Romans 6:13).

The believer, already alive spiritually, is to be made alive at the coming of the second Man. (I Corinthians 15:20 to 23). This has reference to the believer’s resurrection body.

Christ, in His resurrection, was the Firstfruits of them that slept. (I Corinthians 15:20). He is the believer’s Forerunner, entered into heaven. (Hebrews 6:19 and 20). They that are Christ’s, redeemed by His precious blood, will be made alive at His coming. (I Corinthians 15:21 to 23 - I Corinthians 15:51 to 54).

Note the believer’s testimony in I John 3:1 to 3: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He (Christ) shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

As Adam was disobedient unto death, and brought alienation, condemnation, unrighteousness and death, so Christ was obedient unto death and brought reconciliation, justification, righteousness and eternal life. (Romans 5:12 to 21 - Philippians 2:5 to 9).

Adam brought the curse and the thorns. Christ bore the curse when He wore the thorns.

LESSON EIGHTEEN

READ EPHESIANS 2:1 TO 10 - EPHESIANS 2:13 - II TIMOTHY 1:9 AND 10
TITUS 3:3 TO 8 - PHILIPPIANS 2:12 AND 13 - ROMANS 4:4 AND 5.

SALVATION BY GRACE

The apostle Paul was the outstanding messenger of grace. It is true that we read in John 1:16 and 17 that grace came by Jesus Christ and of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. But after we leave these statements, the word “grace” is not found again in John’s Gospel. There is abounding grace in that Gospel, but not the word “grace” after the first chapter. And in Matthew, Mark and Luke (68 chapters), in the sinner’s salvation, the word “grace” is not used. In fact, our word “grace” is not found in Matthew and Mark; only once in Luke 2:40, referring to the Lord Himself. In the Gospel of Luke, the Greek word is several times translated “favour”, but this is not in connection with the sinner’s salvation. Of course, there was plenty of grace in Christ’s messages to sinners while He was on earth. There was grace for Abel, Noah, Abram, Jacob and Moses and David, but not as we have it in this “grace” dispensation (Ephesians 3:1 to 4).

In the Four Gospels, and the New Testament Writings, other than Paul’s, the word “grace” is found 27 times: whereas Paul, in his “Acts” ministry and in his Epistles, used the word “grace” 101 times, also using the word in the “verb” form. Believers are accepted (graced) in Christ, the Beloved. (Ephesians 1:6 and 7).

Note Paul’s testimony in I Corinthians 15:10 and in Romans 11:6. “But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed on me was not in vain; But I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” “And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more of grace: otherwise work is no more work.”

In Romans 5:21 Paul tells us how grace operates: “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Immediately following this statement Paul asked a very important question and followed it up with another question in Romans 6:15. To both questions he answers, “God forbid.” Note the two questions: “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?” “what then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?” (Romans 6:1 and 15).

Grace is not license or permission to sin. Grace, by no means, excuses spiritual inactivity. After the Holy Spirit permits us to look into God’s “saint” factory, in Titus 3:3 to 7, to see the human material out of which God makes saints by grace and the Divine process, which is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, after we see the finished product, then the Holy

Spirit adds in verse 8, “that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain (practice) good works.”

Note how the Holy Spirit states this truth, by the pen of Paul, in Philippians 2:12 and 13, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: For it is God which, worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” This is explained in Ephesians 2:10 - “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” No man’s good works will be accepted by God for salvation; no not until man is the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus. And then “whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.” (Colossians 3:17). Read the All-sufficiency of God’s grace in II Corinthians 9:8.

Paul headed the list of “good workers”; but he gave credit to the grace of God. (I Corinthians 15:10 - II Corinthians 9:8).

We have God’s unmixed “salvation by grace” message in II Timothy 1:9 and 10, Romans 4:4 and 5 - Titus 3:5 to 7 - Ephesians 2:8 to 10 and in many other Scriptures, including John 6:47 - John 6:29 - John 6:40. The mixed message, such as Luke 13:24 - Matthew 24:13 and 14 - Acts 2:38 - Mark 16:16 - Acts 10:34 and 35, can only be applied in this present age of grace, as we study them in the light of Ephesians 2:8 and 9 - “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, less any man should boast.”

LESSON NINETEEN

READ II CORINTHIANS 9:8 - II CORINTHIANS 5:6 - II CORINTHIANS 2:14
JOHN 11:42 - LUKE 18:1 - EPHESIANS 6:18 - EPHESIANS 5:20
I PETER 3:15 - I CORINTHIANS 15:58

WHAT CHRISTIANS ARE TO DO ALWAYS

In every verse mentioned above we find the word “ALWAYS” and in them we learn what Christians can do, by the grace of God, ALWAYS.

Let us ever keep in mind that Christ in heaven is always praying for Christians (Hebrews 7:25) and that “God is faithful Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.” (I Corinthians 10:13). In the intercessory ministry of Christ hear what He said to His Father in John 11:42, “Thou Nearest Me always.”

Then note God’s all-sufficient grace for every test, every task, and every trial of every Christian: “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, ALWAYS having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” II Corinthians 9:8.

Then note II Corinthians 5:6: “Therefore we are ALWAYS confident knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.”

“We are ALWAYS confident” - no room for doubt at any time. To be confident always means more than “I hope so.” Faith cometh by hearing the Word of God. Faith is the evidence of things not seen.

God ALWAYS causeth us to triumph in Christ, (II Corinthians 2:14). Outside of Christ there is no triumph, no spiritual blessing, no righteousness, no hope, no life, no salvation. But in

Christ all spiritual blessings. (Ephesians 1:3) and all of God's power that the Christian needs. (Ephesians 1:19 to 23).

The Lord Jesus said, "Men ought ALWAYS to pray (Luke 18:1 and Luke 21:36). Then He instructed Paul to write Ephesians 6:18 and Ephesians 5:20: "Praying ALWAYS with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." "Giving thanks ALWAYS for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Christians should pray without ceasing (I Thessalonians 5:17), always. And they should never forget to pray for every member of the Body of Christ, remembering I Corinthians 12:26: "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it."

Christians are to be filled with praise and gratitude and give thanks always in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then note I Peter 3:15 and I Corinthians 15:58: "But sanctify the Lord in your hearts and be ready ALWAYS to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, ALWAYS abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Christians are to be on the alert at all times. They are to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. They are to be partakers of the afflictions of the gospel. They are to make full proof of their ministry (II Timothy 2:2 - II Timothy 1:8 - II Timothy 4:5). They are to be shining lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse human race. (Philippians 2:15 and 16).

Christians are to be ready always to testify for Christ as stated in II Corinthians 4:5 and 6. "Always" does not mean semi-annually or monthly, or once a week in the assembly, but at all times.

And what does it mean to be steadfast and unmoveable, not weary in well doing? What does it mean to ALWAYS abound in the work of the Lord? It means exactly that and great will be the reward, for not one sacrifice, one deed done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ will be in vain.

"Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." (Galatians 6:9).

LESSON TWENTY

READ HEBREWS 1:1 AND 2 - II PETER 1:19 AND 20 - II TIMOTHY 3:16
MATTHEW 13:16 AND 17 - JOHN 16:12 AND 13 - ACTS 26:16
II CORINTHIANS 13:3.

THE SCRIPTURES BY INSPIRATION

Let us read every Scripture mentioned above. First note Hebrews 1:1 and 2 - "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son."

Thus we see how the Scriptures were given on the installment plan from the first line, written by Moses, until Christ Himself said what He did in Matthew 13:16 and 17 and John

16:12 and 13: “But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.”

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: and He will shew you things to come.”

Some years thereafter Christ spoke in a housetop vision to Peter authorizing Peter to preach to Cornelius. (Acts 11:1 to 9). Then note what the twelve apostles did: “When they heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.” (Acts 11:18).

Then note Paul’s testimony in Acts 26:16: Christ said, “I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee.”

Then Paul, in Galatians 1:11 and 12, told how his “grace” gospel was received from Christ in heaven. Then he spoke of many revelations from Christ (I Corinthians 15:8 - II Corinthians 12:1 to 12).

Then note in II Corinthians 13:3 that Christ spoke in Paul as He lived in Paul. (Galatians 2:20).

Years after God spoke to Adam He spoke to Noah (Genesis 7:1 - 9:17). Years later He spoke to Abraham (Genesis 13:14 - Genesis 17:9). More than 400 years later God spoke some entirely new truth to Moses. Many times in the Bible is the statement, “God said unto Moses.” Then centuries later God spoke unto Solomon and David, to Elijah and Elisha, to Isaiah and Jeremiah, and many others. Then Israel went to Babylon and “the times of the Gentiles,” politically, began. And God told Daniel many things that He had never told any other of His servants.

Several hundred years later God sent His Son Who said, “I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me what I should say.” (John 12:49). Years after Christ went back to heaven, He spoke some wonderful messages to Gentiles, through the apostle Paul.

While Christ was on earth, sent only to Israel, He was not speaking in the dispensation of the grace of God to members of the Body of Christ, but He was ministering under the law to Israel, speaking to saved and unsaved Jews. Some of these - but not all - spiritual truths, proclaimed by Christ on earth were to apply to God’s people both before and after Calvary.

This is one of the most difficult problems in rightly dividing the Word of truth, for Christians want to be sure not to eliminate from God’s grace program and message one word in The Four Gospels that is compatible with this “grace” message, and not to bring over one thing that will frustrate the grace of God or pervert the grace gospel. (Galatians 1:8 to 12 and Galatians 2:21).

In Acts 26:16 we learn how Paul received revelation on the installment plan until finally he received that which completed the Word of God, the revelation of the mystery. (Colossians 1:24 to 26). Since God completed His Scriptures, and the last Book was written, spiritually speaking, anything that is new is not true, and anything that is true is not new.

LESSON TWENTY-ONE

READ JOHN 20:31 - JOHN 3:18 - JOHN 6:47

JOHN 3:36 - JOHN 8:24 - JOHN 16:9 - JOHN 6:29 - JOHN 6:64

JOHN'S GOSPEL - BELIEVE

It is very interesting to note that in the Gospel of John the word "believe" is used 100 times. Of the 100 times it is translated "commit" in John 2:24. The words "believe not" are found in John about 15 times. Note John 6:64 - John 8:24 - John 16:9 and John 3:36.

"But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not." "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." "Of sin, because they believe not on Me." "He that believeth on the Son hath, everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Surely the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal I AM, in the Gospel of John; for in that Book He speaks of Himself as "I AM" at least 20 times. As the I AM, of course Christ was omniscient. He knew all things (John 4:25 - John 21:17). He knew what was in man. He was more than a mind-reader. (John 2:24 and 25). Thomas was right, "My Lord and My God." (John 20:28).

"If ye believe not that I AM, ye shall die in your sins." (John 8:24). Surely no man but the God-man would make such a statement, or the statement in John 6:47 and John 10:28: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."

The question in John's Gospel is the "Son" question. The great sin is the refusal to accept (by believing) God's remedy for sin, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the eternal I AM, the spotless Lamb of God, Who was foreordained before the foundation of the world (John 1:29 and I Peter 1:18 and 20). This was true in Christ's day, and it is true today. We read in John 3:18 and John 16:9: "He that believeth on Him (Christ) is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." "Of sin, because they believe not on Me (Christ)."

Strange language to fall upon the ears of the self-righteous religious person are Christ's statements in John 6:29 and John 6:40: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent." "And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

Man has many spiritual responsibilities and duties but the great fundamental truth is to know that the first duty is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. "Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid. Which is Jesus Christ." (I Corinthians 3:11).

In studying John's Gospel, we learn that it was written that the readers might believe that Jesus is the eternal Christ, the Son of God; and thereby have life. (John 20:31). Upon the one who believeth not the wrath of God abideth. (John 3:36). Christ died and arose to deliver us from the wrath to come. (I Thessalonians 1:9 and 10).

About eighty per cent of the doings and sayings of Christ, recorded in John's Gospel, are not found in Matthew, Mark and Luke, called the "Synoptics." We shall dwell more fully on this in another lesson.

Unlike the Synoptics, the rejection of Christ is set forth in the very first chapter of John, where Christ is the Lamb of God Which heareth away the sins of the world. (John 1:11 and John 1:29). Therefore in that first chapter we learn that grace came by Jesus Christ and the eternal life in John's Gospel, by grace, is on the ground of the rejection, death and resurrection of Christ. The sinner's work is to "believe." This is the truth so clearly set forth in Paul's "grace" gospel in Ephesians 2:8 to 10. "By grace—through faith—not of works—unto works."

LESSON TWENTY-TWO

READ MARK 16:14 TO 18 - I CORINTHIANS 12:8 TO 11
AND I CORINTHIANS 12:28.

WHAT ABOUT MARK 16:14 TO 18?

We have, in Mark 16:14 to 18, a message and program from the heart and lips of the resurrected Christ, that has perhaps caused more unpleasant divisions and ungracious controversy among Christians than any other part of the Bible. We quote what Christ commanded: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." (Mark 16:15 to 18).

Has any Christian the right to revise this command of Christ? and make it read "he that believeth and is saved shall be baptized and no signs shall follow?" Certainly no one has God's permission to do this, Neither has any Christian the right to abridge the command, leaving verse 16 "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," and forget or ignore verses 17 and 18, "these signs" shall follow."

Without explanation or apology, the majority of evangelical "grace" preachers both revise and abridge this commission of Christ and teach "he that believed and is saved shall be baptized, as a witness to the world"; and "no signs."

The Lutherans teach, "he that believeth and is baptized (by sprinkling) shall be saved, but "no signs following."

The disciples of Alexander Campbell (The Disciples of Christ also called Christians) teach "he that believeth and is baptized, by immersion shall be saved," but "no signs following."

The Disciples and Lutherans do not revise the first part of the command. But the Disciples and the Lutherans differ most radically in obeying Mark 16:16.

The Lutherans teach that the infant son or daughter of Lutheran parents should be baptized. They teach that faith, without sprinkling, will not save; that sprinkling, without faith, will not save. The combination is required. But they agree that the infant cannot believe. If the parents believe for the infant why not let the parents be baptized for the infant?" The Disciples contend that sprinkling is not being buried by baptism in obedience to Romans 6:4 and they teach that no person has "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine delivered you" (6:17) unless that person is born of the water, by being buried under the water. (John 3:5). They stick to the order, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

This is called "baptismal regeneration." If water baptism is a factor in the believer's salvation, the grace message of Ephesians 2:8 and 9 is not true, for there salvation is not of yourselves. If water baptism helps to save a person, Paul, in I Corinthians 1:14 to 17, thanked God that He helped to save a very few. And yet in the same Epistle (I Corinthians 9:21 to 25) the same Paul became all things to all men that he might save some. Did Paul thank God he had helped only a few to witness by water?

The Pentecostalists are more consistent than the Lutherans and the Disciples.

The Pentecostalists claim that, in their message and program, they proclaim the full gospel, that is, they neither revise nor abridge Mark 16:14 to 18, or I Corinthians 12:8 to 11, where the sign gifts are found. They teach faith, water salvation, Holy Spirit baptism, tongues, healing, poison-drinking, raising-the-dead, casting-out-demons and all the miracles, even greater works than Christ performed. (John 14:12). But when they put faith into practice, they miserably fail, and not because of lack of faith or zeal or sincerity.

If Acts 2:38 and Mark 16:16 is our gospel for Gentiles in this age of grace, of course, Titus 3:5 to 8 is not. Compare them.

Only as we employ the principle of progressive revelation, and study the Four Gospels and Acts in the light of Ephesians 2:8 to 10 and Ephesians 3:1 to 11, can we know God's salvation message and program.

LESSON TWENTY-THREE

READ I CORINTHIANS 12:13 - ROMANS 10:12
EPHESIANS 2:14 TO 22 - EPHESIANS 3:6.

JOINING THE CHURCH

Many earnest sincere, conscientious religious people have been saved after having been for years members of some sectarian church-organization.

There are multitudes of zealous church members who have never become new creatures in Christ Jesus. (II Corinthians 5:17).

One of the most heart-searching questions to be considered by them is, "have you experienced I Corinthians 12:13?" Note this verse; "For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles"?

This is an all-inclusive and all-exclusive message. Put the question to yourself, "have I been baptized into the Body of Christ?"

In religious circles we hear much of "joining the church", but here we have the all-important joining of the Church, "which should come before we become identified with some local assembly.

If there is any truth clearly taught in the Bible, so clearly taught that no person should have any excuse for ignorance, it is the fact that, during this age and dispensation of grace, God recognizes one and only one true Bible Church, "the Church which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." (Ephesians 1:22 and 23).

"There is one Body". (Ephesians 4:4). No church board or committee of deacons and elders can induct any believer into this Body. "For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one Body."

So far as the adults of this world are concerned, with respect to salvation, the human race is divided into two groups, "dead sinners" and "living saints." (I Corinthians 6:11 - Ephesians 2:1 to 10).

Dead sinners may be moral or immoral, religious or irreligious, they may be church-members, Sunday School teachers, or reverends; but unless they have been made "living saints"

in God's way (Ephesians 2:4 to 10 - Ephesians 2:13) they are "dead sinners." Some of them "twice dead plucked up by the roots." (Jude 12).

All "living saints" are members of the Body of Christ, such have been added to Christ and His Church by a Divine baptism made without hands. Every living saint should be identified with an assembly of saints of like precious faith. But no person is changed from a "dead sinner" to a "living saint" by joining some church-organization. "Living saints" should behave as becometh saints, but they do not become saints by behaving, but by believing. (Romans 4:4 and 5).

In Ephesians 2:15 to 18 we learn that Christ on the cross made peace and settled the God-ordained difference between the Jews and the Gentiles, those that were nigh and those that were far off. (Ephesians 2:17). "And that He might reconcile both unto God in one Body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." (Ephesians 2:16). "That the Gentiles should be joint-heirs, and of the JointBody, and joint-sharers of His promise in Christ by the gospel." (Ephesians 3:6). "Reconciled to God in one Body." "Baptized in the Holy Spirit in one Body." "God gave the increase." (I Corinthians 3:6).

Christ gave gifts unto men, "For the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the Body of Christ." (Ephesians 4:12).

Here we see that all saints are expected to have a part in God's great work, the building-up of the Body of Christ: "In Whom all the Building fitly framed together groweth unto a Holy Temple in the Lord. In Whom ye also are builded together for a Habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:21 and 22).

"A Holy Temple in the Lord." This will yet be the glorious spotless Church of Ephesians 5:26 and 27.

If you are saved, you have received Holy Spirit baptism. If you are saved, you are a member of the Joint-Body, "the fulness of Christ," and with Him one flesh. (Ephesians 5:31 and 32). If you have not received Holy Spirit baptism, you are not saved.

LESSON TWENTY-FOUR

READ ACTS 22:1 TO 21 - ACTS 26:9 TO 23 - I CORINTHIANS 15:8 TO 10
EPHESIANS 3:1 TO 8 - I CORINTHIANS 3:10 - II TIMOTHY 4:6 TO 8.

PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In this lesson we simply quote some Scriptures which give us a short autobiography of the apostle Paul.

"I am verily a man, a Jew born in Tarsus, of Cicily, brought up in this city (Jerusalem), at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the perfect manner of the law (Acts 22:3). After the most straitist sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee" (Acts 26:5) "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 26:9). And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women." (Acts 22:4). "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, Who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." (I Timothy 1:12 and 13).

“To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him (Christ) among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me.” (Galatians 1:16 and 17). “And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time”. (I Corinthians 15:8). “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.” (Philippians 3:7). “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” (Philippians 1:21).

“And He said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.” (Acts 22:21). “Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.” (II Timothy 1:11). “For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office.” (Romans 11:13). “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, . . . “ “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” (Ephesians 3:1 and 8).

“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth together thereupon.” (I Corinthians 3:10) “. . . For they who seemed to be somewhat, in conference, added nothing to me.” (Galatians 2:6). “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” (Galatians 1:11 and 12) “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.” (I Corinthians 1:17). “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body’s sake, which is the Church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the Word of God.” (Colossians 1:24 to 26).

“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts 20:24). “But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” (I Corinthians 15:10). “ I am made all things to all, that I might, by all means save some.” (I Corinthians 9:20 to 25). “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” (II Timothy 4:6 and 7).

LESSON TWENTY-FIVE

READ LUKE 2:8 TO 11 - LUKE 1:26 TO 33 - LUKE 1:68 TO 71
LUKE 12:22 TO 33 - LUKE 15:1 TO 6 - LUKE 19:10.

ISRAEL’S SHEPHERD KING

As we study the outline of the Gospel of Luke, let us think of the Twenty-third Psalm, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.” Also read Jeremiah 50:6 concerning Israel, the lost sheep of Jehovah and the Prophecy in Ezekiel in 34:11 and 12, how the Shepherd will come and seek them and when they are found God will put a Shepherd over them. (Ezekiel 37:24).

Note Isaiah 40:10 and 11: “Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed

His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently feed those that are with young.”

Christ is the Good Shepherd, Who gave His life for the sheep. (John 10:11). He is the Great Shepherd and the Chief Shepherd, (Hebrews 13:20 and 21 - I Peter 5:4).

We know that David was the hero of those shepherds who kept their flock. David was Israel’s shepherd-king and surely a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Both David and Christ were born in Bethlehem “the city of David.” This was announced to the shepherds. (Luke 2:11 to 16).

Only in Luke do we have the announcement of Luke 1:27 to 33 that Christ is to be born in the city of David, in the house of David, as the Seed of David, to take the throne of David.

The Shepherd seeks His sheep, He came to seek and to save the lost sheep of Israel, even the publicans. (Luke 19:9 and 10). The shepherd drives off the destroyers of the sheep. Christ was the Horn of salvation raised up in the house of David to deliver Israel from Gentile subjugation. (Luke 1:68 to 71).

With such a Shepherd the sheep were thus instructed: “he that hath two coats, let him impart to him that has none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.” Luke 3:11.” Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.” (Luke 9:3). “Carry neither purse nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.” (Luke 10:4)

“... take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, neither for the body, what ye shall put on.” (Luke 12:22). “And seek not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.” (Luke 12:29).

Finally the Shepherd-King said to His sheep, “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupted.” (Luke 12:32 and 33).

With such a program they had to say, “The Lord is My Shepherd.”

Then only in Luke 15:1 to 6 do we find in detail one of the greatest stories of all ages: “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.” Luke 15:4 and 5. Thus we can see how the Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Luke is Israel’s Shepherd-King.

In Luke we do not find the Gentile woman of Mark 7:27 and Matthew 15:21 to 25, coming to the Shepherd.

The only Gentile in Luke is the Roman official, who built a synagogue for Israel and who would not dare to come to Israel’s King except through one of the Shepherd’s sheep. (Luke 7:1 to 12).

After this study surely we will not call Luke a Gentile, and follow those who call Luke’s Gospel, “the Gentile Gospel.” Christ was sent in Luke, to the sons and daughters of Abraham. (Luke 13:16 - Luke 19:9 and 10).

LESSON TWENTY-SIX

READ I PETER 3:15 AND 16 - ROMANS 8:29 TO 39 - I JOHN 5:13

ROMANS 10:12 TO 16 - HEBREWS 6:18 AND 19

THE REASON OF OUR HOPE

Let us prayerfully consider the Holy Spirit's exhortation to believers in I Peter 3:15 and 16. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ."

If Christians are to give an answer to those who ask the reason of the hope in them, Christians should sanctify the Lord God in the heart. They should also have a good conscience and a good conversation in Christ. They should expect to be falsely accused as evil doers. Think of Paul, the pattern, who suffered in jail as an evil doer. (I Timothy 1:16 - II Timothy 2:8 and 9). The Son of God was falsely accused of being an evil doer and He died between two evil doers, for all evil doers. Read II Timothy 1:8 and 12.

According to John 4:35 to 38, Romans 10:12 to 15, II Corinthians 5:18 to 21, II Timothy 4:5, Christians should not wait for the question before they give a reason of the hope that is in them. Neither should they limit this answer to Sunday. The exhortation is "always". "Be ready always." This means to know and practice the truth of II Corinthians 4:5 and 6 and Philippians 2:15 and 16: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the Word of life."

The God of hope wants to fill every Christian with joy and peace in believing. (Romans 15:13). Our heavenly Father wants every Christian to know the truth of Romans 8:15 - "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father."

God wants every Christian to have the "know-so" salvation mentioned in I John 5:13 and Romans 8:32 to 39. If God be for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31).

This is the reason why every Christian should know the truth of I Corinthians 1:30, Galatians 6:14, I Peter 3:18, Romans 4:4 and 5 and I Corinthians 15:10. That no flesh can glory in God's presence. That Christians glory only in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. That God's righteousness is given unto them that work not, but believe on Christ Who once suffered for our sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. That by the grace of God the Christian is what he is, any and all the acceptable good works that he does is by the grace of God. These good works are to be done heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men, and in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Colossians 3:23 - Colossians 3:17).

In Revelation 12:9 Satan is accused of deceiving the whole world. In II Corinthians 11:3, the Holy Spirit, by Paul, said, "I fear, lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." In the same chapter we learn that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light and has under his control religious messengers who claim to represent Christ (II Corinthians 11:13 to 15). By Satan and his messengers many religious people are deluded into believing a lie.

Christians are to have confidence and assurance (Philippians 1:6 - II Corinthians 5:6 - Hebrews 6:18 and 19), but in stating the reason of their hope they should do so with meekness and fear.

When we are thoroughly established in the truth of Ephesians 2:8 to 10, II Timothy 1:9 and 10 and Titus 3:5 to 8, we can give a clear testimony as to why we know we are saved and on the way to heaven.

LESSON TWENTY-SEVEN

READ HEBREWS 10:10 TO 14 - 1 CORINTHIANS 8:11
II THESSALONIANS 2:13 - JOHN 17:17

THE CHRISTIAN'S SANCTIFICATION

In that wonderful prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ, He prayed for His disciples, "Father, sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth." (John 17:17).

This prayer was uttered before Christ went to the cross and offered Himself without spot unto God. (Hebrews 9:14).

What is the meaning of the truth in Hebrews 10:10 and 14: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all?" "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified?"

Christ offered Himself once for all on the cross. Is it true that by that one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified? The Word of God says, "Yes."

The Scriptures state this plainly. Then we must conclude that the believer, who meets God at Calvary, is sanctified once-for-all, because that "the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins." Hebrews 10:2.

This does not mean that the sanctified person (saint) will not be conscious of imperfections, or consider himself sinless, in word, thought or deed. (I John 1:8 to 10). But before God his defiled conscience is forever cleansed. Such is the efficacy, power and value of the precious shed blood of the eternal Son of God.

And Hebrews 10:26 does not say that if a person sins after he receives the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more forgiveness of sins. This is explained in Colossians 2:13 and I John 1:9 and 2:1. But Hebrews 10:26 says, "no more sacrifice for sins."

"Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." (Hebrews 13:12).

"Elect" through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (I Peter 1:2).

The word sanctified, also translated "holy", means separated by God unto God, for God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Every one thus separated is a saint. Some saints do not behave as becometh saints, but no one becomes a saint by behaving, only by believing. (I Corinthians 1:1 and 2 and 3: and I Corinthians 6:19 and I Corinthians 6:5 to 7).

Saints are instructed to walk as becometh saints. (Ephesians 5:1 to 4). But they become saints by grace through faith. (Ephesians 2:8 to 10 - I Corinthians 6:11).

Now let us read and believe II Thessalonians 2:13 and I Corinthians 6:11: “But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through SANCTIFICATION of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are SANCTIFIED, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

Salvation is the result of believing the truth and God’s work of sanctification of the believer by the Holy Spirit.

No one is saved who is not first sanctified. In I Corinthians 6:11 note the order, washed, SANCTIFIED, justified.

The believer is saved without works; but unto good works, in which he should walk because he is saved. (Ephesians 2:8 to 10).

In such Scriptures as II Corinthians 7:1, as the “twelfth chapter of Romans and the third chapter of Colossians and others, saints are exhorted to a holy walk and conversation. But remember that believing sinners are saved by faith in the crucified and resurrected Christ. Now read, Hebrews 13:12; “Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate.” He suffered to bring sinners to God. (I Peter 3:18). After the believer is sanctified once-for-all (Hebrews 10:10 to 14) he is called to a life of separation and service.

LESSON TWENTY-EIGHT

READ ROMANS 8:28 TO 32 - II TIMOTHY 1:9 AND 10

EPHESIANS 1:9 AND 11 - EPHESIANS 3:11

GOD’S ETERNAL PURPOSE

After reading the above Scriptures we might wonder what a man has to do with his salvation. These Scriptures tell of God’s eternal “grace” purpose. Man’s responsibility is set forth in other Scriptures.

We have God’s work and man’s part in salvation in II Thessalonians 2:13 and 14: “For we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. Whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Here we learn that God chose, God called, God sanctified; man believed the truth; and by the gospel the believer obtained the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But in the Scriptures listed above for this lesson we see the sovereignty of God, or His eternal PURPOSE, in man’s redemption by grace.

Note II Timothy 1:9: “Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own PURPOSE and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”

Here we learn of God’s eternal “grace” PURPOSE; God’s grace and PURPOSE given in Christ Jesus before the world began. This is in harmony with I Corinthians 2:6 to 8 and

Ephesians 1:4 and 5. The salvation and calling without any works on the part of man is in harmony with Ephesians 2:8 to 10 - Titus 3:5 to 8 and Romans 4:4 and 5.

And all of this is confirmed by Romans 8:28 to 30, where we read what God predestinated and that all things work together for the good of God's elect.

Why do all things works together for good for those who are the called according to God's PURPOSE (Romans 8:28)? Because God foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, and glorified. Who can be against God's elect? (Romans 8:31 - 33 - 34).

We learn, in Ephesians 3:9 that God wants all His children to see the great truth called "the dispensation of the mystery," "the mystery of His will" (Ephesians 1:9), "the mystery of Christ" (Colossians 4:3 and 4), "the mystery of the gospel" (Ephesians 6:19 and 20), which is according to His eternal PURPOSE, which He PURPOSED in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 3:11).

This is profound truth, wonderful, glorious truth. When did God PURPOSE His eternal PURPOSE in Christ Jesus? Before the world began, when He foreknew and predestinated the mystery of His will, that all things should work together for good to those who would be the called according to His PURPOSE.

Now note Ephesian 1:9 and 11: "Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath PURPOSED in Himself. In Whom also we have obtained an inheritance being predestinated according to the PURPOSE of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

In I Corinthians 15:1 to 4 and Acts 3:19 to 25 and Acts 26:21 and 22, and Romans 11:27 to 29, we learn of some blessed events which are "according to the Scriptures," foretold by the prophets. But truth, according to "God's eternal PURPOSE" is different. It was not foretold by the prophets. Therefore it is called "the unsearchable riches of Christ." (Ephesians 3:8).

Compare the "searchable" riches of Christ in Acts 17:11 with the "unsearchable" riches of Christ in Ephesians 3:8. In order that Christians might understand God's eternal purpose God has instructed Christians to pray in Ephesians 1:16 to 18 and Ephesians 3:14 to 21. God's instruction also is to test things that differ. Divine truth, according to the Scriptures, (in fulfillment of prophecy) is different from the truth of God in Ephesians, according to His eternal purpose.

LESSON TWENTY-NINE

READ HEBREWS 3:6- HEBREWS 10:21 - I PETER 2:5 - I TIMOTHY 3:15 AND 16
I PETER 4:7 - II TIMOTHY 2:20 - II CORINTHIANS 5:1 AND 2 - JOHN 14:2.

THE NEW TESTAMENT HOUSES

The word "HOUSE" is found in the Bible more than 1200 times. It is doubtful whether it is correct to call all of the twenty-seven Books of the Bible, from Matthew to Revelation, "the New Testament Scriptures," but in these twenty-seven Books we find many different HOUSES. We quote the Scriptures:

"But Christ as a Son over His own HOUSE; Whose HOUSE are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Hebrews 3:6).

"And having a High Priest over the HOUSE of God." (Hebrews 10:21).

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual HOUSE, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” (I Peter 2:5).

“But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the HOUSE of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” (I Timothy 3:15).

“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?” (I Peter 4:17).

“But in a great HOUSE there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour and some to dishonour.” (II Timothy 2:20).

“For we know that, if our earthly HOUSE of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a HOUSE not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our HOUSE which is from heaven.” (II Corinthians 5:1 and 2).

“In My Father’s HOUSE are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.” (John 14:2).

“And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not My Father’s HOUSE a HOUSE of merchandise.” (John 2:16).

“Saying unto them, It is written, My HOUSE is the HOUSE of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.” (Luke 19:46).

“And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the HOUSE of His servant David.” (Luke 1:69).

“And He (Christ) shall reign over the HOUSE of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.” (Luke 1:33).

“Therefore let all the HOUSE of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” (Acts 2:36).

“When once the Master of the HOUSE is risen up, and hath shut the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and He shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are.” (Luke 13:25).

“Or else, how can one enter into a strong man’s HOUSE, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man: and then he will spoil his “HOUSE.” (Matthew 12:29).

The Lord Jesus was born in the House of David, to reign over the House of Jacob forever. (Luke 1:27 to 33). He was raised from the dead and He is coming back to this earth to do this very thing. But during this parenthetical “grace” period while the tabernacle of David is fallen down and the kingdom of heaven is in abeyance Christ is the Head of the Church which is His Body. (Ephesians 1:19 to 23). That Body is called the House of God. In I Corinthians 12:13 we learn how sinners can enter this House. Only Christ can deliver the strong man’s House from the strong man.

LESSON THIRTY

READ JOHN 7:31 - JOHN 7:46 - LUKE 23:41 - HEBREWS 10:12
ACTS 13:38 - LUKE 15:1 TO 3.

THIS MAN CHRIST

The blind, ignorant rulers of Christ's day knew Him not. (I Corinthians 2:6 to 8). They thought they knew Him for they said, "Howbeit we know this Man whence He is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is." John 7:27.

Some spies and detectives went out to apprehend Jesus that the rulers might put Him to death. But some of them, if not all, came back with a verdict in His favor. Christ had fed 5000 hungry people with less than a pound of food, and had performed so many miracles that even His enemies believed on Him. "And many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which THIS MAN hath done? (John 7:31).

And note what they said in John 7:46: "The officers answered, Never man spake like THIS MAN."

The title of Christ "THIS MAN" used in the King James edition of the Bible had a two-fold significance. It was used in derision by some and by others who were perplexed.

In John's Gospel we learn that Christ claimed and proved unity and equality with the Almighty God, saying, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father"; "I had glory with the Father before the world was"; "I came down from heaven"; "I am the resurrection and the life, the one and only way to God"; "I have power to lay down My life and to take it up again"; "I am the door of salvation"; "before Abraham was I AM"; "if ye believe not that I AM, ye shall die in your sins." (John 14:9 - John 17:5 - John 6:37 and 38 - John 11:25 - John 10:17 to 19 - John 9:5 - John 10:9 - John 8:58 and John 8:24). Christ used the first person pronoun in speaking of Himself about 680 times in the Gospel of John.

Surely never man spake like THIS MAN. Can you image any other rational man saying, "I came down from heaven that a man may eat of Me and never die?"

No man can prove He is Christ by doing greater miracles than this Man did. "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!" (Matthew 8:27). He was approved of God by miracles, wonders and signs. (Acts 2:22 - John 5:36).

Was Christ "posse non peccaris" or "non posse peccaris?" Was He able not to sin or not able to sin? "THIS MAN hath done nothing amiss." (Luke 23:41). Christ made no confession of sin to man or God. He was tested in all points like as we, yet without sin in word, thought and deed. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He knew no sin, but on the cross He was made sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. (II Corinthians 5:21).

Now note Hebrews 10:12 - Acts 13:38 and Luke 15:2 - "But THIS MAN, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through THIS MAN is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." "And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, THIS MAN receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

We are not serving a dead Christ but a living glorified Man Who is far above all heavens. However we are saved from God's eternal wrath by His once-for-all sacrifice. (Ephesians 4:9 to 11 - I Peter 3:18 and I Thessalonians 1:10). "Reconciled to God by the death of His Son." (Romans 5:10).

Glorious blessed truth told by those selfrighteous religious enemies of Christ "THIS MAN receiveth sinners."

As many as received Him were given the right to become the children of God. (John 1:11 and 12).

This same Jesus is coming again as He went away. Then He will receive His own unto Himself. (Acts 1:9 to 11 - John 14:1 to 4). As He was once offered to bear the sins of many, so unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” (Hebrews 9:28).

LESSON THIRTY-ONE

READ RUTH 1:1 TO 5; 16 AND 17; 20 TO 22 - RUTH 2:1; 10 AND 19 TO 23 - RUTH 3:13 AND 18 - RUTH 4:6 TO 17 - JUDGES 3:28 - DEUTERONOMY 23:3 - JEREMIAH 48:4
MATTHEW 1:5 - MATTHEW 1:3 - MATTHEW 1:6

HOW RUTH THE MOABITRESS WAS REDEEMED

Most Christians remember the famous words of Ruth and the question, her mother-in-law, Naomi, asked of her. Ruth said to Naomi, “. . . Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people and thy God my God: Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.” (Ruth 1:16 and 17).

Then Naomi’s question when she and Ruth had come into Israel’s country, “Where hast thou gleaned today?”

We read in Ruth 1:1 to 5 that Elimelech, with Naomi his wife, and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, in the time of famine in Israel’s land, went into the land of Moab. There Naomi’s husband died. There the two sons were married to two women of Moab. Then plenty of trouble came to Naomi. Elimelech had died. Then Mahlon and Chilion died. Would we have had one of the greatest stories of all times, if they had not died in the land of Moab when they did?

“Naomi” means “pleasant.” No one could bring cruel judgment against that mother-in-law. How gracious and loving she was to Ruth, in spite of her own troubles which caused her to speak of herself as “Mara” (bitter). (Ruth 1:20).

This story was in the day of the Judges. (Ruth 1:1). So “Ruth”, in the Bible, follows “Judges.” In Judges 3:28, God declared that the Moabites were Israel’s enemies. In Deuteronomy 23:3 and Nehemiah 13:1 we read that a Moabite must not enter the congregation of the Lord.

In this connection let us think of Ephesians 2:12 and 13 where we learn how the alienated Gentile strangers were afar off and then, by grace, brought so nigh to God that they were no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow-citizens in the Household of God. (Ephesians 2:19). They became heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. This was by the work of Israel’s great Redeemer Kinsman (Hebrews 2:11 - Hebrews 2:16 and 17).

“Moab” has the meaning of “from her father.” Lot was the father of Moab and also the father of Moab’s mother. Moab is mentioned more than 160 times in the Old Testament Scriptures, with no good word to his credit. He is mentioned in the forty-eighth chapter of

Jeremiah 34 times. Note Numbers 21:29 - Jeremiah 48:4 - II Kings 23:13: "Woe unto Moab! thou art undone." "Moab is destroyed." "The abomination of the Moabites."

Consider all of this and then turn to Matthew 1:3 to 6 and see that Ruth, the Moabitess, was the mother of Obed, who was the grandfather of King David, from whom Christ came. Tamar, Rahab and Bathsheba are also brought, by grace, into the royal family into which Christ was born. (Matthew 1:3 to 6).

Naomi would have given another son to Ruth; but she had none. But she took Ruth back to Israel's land and there Naomi helped her to get acquainted with Boaz, who was a rich kinsman. Ruth worked in the fields and Naomi told her how to win the favor of Boaz. Ruth replied, "All that thou sayest unto me, I will do.", (Read Ruth 3:3 to 6). And she did.

Then the rich kinsman became Ruth's redeemer for Elimelech's sake. Elimelech means, "the God of the King."

The redemption story by the redeemer taking off his shoe, as a witness, is told in Ruth 4:6 to 8. This was God's plan in Deuteronomy 25:5 to 10. Then the rich kinsman redeemer said, "Ruth have I purchased to be my wife." (Ruth 4:10). Then "Obed," their son, was born. Their house was established in Bethlehem. Read in Ruth 4:14; what was said unto Naomi.

We know of a real Kinsman Redeemer Who was born in Obed's house in Bethlehem. He was rich, and for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.

And the alienated, condemned Gentiles, by God's grace, have been married to Christ. His riches are our riches.

LESSON THIRTY-TWO

READ HEBREWS 9:10 - HEBREWS 10:22 - EPHESIANS 5:26
TITUS 3:5 - ACTS 22:16 - I CORINTHIANS 6:11

NEW TESTAMENT WASHINGS

First read John 13:1 to 14, the record of Christ washing the feet of His apostles. In John 13:10 two different Greek words are translated "wash." "Jesus saith to him, (Peter), He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all."

He that is washed. The Greek word is "LOUO." This is the same Greek word used in Hebrews 10:22 - Acts 16:33 and Revelation 1:5. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies WASHED with pure water." "And he took them the same hour of the night, and WASHED their stripes; and was baptized, he and his, straightway." "Unto Him that loved us, and WASHED us from our sins in His own blood."

"LOUO" has the meaning of "all-over" washing. This is what the believer receives when he comes by faith to Christ and to Calvary. He is there reconciled, forgiven, redeemed and justified.

After this the saint needs and receives the second "wash" of John 13:10. This Greek word is "NIPTO" and has the meaning of a cleansing, or washing, of part of the body. Note the blind boy in John 9:7: "And said unto him, Go. WASH in the pool of Siloam. (which by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and WASHED, and came seeing." This is the same word.

This washing of the Christian's feet speaks of Christ's work at God's right hand as Advocate. (I John 1:7 to 9 - I John 2:1 and 2).

Now note another Greek word, "APOLOUO," used in Acts 22:16 and I Corinthians 6:11: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, (Paul), and be baptized, and WASH away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." "And such were some of you: but ye are WASHED, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

Then in Matthew 27:24 the Greek word is "APONIPTO." And in Luke 5:2 the Greek word is "APOPLUNO."

Then note Ephesians 5:26 and Titus 3:5: "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the WASHING of water by the Word." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the WASHING of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit." The Greek word in these two verses is "LOUTRON."

There were old testament "DIVERS WASHINGS" (Hebrews 9:10). The Greek word is "BAPTISMOS." Some of these were pourings, some sprinklings, some immersions. The Greek word in Luke 11:38 is "BAPTIZO."

Then in Revelation 7:14 - "Robes washed in the blood of the Lamb," the Greek word is "PLUNO."

No ceremonial or religious washing is needed to supplement the Divine washing of Titus 3:5 and Ephesians 5:26 to make it more efficacious or lasting.

In Mark 7:20 to 23 the Lord Jesus Christ gave us an ex-ray of the human heart. The description is up to date. "From within out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, murders, thefts, deceit, blasphemy, pride, foolishness, etc. "This is confirmed in Titus 3:3 - Read it. Then follows the statement of God's kindness and love and how God, with a Divine WASHING, washes man on the inside. Surely we know that water on the outside could not cleanse man's sinful heart on the inside.

Surely every sinner who comes by faith to Calvary and believes unto the saving of the soul is washed once-for-all by the precious blood of the Lamb of God Which beareth away the sin of the world. But that redeemed one then needs the constant washing of his feet. We praise God for these Divine washings.

LESSON THIRTY-THREE

READ ROMANS 10:9 TO 16 - MATTHEW 15:21 TO 27.

GENTILES BEFORE AND AFTER CHRIST'S DEATH

The Epistle to the Romans was written about 60 A.D., more than twenty-five years after Christ died on the cross for the sins of the whole world. A most radical change in God's dealings with the Gentiles took place between the year that the Lord Jesus Christ talked with the Gentile Greek woman (Matthew 15:21 to 27 and Mark 7:24 to 30) and the year that the risen Christ revealed to the apostle Paul the truth of Romans 10:12: "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him."

At the time Christ talked with that Gentile woman, the Gentiles were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel," "having no hope and without God in the world." (Ephesians 2:12).

Israel was “nigh” and the Gentiles were “afar off”. (Ephesians 2:17 and 2:13). The Gentiles were “a foolish nation”, “no people”. (Romans 10:19).

Note the language Christ used in His conversation with that Gentile Greek woman; “It is not meet to take the children’s bread and cast it unto dogs.” (Mark 7:27). In speaking concerning the faith of another Gentile, the Lord Jesus called Israel, “the children of the kingdom”. (Matthew 8:12).

There is a great difference between “children” and “dogs”. In Exodus 11:7 we have God’s own words to Israel, “The Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.” Note also Exodus 19:5, “Ye (Israel) shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.” And again, Isaiah 45:4: “Israel, Mine elect - I have surnamed thee.” Again, Isaiah 43:21, “This people have I formed for Myself, they shall show forth My praise.” Again, Isaiah 44:21: “I have found thee, Thou art My servant, O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me.” Again Isaiah 45:17: “But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.”

In Acts 13:23 and Acts 5:29 to 32, we read that Christ was born to be Israel’s Saviour. While Christ was on earth neither Christ nor His apostles were sent to Gentiles; but only to Israel. (Matthew 15:24 - Matthew 10:5 to 8). (Read also Matthew 10:23 and Acts 10:39 and Acts 2:22).

In Luke 1:67 to 77 we are told very definitely that Christ was born to deliver Israel from Gentile political control. But Israel knew not the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44), and said “We will not have this man to reign over us.” (Luke 19:14). Christ came unto His own and His own received Him not. (John 1:11). Israel had a real fall. (Romans 11:11 - Romans 11:5 to 9). Israel will rise again. (Isaiah 62:1 to 4; Romans 11:26). Then Gentiles from all over the world will come to the Lord.

But after Christ died on the cross, His gospel was “to the Jew first and also to the Gentile.” (Romans 1:16). Here is a very interesting question in Romans 3:29. “Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles?” This question was asked years after Christ died and broke down the partition between Israel “nigh” and the Gentiles “afar off.” (Ephesians 2:13 to 17).

The answer was “Yes, of the Gentiles also.”

Therefore, Gentiles should go to Romans for the gospel of grace rather than to Matthew, Mark and Luke.

The two Gentiles, who were blessed while Christ was on earth, received blessings because both of them had great faith. (Matthew 8:10 - Matthew 15:28). All Gentiles were offered salvation later on, because of Israel’s unbelief and because of great grace, love and mercy. (Romans 11:30 and Ephesians 2:4 to 9). Hold on to the great truth of Romans 11:30. Cornelius, saved under Peter’s keys of the kingdom, feared God and worked righteousness. (Acts 10:34 and 35 - Acts 10:1 to 14).

Gentiles, in this age and dispensation of grace, do not have to take the place of little dogs under the table; for by grace they are seated in the heavenlies in Christ. (Compare Mark 7:28 and Ephesians 2:6 to 9). Ye which were afar off are brought nigh by the blood of Christ. (Ephesians 2:13).

LESSON THIRTY-FOUR

READ II TIMOTHY 2:15 - I CORINTHIANS 2:6 TO 19
JOHN 16:9 TO 16 - I JOHN 2:26 TO 28.

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE SCRIPTURES

In Galatians 1:3 and 4 we read of “this present evil age.” In Ephesians 2:7, we read of “the ages to come.” In Ephesians 3:5 we read of “the other ages” (past ages). All Christians speak of “the Old Testament Age” and “the New Testament Age.”

In Ephesians 3:5 and in Colossians 1:24 to 26, we learn that the people of God in the ages before Paul, including their inspired prophets, did not have foreknowledge of God’s spiritual program during this present dispensation of grace. (Ephesians 3:1 to 4). In these verses we learn that Paul did not, and could not, know God’s present program by studying Israel’s Scriptures. Paul did not learn it from what Christ on earth taught the twelve apostles. (Galatians 1:11 to 19 - Galatians 2:1 to 7). It was truth never before revealed even to the most faithful and the most spiritual servants of the Lord. Therefore, Paul wrote of the unsearchable (untraceable) riches of Christ, God’s eternal purpose. (Ephesians 3:8 to 11). Paul received it by direct revelation from Christ in heaven. It was new truth for a new age for a new dispensation, a new program, called “God’s eternal purpose.” (Ephesians 3:11). It had to do with the making of “One New Man”, (Ephesians 2:15); made up of Christ and new creatures in Christ. (II Corinthians 5:17).

As this was not contemplated by Israel’s ancient prophets and as it was not the program which the Lord Jesus gave to Peter and the Eleven (Acts 2:16), and as Christians are now members of the Body of Christ, all Body members should study, interpret, appropriate and apply all other Scriptures in the light of the “Body” truth which the risen Christ revealed to the apostle Paul. This is indeed the golden key which the Holy Spirit has for those who will obey II Timothy 2:15 and Ephesians 3:9.

This is the meaning of II Timothy 2:15: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.” “Rightly dividing” is translated from “orthotomeo” - “ortho” means “right” - “tomeo” means “to cut,” “to dissect.” The Greek word in Hebrews 4:12 refers to the word “SHARPER” than a sword. To cut aright God’s Word, certainly means to compare spiritual with spiritual, and more. (I Corinthians 2:10 to 16).

During the Old Testament age, or dispensation, God’s people had “meats, drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation.” (Hebrews 9:10). These belonged to Israel’s “shadow” days (Hebrews 10:1 to 10 - Colossians 2:13 to 18). The time of reformation had come when Christ revealed His new program of Ephesians 3:1 to 6 to Paul.

Israel had the seventh day sabbath. They could eat no pork. They worshipped God in a portable tabernacle and a Jerusalem Temple. They practiced physical circumcision. They had earthly priests and many religious feast days. None of these ceremonies, which had a God-given place in a former age, has a place in this age, for we are not under the law, we are under grace (Romans 6:14). The Temple now is made up of redeemed sinners baptized into the Body of Christ, with the spiritual circumcision of Philippians 3:1 to 3. Read Ephesians 2:19 to 22.

As the Lord Jesus Christ, as Jesus of Nazareth on this earth, was under the law, He did not live under this present dispensation of grace which He revealed after He ascended far above all heavens and gave gifts unto men. (Ephesians 4:10 to 13).

Christians should cut aright the Word of truth by studying the earthly ministry of Christ in the light of the truth of Romans, Ephesians, Galatians, Colossians and other “grace” Epistles.

The “Acts” ministry of the twelve apostles, the signs of Mark 16:16 to 18 and the sign gifts of I Corinthians 12:8 to 11 should be studied in the light of the revelation of the mystery mentioned in Romans 16:25, in the light of different gifts in Ephesians 4:9 to 13. In advancing from the truth of the one Body in I Corinthians 12:13 to the truth of the same one Body in Ephesians and Colossians Paul was going from a child to a man. (I Corinthians 13:8 to 13).

LESSON THIRTY-FIVE

READ ROMANS 5:12 TO 14 - ROMANS 8:1 TO 4.

FROM ADAM TO MOSES

In Romans 5:12 to 14 we learn that Adam was a figure of Jesus Christ; and that death reigned from Adam to Moses; and that universal sin and death have resulted from Adam’s sin.

We also learn that “from Adam to Moses” there was no law. This is explained in Romans 5:20: “Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound.” The law that was “from Adam to Moses” was “the law of sin and death.” (John 1:17). Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the ten commandments about 2500 years after Adam was driven from Eden under another law, “the law of sin and death.” The law (the ten commandments) was added, because of transgressions. (Galatians 3:19).

While it is true that, by Moses is the knowledge of sin (Romans 3:20) because sin is the transgression of the law (I John 3:4) and as Paul said, “I had not known lust except the law said, thou shalt not covet” (Romans 7:7), yet sin and death reigned from Adam to Moses, when there was no such law as was added at Sinai because of transgressions, (Galatians 3:19).

For 2500 years the descendants of Adam had neither the written revelation of God nor the law and religion given Israel at Sinai, but they had a law written in their hearts (conscience) (Romans 2:15) and they had the revelation of God in creation. (Romans 1:20).

So under “the law of sin and death” the human race was without excuse. (Romans 1:20).

If before God gave His program to Israel and without the Bible, the children of Adam were condemned (Romans 5:18) and without excuse, how about the condemned lost sinner of the twentieth century, nearly 2000 years since Christ came to earth and went back by the way of Calvary and sent the Holy Spirit and His apostles to give us the glorious gospel of grace and a complete written revelation and nineteen centuries of Christianity? We are surely without excuse and unbelievers are headed for an awful judgment as the result of the universal law of sin and death.

Note the spiritual state of Adam’s children: “. . . who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” Ephesians 2:1 to 3. Alienated from the life of God. (Ephesians 4:18).

The only hope of Adam's children is Romans 8:2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 8:2.

Let us keep in mind that the Holy Spirit has very definitely marked in the Bible a period in the history of man, called, "From Adam to Moses". (Romans 5:14).

That which God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai was later called the covenant made old, or "the Old Testament," (Hebrews 8:7 to 13 - II Corinthians 3:7 to 17). "From Adam to Moses" covered a period of about 2500 years. During that period Adam lived and died, Abel, Seth, Noah, Shem, Eber, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel) and Israel's twelve sons all lived and died. They all died before God added the "law" covenant at Sinai, later known as "the Old Testament", so none of them were Old Testament characters. Moses was 80 years old when the "law" covenant was added.

Let us carefully compare Jeremiah 31:31 to 35 with Exodus 20 and learn just when Jehovah and Israel entered into the "law" covenant. That was 330 years after Abraham died, or 430 years after God made His "Promise" covenant with Abram. (Galatians 3:17 - Galatians 3:8 - Romans 4:7 to 12). In Colossians 2:13 to 16 we learn what made the "law" covenant, "the old covenant." There is not one line in the Book of Genesis concerning the "law" covenant (of Exodus 20) made "old" at Calvary. Therefore think of the great blunder Christians have been making for centuries calling the Book of Genesis part of the Old Testament. There was no Old Testament from Adam to Moses.

LESSON THIRTY-SIX

READ GENESIS 4:1 TO 13 - LUKE 18:9 TO 14
LUKE 23:33 TO 46

BETWEEN TWO MEN

In each of the three Scriptures above listed we have the story of two men, first, Cain and Abel: second, the Pharisee and the Publican who went up to the temple to pray; third, the penitent thief and the impenitent thief who died on either side of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Cain was a religious man, very much like those foolish kinsmen of the apostle Paul to whom he referred in Romans 10:1 to 4, who being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, they would not submit themselves unto the righteousness of God which is by faith. They failed, therefore, to become righteous. (Romans 9:30 to 33).

Cain insisted that God should accept his good works and religious deeds. Cain did not want redemption by blood. We are told in Jude 11 of professing Christians who are going in the way of Cain. Think of the great multitude of "Christianized agnostics," called modernists, in so-called evangelical church organizations, who are going religiously to perdition. They hate the gospel of "blood" redemption.

In Hebrews 11:4 we have God's truth concerning Abel: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH."

Here we have righteousness by faith and by the sacrifice of a substitute. ABEL BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH. He speaks today, in the middle of the twentieth Christian century, although he was murdered by his religious brother nearly six thousand years ago. Be sure you go in Abel's way and not Cain's.

God wants Abel to speak to us, so read the interesting story of these two men in Genesis 4:1 to 13.

Cain offered the fruit of the cursed ground, the labor of his hands. This would not deliver him from the law of sin and death. Even after God told Cain of his blunder and what to do, Cain refused. With envy and malice Cain killed Abel: "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous," I John 3:12.

God's Word is clear and positive, "without the shedding of blood, there is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22), "It is the blood that maketh a covering for the soul". (Leviticus 17:11). "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (I John 1:7 to 9). Read also Hebrews 9:26 - Hebrews 9:12 - Hebrews 9:14 and especially Hebrews 12:24.

The Pharisee, in Luke 18:9 to 14, was a very zealous, sincere religious man. He too had zeal without knowledge. Like millions of well-meaning, religious people today, he was sincerely wrong. He trusteth in his own heart. In Proverbs 28:26 we read that such a one is a fool. He went away condemned. The publican prayed, "meet me a sinner at the blood sprinkled mercy-seat." He was justified. Now God has been merciful - Christ is the propitiation (the blood sprinkled mercy-seat), for the sins of the whole world. (I John 2:2).

What was between Cain and Abel, between the Pharisee and the publican? The same thing that will be between all the people in eternal perdition and eternal glory, the blood of the Lamb. This applies to most respectable, moral, religious, cultured gentlemen or ladies.

We have had the story of two men in the field, and two men in the temple.

Now two men on the cross. Two thieves. Neither was religious. They deserved capital punishment - what was between them? The blood of the Lamb. One by faith, received the Lamb and will be in glory with the redeemed. The other rejected the Lamb and was not delivered from the wrath to come (I Thessalonians 1:10 - John 3:36).

Certainly all of these men, being dead, yet speaketh.

LESSON THIRTY-SEVEN

READ I TIMOTHY 2:4 TO 7 - COLOSSIANS 1:20 AND 21
JOHN 12:27 TO 33.

ALL MEN CALLED TO SALVATION

In the Scriptures listed we learn what is taught in Hebrews 2:9 and I John 2:2, that the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross tasteth death for every man and became the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

In the shadow of the cross, Christ said, "Now is the judgment of this world" - "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." In Colossians 1:20 and 21 we learn that Christ in His death made peace through the blood of His cross, to reconcile all things unto God.

In I Timothy 2:6 we learn that Christ on the cross gave Himself a ransom for all.

We learn in I Timothy 2:4 that God will have all men to be saved. Then we read this in Ephesians 1:11, "In Whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Then we read in Romans 5:18: "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."

If it were not for many other Scriptures, which prove that salvation and eternal life are conditioned upon the individual's faith, we might deduce from the Scriptures quoted, that all of the condemned children of Adam will be justified. We praise God for the truth of Titus 2:11: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."

We do praise God for the fact that eternal life is His free gift through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 6:23).

We do praise God that salvation by grace through faith, is the gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8 and 9 - Titus 3:5 to 8 - Romans 4:4 and 5).

We do praise God that Jesus Christ put sin away by the sacrifice of Himself and by His own blood entered heaven having obtained eternal redemption. (Hebrews 9:26 - Hebrews 9:12 and Hebrews 10:12).

We do praise God that without religion, ritual, law-keeping, church-joining, struggling, striving, or even praying, the vilest or most respectable sinner can be saved by trusting in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ. "God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works". (Ephesians 2:10).

But hear these solemn words: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on Him." John 3:36. "But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Hebrews 10:39. Read this interesting statement in I Timothy 4:10: "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, Who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those who believe."

Some Christians have interpreted Colossians 1:20 to mean that God will reconcile Adam and all of his condemned descendants. Note Colossians 1:20: "And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

To quote Colossians 1:20 without quoting Colossians 1:23 is certainly handling the Word of God ignorantly, if not deceitfully; for in Colossians 1:23, we have the condition, "if ye continue in the faith." One must have faith to continue in faith. This faith "IF" is used many times. Read John 8:24 - I Corinthians 15:2 - Romans 10:9 and 10. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).

Note in II Thessalonians 2:12 and 13 the difference between believing and not believing, "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth." "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

Let us hear God's plain word regarding the responsibility of the ALL MEN for whom Christ died: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth ALL MEN everywhere to repent. Acts 17:30. God has provided salvation for all. (Acts 13:39).

LESSON THIRTY-EIGHT

READ MATTHEW 23:1 TO 3 - MATTHEW 8:4 - MATTHEW 6:14
MATTHEW 15:7 - I CORINTHIANS 12:8 TO 13 - EPHESIANS 4:8 TO 14

SOMETHING OF PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

In this lesson we have something of progressive revelation, a comparative study of Matthew, I Corinthians and Ephesians.

In Matthew we do not find the word “grace,” in Christ’s message to sinners, even one time, although there was surely grace in the invitation in Matthew 11:28, “Come unto Me and I will give you rest.” But He was not inviting the alienated Gentiles. (Ephesians 2:11 and 12 - Matthew 15:24 - Matthew 10:5). Christ was sent to Israel, the children; not to Gentiles, the dogs. (Matthew 15:24 to 28).

Whatever grace the Lord Jesus Christ preached on earth, He preached it under the reign of law, for He said that He did not come to destroy the law. (Galatians 4:4 and Matthew 5:17). Read Matthew 23:1 to 3 - 8:4 - and Luke 4:16.

In preaching the Golden Rule, (Matthew 7:12), Christ said, “This is the law.” And most assuredly when He preached, “you forgive, and God will forgive ,” “you forgive not and God will forgive not” (Matthew 6:14 and 15), Christ was not preaching the grace of Ephesians 4:32: “And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Read also Colossians 2:13 and Acts 13:39. Christ recognized the seat of Moses before He went to Calvary to abolish the law (Matthew 23:1 to 3 - Colossians 2:14 to 16 - II Corinthians 3:9 to 17). Christ instructed His people to obey the law of Moses (Matthew 8:4).

While Jesus Christ was in the midst of Israel, under the law, (Acts 2:22 - Acts 13:23), “the meats and drinks and carnal ordinances and divers baptisms” of Hebrews 9:10 were binding on Israel. While Christ was on earth, with the exception of one Roman man and one Greek woman (Luke 7:1 to 12 and Mark 7:25 to 31), He was not talking to Gentiles. Certainly Christ did not teach on earth that saved Jews and saved Gentiles were all one in Christ Jesus, and all baptized by one Spirit into one Body (Galatians 3:26 to 28 - I Corinthians 12:13). While Christ was on earth no believer was in the Body of I Corinthians 12:13 and the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6. While Christ was on earth He recognized the believing and the unbelieving Jews as “the children of the kingdom.” (Matthew 8:12). It was to them He was sent (Acts 5:29 to 32 - Matthew 15:24 - Acts 13:23 - Romans 15:8). Christ came unto His own - His own received Him not. (John 1:11). When Israel rejected Christ in resurrection God ushered in a new dispensation and a new “grace” program.

The Epistle to the Ephesians has six rather short chapters whereas Matthew has twenty-eight. The word “grace” is found twelve times in Ephesians. The clear salvation “grace” message is recorded in Ephesians 2:8 to 10. In the light of this, “by grace are ye saved through faith, not of yourselves, not of works,” we know that we are not to preach to the unsaved in this economy and age of grace, “keep the commandments - sell your property” or “he that endureth unto the end shall be saved.” (Matthew 19:16 to 22 - Matthew 24:13 and 14). Christ lived on earth under the law. We are under grace. (Galatians 4:4 - Romans 6:14).

In Matthew we have God’s spiritual “religious” program before Israel was set aside, before Jews and Gentiles were in the JointBody of Ephesians 3:6.

In Corinthians we have God's spiritual "sign" program for the members of the Body of Christ. (I Corinthians 12:8 to 13 and 28).

The Epistle to the Corinthians was written before the close of the period covered by the Book of Acts, a transition period when the children "Israel" were first being filled (Mark 7:27) and then were cast out. (Matthew 8:12 - Romans 11:15 - Acts 28:25 to 28 - Romans 11:11).

If any servant of Christ had preached, while Christ was on earth, the messages of Colossians 2:11 to 16 or Galatians 6:15 or Ephesians 2:13 to 19, the Lord would have severely rebuked that "premature" messenger.

LESSON THIRTY-NINE

READ I CORINTHIANS 9:16 AND 17 - EPHESIANS 1:10
COLOSSIANS 1:24 TO 27. - EPHESIANS 3:1 TO 6

THIS PRESENT DISPENSATION

The Greek word translated DISPENSATION in the Scriptures listed above is "OIKONOMIA" - "Nomia" is law. "Oiko-Nomia" is "house-law", "stewardship". Our word is "economy", "OIKONOMOS" is a governor, a steward.

Note carefully I Corinthians 9:17 "For if I (Paul) do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a DISPENSATION is committed unto me."

Here the apostle Paul declared that an "economy" or a "dispensation" was committed to him. It was a very special Divine economy, never before committed to any servant of the Lord. (Romans 16:25 - Colossians 1:24 to 26). In the Greek, in II Timothy 1:12, Paul used the word "Paratheke" a "deposit". The Lord truly deposited something very precious with Paul, and it cost Paul his liberty. Note Ephesians 3:1 to 4: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the DISPENSATION of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words; Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)."

Paul was in the jail at Rome. He may have been Caesar's prisoner, and Satan had much to do with Paul's chains in that prison. But Paul was the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ for Gentiles, and for the dispensation which Christ committed to him. He called it "my gospel" and he added, "wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, unto bonds." (II Timothy 2:8 and 9). I wonder how many Christian appreciate Paul's suffering for them.

Note Colossians 1:24 to 26: "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body's sake, Which is the Church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the DISPENSATION of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the Word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints."

Try to picture Paul in jail and then carefully and prayerfully study the verses just quoted. This dispensation of God committed to Paul carried with it special intense suffering, for Paul and for us.

In Ephesians 6:19 and 20 and Colossians 4:3 and 4 Paul wrote why he was in jail. There was great opposition from religious men and from Satan (the ruler of principalities and powers in

the heavenlies) to this message concerning the heavenly position and possessions of members of Christ's Body in Christ Who is far above heavenly principalities and powers. (Ephesians 6:11 to 13 - Ephesians 1:19 to 23 - Ephesians 2:6). Satan is uncompromisingly against the truth concerning Christ and the believers in the heavenlies.

But God's will concerning every member of Christ's Body is expressed in Ephesians 3:9 and 10: "And to make all men see what is the DISPENSATION of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God."

The Greek word translated "fellowship" in Ephesians 3:9 is "oikonomia", "dispensation". Almighty God, our heavenly Father, wants every member of the Body of Christ to know this wonderful truth, so that the Church will make known to principalities and powers in the heavenlies the manifold wisdom of God, which was ordained to our glory before the world was. (I Corinthians 2:6 and 7).

If you would know the glorious, blessed truth, called "The mystery of God's will" (Ephesians 1:9), pray earnestly the prayer of Ephesians 1:16 to 18. Then make up for lost time in faithful obedience to Ephesians 3:9 and 10.

LESSON FORTY

READ ACTS 18:5 AND 6 - ACTS 13:45
II CORINTHIANS 5:16 TO 18 - GALATIANS 1:11 TO 12.

WHY PAUL TURNED TO GENTILES

Be sure to read the Scriptures listed.

Between the death and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ He gave what is called "the Great Commission." "Disciple all nations." (Matthew 28:19 and 20).

After He gave this commission the twelve apostles asked of Christ, "Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). So they knew nothing concerning the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6.

If this "disciple all nations" is God's program for "the dispensation of grace" (Ephesians 3:1 to 4) all during the period of grace, during which period God is building-up the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:9 to 13), and is to continue till the day of the rapture of the Body (I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18), why then the revelation of Galatians 1:11 and 12?

Why did Paul, in Acts 13:46, say what he said about twelve years after Christ gave the great commission? Paul said that the Word of God had to be preached FIRST to Israel, and then because they blasphemed and resisted the Holy Spirit (the unpardonable sin of Matthew 12:30 and 31 - Acts 7:51 to 56), and put the Word of God from them, he, (Paul), turned to the Gentiles. Read Acts 13:45 and 46. Read one of the most important key verses in the Bible - Romans 11:30.

Did Matthew 28:18 and 19 authorize the apostles to preach twelve years to the Jews, with the understanding that if they did not accept the gospel, the apostles were to turn to the Gentiles and disciple all nations because the Jews refused to be discipled? If so, what would have happened if Israel had received the Word of God? The Gentiles were saved because Israel fell.

(Romans 11:11). What if they had not fallen? Do not hurry away from this question. Christ was raised to be Israel's Saviour. Acts 5:30 to 32 - Acts 13:30 to 36). Israel received Him not. (John 1:10). Israel would not receive Christ in incarnation. (Matthew 21:42). Then Christ in resurrection was offered to Israel. But again Israel received Him not, but received blindness from God. (Romans 11:5 to 11). Then Christ turned Paul, with the gospel of grace, to Gentiles, (Romans 11:30 - Romans 11:15).

Some day all Israel will be saved and then again many Gentiles will turn to the Lord, as did Cornelius when Peter used the keys to the kingdom. (Romans 11:26 - Isaiah 62:1 to 4 - Ezekiel 36:22 to 34).

Israel will rise again and the gospel of the kingdom will be preached as a witness among all nations (Matthew 24:13 and 14).

But now Israel is fallen and the gospel of the grace of God is being preached to Gentiles because of Israel's fall and unbelief. (Romans 11:11 and 30). Gentile salvation in the Bible must be studied with the rise and fall of Israel.

Paul received the grace gospel not from Peter and the Eleven, nor from the great commission, but by revelation from Christ. (Galatians 1:11 and 12). Compare Matthew 28:19 and 20 with Ephesians 3:1 to 4.

When Israel was cast away, God had a "new creation" program, with the new commission, the ministry of reconciliation. (Romans 11:15 - II Corinthians 5:16 to 18). Read these Scriptures. God did not turn from Israel at the time they crucified Christ, but later. (Acts 3:26 - Acts 5:30 to 32).

Because of God's radical change from the great commission of Matthew 28:19 and 20 to the "reconciliation" commission of II Corinthians 5:18 to 20, we have the double "henceforth" of II Corinthians 5:16 and the "henceforth" of Acts 18:6. Read these verses and know the truth of Romans 11:30 to 32.

Then follows the record of the new program in this language: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:" Ephesians 3:1 and 2.

God's Word is "test things that differ." The great commission and Peter's keys of the kingdom of heaven are quite different from Paul's dispensation of the grace of God.

LESSON FORTY-ONE

READ ROMANS 5:12 TO 14 - 5:20 - GENESIS 1:26 - GENESIS 3:1 TO 24
GENESIS 7:6 - GENESIS 9:28 - ROMANS 4:8 TO 14
MATTHEW 16:16 TO 18 - EPHESIANS 3:1 TO 4

SEVERAL BIBLE DISPENSATIONS

In Romans 5:12 to 14 and 20, we learn that sin entered by Adam, that death reigned during the 2500 years from Adam to Moses, and then the law of the ten commandments was added.

In Galatians 3:6 to 9 we learn that during the period designated “from Adam to Moses” (430 years before Moses received from God the Ten Commandments) Abram was justified in uncircumcision. (Romans 4:9 to 12).

During that same period, “from Adam to Moses”, we learn in chapters six to nine, in Genesis, that God, with a flood, destroyed all creatures on earth who were not in Noah’s Ark. That was about 850 years before Moses received the Ten Commandments and about 1650 years after Adam was driven from Eden, and about 420 years before God called and justified uncircumcised Abram.

And we read in Genesis 7:6 that Noah lived 600 years before the flood; before he entered the ark.

In Genesis 9:28 we learn that Noah lived 350 years after he came out of the ark.

In Genesis 1:29 and 30 we read that God gave fruits and herbs for man’s food.

In Genesis 9:3 God gave animal flesh for man’s food and instituted the government of man by man in Genesis 9:5 and 6.

In Galatians 3:19 we read that 430 years after Abram left Ur of Chaldees God gave the law; that the law of sin and death might abound (Romans 5:20).

Adam lived in innocency before he sinned and then Adam knew good and evil (conscience)—(Genesis 3:5 - Romans 2:15 - and Romans 1:20).

So Adam lived first in the “Dispensation of Innocence” and then in the “Dispensation of Conscience.”

This was under “the law of sin and death” reigning “from Adam to Moses.” Under this dispensation and reign God sent Noah into the ark and the rest of the human race to destruction.

Noah came out under the “Dispensation of Human Government.”

Again, about 1900 B. C. God gave up the Gentiles (Romans 1:18 to 28) and made a covenant of promise with Abram.

This began the “Dispensation of Promise.”

When Moses was eighty years old (Exodus 7:7) God remembered His promise to Abram and delivered Israel from Egypt (Exodus 2:24), by the hand of Moses; and then God made with Israel a new covenant at Sinai, the law covenant.

The law was added till Christ came (Galatians 3:19). So for 1500 years Israel was governed by the “Dispensation of Law.”

While Peter and the Eleven were on earth with the Son of Man preaching the gospel of the kingdom to Israel (Matthew 4:17 - Matthew 4:23 - Matthew 10:6 to 8), they ministered under the law. We might, however, think of the earthly ministry of Christ and the Twelve as the “Dispensation of the Son of Man.”

Christ committed to Peter the kingdom keys used on the day of Pentecost, and with the household of Cornelius. Peter lived before and after the death of Christ.

Then to Paul was committed a new dispensation, the “Dispensation of Grace.” (II Corinthians 5:17 - I Corinthians 9:15 to 17 - Ephesians 3:1 to 4). In Paul’s “grace” Epistles we have the revelation of the new creation and the one new man. (II Corinthians 5:17 - Ephesians 2:15).

Paul ministered before and after the fall of Israel. Here we learn that all of these servants of the Lord lived before and after, that is, in two different dispensations.

There are other ages and dispensations: which will follow this one; as the time of Jacob’s trouble is to be followed by the millennium.

LESSON FORTY-TWO

READ ROMANS 7:18 TO 20 - JOHN 9:12 TO 26
ECCLESIASTES 3:14 - JOB 19:22 TO 25 - II TIMOTHY 1:12.

WHAT I KNOW

In these Scriptures we have five verses with the two words "I know."

It is so blessed for the Christian to know spiritually and Scripturally that he is saved for time and eternity and to "be ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." I Peter 3:15.

The very first thing that any person should know, if that person desires to be saved and go to heaven, is to know the truth of Romans 8:8, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God;" and that means to know the truth of Romans 7:18, "for I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing."

You will perhaps never know the second thing until you know this first thing, that because of a spiritual disease, known as inherited, indwelling sin (Psalm 51:5 - Romans 7:19 and 20) no one "in Adam," by the deeds of the law, can please God.

The healing of the man born blind, in John 9:1 to 26, gives us our second - "I know." He was blind from his mother's womb. So by natural birth man is spiritually blind and cannot see the kingdom of God. A supernatural birth is necessary (John 3:3 - I Corinthians 2:14).

Christ told that man to wash in the pool of Siloam (Sent). He washed and saw. (John 9:1 to 8).

In John's Gospel, in which grace came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17), John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The Lamb of God is called "the One SENT" many times in John's Gospel. The only cure for the blindness of indwelling sin and by Satan (II Corinthians 4:3 and 4) is to be washed by the precious blood of Christ (I Peter 1:18; Revelation 1:5).

Then we may not be profound, intelligent students of the Bible or very wise in the wisdom of this world; but with the blind man we can say "one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." (John 9:25).

Then for eternal security we accept John 6:38 to 41 - John 10:28 to 30 and we believe Ecclesiastes 3:14: "For I (Christ) came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again on the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, Which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are One." Now Ecclesiastes 3:14 - "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it; nor anything taken from it - God doeth it."

Then we can say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job 19:25

After this hope was revealed to Job the Lord revealed to us the “we know” of II Corinthians 5:1 to 8 and I John 3:2, concerning our house from heaven and the blessed mystery of our change in the twinkling of an eye. (I Corinthians 15:51).

The last “I know” of II Timothy 1:12 has a two-fold meaning, “I know Whom I have believed.” I am persuaded as to His ability.

But the word “paratheke,” meaning “deposit,” is used in II Timothy 1:12. So it can be translated “my deposit.” “Good thing” in II Timothy 1:14 is “good deposit.” Christ deposited much with Paul. Paul and you and I have deposited much with Christ.

LESSON FORTY-THREE

READ I TIMOTHY 2:8 - ROMANS 8:26 - I JOHN 5:14
I THESSALONIANS 5:17 - MATTHEW 21:22

PRAYER A DISPENSATIONAL STUDY

In this lesson we shall learn that prayer is certainly a dispensational study. No Christian, in this age of grace, in the light of Romans 12:17 to 21, would pray any of the many imprecatory prayers by God’s most spiritual servants under the reign of law.

Note Matthew 21:22 - I Timothy 2:8 - John 14:13: “And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” “I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” “And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

Every one should know that God does not hear the prayers of unsaved people, no matter how religious and sincere and earnest they may be. But James 5:16 is always true, “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” “The ear of the Lord is open unto the cry of the righteous.” (I Peter 3:12).

It is true, that Stephen, when dying, prayed unto the Lord Jesus; but that was for Israel’s benefit concerning the Son of man. (Acts 7:51 to 58). The Son instructed His disciples to pray to the Father.

It is true that many spiritual Christians claim rich blessings praying to Christ and the Holy Spirit. But strictly speaking prayer should be offered in accordance with John 14:13 and Romans 8:26, to the Father, in the name of the Son, through the intercession of the Holy Spirit.

Christians well taught in the Scriptures, do not address the Saviour, as “Jesus.” When we speak of our Saviour, let us call Him our Lord Jesus Christ.

Note Romans 8:26 and I John 5:14: “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered.” “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us.”

These two conditions of answered prayer have been a great blessing in my own Christian life, together with James 1:5 and 6: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and

tossed.” And let us never forget Psalm 66:18, “if I regard iniquity, in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”

I confess that I am impotent and ignorant apart from God’s Divine wisdom from above made known to me by the indwelling Spirit: “And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” Romans 8:27. Only in this way can any Christian ask according to God’s will.

As we study the prayers of Luke 18:13 - Acts 10:4 - Acts 8:15 in the light of I John 2:2- Titus 2:11 - Ephesians 1:13 and 14, and especially in the light of the Lord’s message of reconciliation committed to Paul with the dispensation of grace, (II Corinthians 5:18 to 21), no Spirit-taught messenger of grace will tell any sinner that he must pray to be saved or pray through to receive the Holy Spirit. God’s “grace” way is not of works - not by works - not of yourself. (Ephesians 2:9 - Galatians 3:2 - Titus 3:5 to 8) - Salvation and the Holy Spirit are God’s “grace” gifts when the sinner believes. Christians should pray without ceasing; should pray for one another, with all prayer and supplication for all saints and for all things. (I Thessalonians 5:17 - Philippians 4:6 to 8 - Ephesians 6:17 and 18 - James 5:16).

Note these prayers in God’s program of grace: Philippians 1:9 - Colossians 4:2 - II Corinthians 13:7 - Romans 12:12 - I Timothy 4:5.

LESSON FORTY-FOUR

READ LUKE 21:24 TO 33 - DANIEL 2:44 AND 45 DANIEL 3:1 TO 6
ROMANS 11:25 AND 26

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

In Luke 21:24 we read that certain things will happen to the Jews and the land of the Jews “until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

In Romans 11:25 we read that certain things have happened to the Jews “until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”

In Romans 11:11 we read that certain things happened to the Jews, that salvation might be sent to the Gentiles.

In Romans 11:30 the Gentiles received mercy from God, because of the unbelief of the Jews.

In Ephesians 3:1 to 4 we read that Christ committed unto Paul a dispensation revealing God’s secret to Paul, “the dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles.” The blessed hope of those in this dispensation is Titus 2:13.

In Ephesians 3:8 we learn that God’s grace was bestowed upon Paul that Paul might preach to Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

In Colossians 1:27 we read of the mystery among the Gentiles, “Christ in you the hope of glory.” In Colossians 3:3 and 4 we learn that when Christ appears the Church will appear with Him in glory.

Then we read in Romans 11:21 and II Thessalonians 2:5 to 12, that if God spared not the Jews, God will not spare the Gentiles; but as a result of believing not the truth, great wrath will fall on the Gentiles at the end of this age and economy of grace.

Thus we learn that: “the fulness of the Gentiles” will come in by the coming of the Lord Jesus for His Church.” This will be when God has finished the perfect man of Ephesians 4:13.

Politically, “the times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled” by the coming of Christ, as the Son of man, in the clouds with power and great glory to redeem Israel. (Luke 21:27 to 33). Israel shall be saved by the coming of Israel’s Deliverer out of Sion. (Romans 11:26).

We are surely living in “the times of the Gentiles”, politically and spiritually. In fulfillment of Deuteronomy 28:13 - Deuteronomy 28:44 and 64 to 68 Israel today is the tail and not the head.

This will change when Daniel 2:44 and 45 is fulfilled. Christ will come, as the Son of man, for Israel’s deliverance out of the great tribulation. (Jeremiah 30:7 - Matthew 24:29 to 41).

Then Christ will become a mountain and fill the whole earth.

Peace on earth will not be realized until Luke 21:25 to 33 has been fulfilled. In these verses we learn that in the midst of plenty of trouble on this earth the Son of man will come in the clouds with power and great glory and then Israel’s redemption and the kingdom of God will be at hand.

In the second chapter of Daniel we learn of the beginning of “the times of the Gentiles”, politically, about 600 B.C., also the course and the culmination of “the times of the Gentiles”, politically. In that chapter we learn that Christ is the stone which will crush a Christless civilization and become a mountain and fill the whole earth. In Matthew 21:44 Christ called Himself a Stone, and said, “Whosoever shall fall on this Stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever the Stone shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” Israel fell on the Stone some years after the Stone was smitten on the cross. Israel stumbled and fell and was broken. (Romans 9:32 - Romans 11:11 - Romans 11:19). When Israel stumbled and fell, “the times of the Gentiles,” spiritually, began. The consummation of “the times of the Gentiles,” spiritually, is Titus 2:13 and Ephesians 4:13. “The times of the Gentiles,” politically, will end with the Stone grinding a Christless civilization to powder, after the Church has been raptured.

LESSON FORTY-FIVE

READ EPHESIANS 1:5 TO 7 - ACTS 10:35
PHILIPPIANS 4:18 AND 19 - II CORINTHIANS 5:9

ACCEPTED BY GOD

There are many seeming contradictions in the Bible, which disappear when the Word of God is rightly divided and the Greek text is understood.

In this lesson we are to study several Scriptures. First II Corinthians 5:9: “Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be ACCEPTED of Him.” Now Acts 10:35: “But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is ACCEPTED of Him.” Now Ephesians 1:6 and 7: “To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us ACCEPTED in the Beloved, In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”

In the light of Paul’s clear statements of grace how are we to understand II Corinthians 5:9, “labor to be ACCEPTED of God?”

How are we to reconcile Peter's message to Cornelius in Acts 10:35, that men who work righteousness are ACCEPTED of God with Paul's message of grace in Romans 4:5, that the man who does not work, but believes on Christ, is declared righteous?

Then compare II Corinthians 5:9 and Ephesians 1:6 and 7 (quoted above).

The first verse tells us, that we labor to be accepted of God. The other verses say that believers have been made accepted in Christ, redeemed and forgiven.

Now, first of all, the word, "accepted" in II Corinthians 5:9 is from the Greek words "love" and "honor" - "to love honor." - In Philippians 4:18 it is translated "well-pleasing."

Then again, the word "accepted" in II Corinthians 5:9 is altogether different from the word "accepted" in Acts 10:35.

In order that we might understand this difference we quote these words from Philippians 4:18 "a sacrifice acceptable, WELL PLEASING to God." Here the word "acceptable" is the same Greek word as "accepted" in Acts 10:35 whereas the word "well-pleasing" is the same Greek word as "accepted" in II Corinthians 5:9.

But the word "accepted" in Ephesians 1:6 and 7, where we read that the believer has been made accepted, according to the riches of God's "grace," is still a different word. This "accepted" is the verb form of the word "grace." Believers have been "graced" in Christ according to the riches of God's grace. What an inexcusable blunder by the Holy Spirit, if He wrote in Ephesians 2:8 and 9, that sinners are saved by grace through faith, not of the sinner, and not of works, and then wrote in II Corinthians 5:9, that sinners have to labor to be accepted by God, that is, saved by God.

By grace are ye saved, not of works. Read this truth in II Timothy 1:9 - Romans 4:4 and 5 - Romans 11:6 - Ephesians 2:8 and 9.

The seeming contradictions are in our misunderstanding, or lack of understanding, of what the Holy Spirit dictated to holy men of God.

We do not labor to be accepted for salvation or righteousness and eternal life. These are all God's free gifts or grace.

But we should labor to be well pleasing to God; we should endeavor to please Him with our good works done in the name of Christ. Thereby our labors are accepted by Him.

In Titus 3:5 to 7 God's "grace" way of salvation, without any of man's doings, religious or otherwise, is made very plain. But in Titus 3:8 the redeemed sinner is exhorted to excel in good works (maintain good works). This is in harmony with Ephesians 2:10, "God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works" that God expects the saint to do. Philippians 2:12 should be studied in the light of all the above Scriptures; "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

LESSON FORTY-SIX

READ MATTHEW 4:17 - MATTHEW 16:20 AND 21
LUKE 2:14 - LUKE 12:49 TO 52

THE CHANGE IN MATTHEW

The words of the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 16:21 “FROM THAT TIME FORTH” and in Luke 12:52 “FROM HENCEFORTH” seem to mark rather a radical change in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth.

First, let us compare the statement in Luke 2:14, “peace on earth,” with the statement in Luke 12:51, “suppose ye that I (Christ) am come to bring peace on earth? I tell you, Nay, but rather division.”

Christ’s words in Luke 12 and the words of the heavenly messenger to the shepherds in Luke 2 by no means agree. On the contrary, they are decidedly, contradictory. There is a great difference between “peace on earth” and “no peace on earth.” There will not be even a united family: “For FROM HENCEFORTH there shall be five in one house divided, three against two and two against three.” Certainly with Jewish families divided there cannot be universal peace. But the time will come when every Jew shall know the Lord. (Hebrews 8:9 to 13).

When will there be peace on earth? When the Lord Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace reigns on the throne of David. Read Isaiah 9:6 and 7. This is when the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform it.

The Lord Jesus was born in the house of David, of the Seed of David, in the city of David, to be Israel’s Deliverer and to sit on the throne of David (Acts 13:23 - Luke 1:67 to 72 - Luke 2:11 - and Luke 1:27 to 33). But they knew not the time of their visitation for peace. (Luke 19:41 to 44).

Concerning Christ, in Matthew 4:17, note the words “FROM THAT TIME”. What did Christ and His apostles do from that time? They proclaimed “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Read Matthew 3:2 - Matthew 4:17 - Matthew 10:6 and 7).

That kingdom is not now at hand. It will be at hand when Christ comes to build again the tabernacle of David and take the throne of David, (Amos 9:11 to 15 - Isaiah 9:6 and 7 - Acts 15:13 to 18). Until Christ comes from heaven to earth the times of restitution of all things and universal peace on earth will not come. (Acts 3:19 to 21).

While the Messianic kingdom and “peace on earth” are in abeyance, postponed until the Prince of Peace comes, individual sinners may accept the truth of Colossians 1:20, that Christ on the cross made peace through the blood of His cross to reconcile sinners unto God. By this acceptance they can be included in Romans 5:1: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have PEACE WITH GOD through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

During this parenthetical present evil age, notwithstanding the truth of Titus 2:11, “the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men”, the great majority of the world’s inhabitants, including those in the so-called Christian lands, despise God’s grace and reject His Son (Who is our Peace - Ephesians 2:14 to 16) and are on the road to eternal conscious perdition. Families are divided two against three. There are wars and rumors of wars. When they cry, PEACE, destruction will come. (I Thessalonians 5:1 to 6).

Israel would not have Christ as King. Now let us carefully read Matthew 16:20, 21: “Then charged He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ.” “FROM THAT TIME FORTH began Jesus to show His disciples how that he must go into Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priest and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.” The disciples understood none of these things (Luke 18:31 to 34). But you and I should understand the great difference between Christ going to the tree and to the throne. He went to the tree. When He comes again He will go to the throne. (Matthew 25:31 to 41).

Tell no man that I am Israel's Messiah. What a change. Christ was saying "I am not going to David's throne, as the Prince of Peace, (Luke 1:27 to 33); but the builders will reject the Stone." "I am going to Calvary as "the Lamb of God" to make peace by the blood of My cross. "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." God has postponed, but not abandoned, this Kingdom program for Israel and the nations.

LESSON FORTY-SEVEN

READ ROMANS 8:15 - I JOHN 4:18 - II TIMOTHY 1:7 - I PETER 1:17
I PETER 2:17 - I PETER 3:15 - PHILIPPIANS 2:12
HEBREWS 12:28 - I CORINTHIANS 2:3 - ROMANS 11:20.

SHOULD CHRISTIANS FEAR AND TREMBLE?

Let us compare Romans 8:15 and I John 4:18 - II Timothy 1:7 with Hebrews 12:28 and Philippians 2:12: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to FEAR; but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." "There is no FEAR in love; but perfect love casteth out FEAR: because FEAR hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." "For God hath not given us the spirit of FEAR, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." Let us carefully and prayerfully consider these verses and compare with, "wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly FEAR." "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with FEAR and trembling."

There seems to be contradictory truth in the five verses quoted above. Christians have not received the spirit of bondage unto fear. Christians have not received the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sound mind. And yet Christians are told to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, and to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

In Romans 11:20 and 21 the Gentiles are warned to consider what God did to the Jews and be assured that God will not spare Gentiles. "Thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but FEAR."

We read in Psalm 112:1, "Blessed is the man that FEARETH the Lord." Then we read in Job 1:8 and Job 2:3 that Job was upright and FEARED God. Christ instructed His hearers Whom to fear: "And FEAR not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather FEAR Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matthew 10:28.

In II Corinthians 5:11, Paul said, "Knowing the FEAR (terror) of the Lord we persuade men." Here perhaps it is more what the unsaved have to fear than the ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Acts 10:35 we learn that Cornelius obtained God's mercy because he FEARED God. He FEARED God with all his house. (Acts 10:2). However, the saved person is instructed to FEAR God and to pass his time here or, earth in FEAR, (I Peter 1:17).

Not long ago I asked a man if he were a Christian. His reply was, "Yes I am a Godfearing man." Both sinners and saints should fear God, but not in the same way. When saints work out

their own salvation with fear and trembling, or preach the gospel with meekness and in fear in much trembling as did Paul, according to I Corinthians 2:3, or give their testimony in obedience to I Peter 3:15 with meekness and fear, it is not fear of being destroyed in hell, but it is what we have described in Hebrews 12:28, reverence and godly fear.

This is the sense in which every Christian, although he knows God as his loving and merciful Father, the God of all grace, should fear to deliberately act against the known will of God. Perfect love casteth out fear. Sinners should fear God, because of Hebrews 10:28 to 33. For the sinner, it is a fearful thing to fall into God's hands.

The statement of Paul that he preached to the sinners in Corinth in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, is explained in I Corinthians 1:29 and I Corinthians 2:5 and II Corinthians 4:7: "That no flesh should glory in God's presence;" "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God;" "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

LESSON FORTY-EIGHT

READ ROMANS 5:10 TO 12 - ROMANS 11:15 - II CORINTHIANS 5:16 TO 21
COLOSSIANS 1:20 AND 21 - EPHESIANS 2:13 TO 19.

RECONCILED BY CHRIST'S DEATH

The doctrine of RECONCILIATION IS rather a profound study, the strong meat of Hebrews 5:14, for those Christians who are no longer children tossed to and fro. (Ephesians 4:14).

There is nothing too difficult for even the babe in Christ in Romans 5:10 and Colossians 1:21 and 22: "For if, when we were enemies, we were RECONCILED to God by the death of His Son, much more, being RECONCILED, we shall be saved by His life." "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He RECONCILED, in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight."

God's Word is very dogmatic and clear, that believing sinners are reconciled to God by the death of God's Son, by the work that Christ did on the cross: "And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to RECONCILE all things unto Himself; by Him I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Colossians 1:20.

Note that reconciliation was for the purpose of getting believing Gentiles and believing Jews into the Body of Christ. "And that He might RECONCILE both unto God in one Body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh." (Ephesians 2:16 and 17).

When Christians go to sinners as Christ's ambassadors, as every Christian should, they go with the ministry and word of reconciliation. (II Corinthians 5:18 to 20). They beseech sinners to be reconciled to God by believing II Corinthians 5:21: "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." II Corinthians 5:21.

The full meaning of the statement that Christ was made sin, we may never really comprehend until the ages to come when God will show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Ephesians 2:7). But “KATALLASSO” translated “RECONCILE” is “ALLASSO” - “Change” or “different”. “KATALLASSO” has the thought of “a mutual change” or “an adjustment.”

The word translated “atonement,” in Romans 5:11, is the same Greek word translated in other verses “reconciliation.” It is more than atonement. Our sins are not covered over, but forever put away.

But let us understand the significance of this reading in Romans 5:11 and 12 - By Christ the reconciliation; wherefore as by Adam sin and death entered into the world.

“Reconciliation” - “Wherefore Adam and his deadly work.”

The sinner, in Adam, by Adam, is alienated from the life of God (Ephesians 4:18 - Colossians 1:21); and is condemned, dead in trespasses and sins, the child of wrath (Ephesians 2:1 to 3 - Romans 5:18) because of Adam. The ministry of the Twelve did not go back to Adam, but to circumcised Abraham. RECONCILIATION was Paul’s message.

The believing sinner is a new creation in Christ Jesus; is reconciled; is not condemned; is alive from the dead; is righteous and has eternal life. (Romans 8:1 - John 3:18 - Colossians 1:21 - Ephesians 2:5 and 6 - Romans 6:23).

The Divine reason and process is told in Romans 5:21 and in Ephesians 2:8 to 19.

But note carefully Romans 11:15: “For if the casting away of them (Israel) be the RECONCILING of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” Read this with Romans 11:11 and Romans 11:30 and Acts 13:46 and Acts 28:28.

The Gentiles obtained mercy for two reasons; because of Christ’s propitiation and because of Israel’s unbelief (I John 2:2 - Romans 11:30). The Gentiles were reconciled to God for two reasons, because of reconciliation by the death of Christ and the casting-away of Israel some years after Christ was raised from the dead (Romans 5:10 - Colossians 1:21 and 22 - Ephesians 2:16 and Romans 11:15).

LESSON FORTY-NINE

READ ESTHER 1:1 TO 12 - DANIEL 2:39 - DANIEL 5:31 - DANIEL 8:28
DANIEL 9:1 - DANIEL 10:1 - DANIEL 11:1 TO 4 ESTHER 3:13 - ESTHER 4:18 ESTHER 7:3
- ESTHER 7:10 - ESTHER 8:15 TO 17 - ESTHER 10.3.

ESTHER-MORDECAI-HAMAN

Christians have wondered why the word “God” is not found once in the ten chapters of “Esther.” But God was working very definitely in favor of Mordecai, Esther and the other Jews, and against Haman who, in Esther 3:10, is called “the Jews’ enemy (oppressor).”

In Daniel 2:36 to 39 the Lord, through Daniel, revealed to the king of Babylon that he was the first of four great Gentile world powers, the beginning of “the times of the Gentiles,” politically. The second was to be the Medes and the Persians. (Daniel 5:28 - Esther 1:19). We read in Daniel 5:31, “Darius the Median took the kingdom.” In Daniel 6:28 we read “Daniel prospered in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.” In Esther 1:1 to 12 we read that Ahasuerus reigned

from India to Ethiopia. "Ahasuerus" was a title rather than the name of the king. This Persian king, in the presence of all the princes of the provinces of Persia and Media, "shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent glory." (Esther 1:4).

Vashti, the queen, refused to attend the king's feast. She was deposed.

Then Satan and Haman, versus God, With Mordecai and Esther, began to work. It was Ham versus Shem. It was the Agagite (Esther 3:1) against the faithful Jew, for Mordecai was true to God under most adverse circumstances.

Note the decree Haman persuaded the Persian king to issue: "To destroy, to kill and to cause to perish ALL Jews, both young and old." (Esther 3:13).

Remember that Christ, the promised Seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham and David, humanly speaking, would not have been born, if Haman and the Persian king had carried out that wholesale execution of the Jews. Mary, the virgin, was to descend from some Jew who was at the time in Persia. "The city of Shushan was perplexed." (Esther 3:15). Haman was happy and especially when the gallows was erected for the death of Mordecai.

Then there was the mourning, the fasting, the weeping, wailing, sackcloth and ashes of the faithful of God (Esther 4:3), the God-given courage of Esther, who had been made queen in the place of Vashti. We remember the famous words of Esther, "if I perish, I perish," in case the king did not hold out his sceptre. (Esther 4:16). The reasoning of the Gentiles then was sound - "If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, Haman, thou shalt not prevail." (Esther 6:13).

"So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai." (Esther 7:10).

Mordecai was dressed in royal apparel, with a crown of gold. There was rejoicing in Shushan. "The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour. And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews." How could a Persian. Gentile become a Jew? We read in Acts 2:10, of "proselytes." They were Gentiles who accepted the Jew's religion.

God prophesied in the Scriptures that Israel could not be assimilated; could not be annihilated. (Read Numbers 23:9 - Jeremiah 30:11).

"So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." (Exodus 33:16).

"Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." (Romans 9:27).

"Except the Lord of Saboath had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah." (Romans 9:29). God is yet to do great and glorious things on earth through Israel; so we learn that God was very much in Esther.

LESSON FIFTY

READ COLOSSIANS 1:12 TO 14 - I THESSALONIANS 1:9 AND 10 - EPHESIANS 5:8
EPHESIANS 2:13 - COLOSSIANS 2:13 - ACTS 26:18 AND 20 - HEBREWS 11:5

TRANSFERRED AND TRANSFORMED

In Colossians 1:12 and 13 we learn that believers give thanks unto God because God has qualified them for heaven, delivered them from the power of darkness and translated them into Christ's kingdom. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: In Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." (Colossians 1:12 to 14).

"Translated" is the Greek, "methistano," which means "transferred." From the power of darkness into Christ's kingdom is a real "transfer." It means the same as I Corinthians 6:11, "But ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified."

Note how this change is stated in Ephesians 5:8 - 2:13 and I Thessalonians 1:9 and 10. "For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." "How ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; And to wait for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

"Turned to God from idols" is a great change. The word "turned" in the Greek is "epistrepho," the same word used in Acts 26:18, "turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God." This word means to convert. The noun "epistrophe" means conversion. When a sinner receives Christ, he becomes a new creation. (II Corinthians 5:17); God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus, unto good works." (Ephesians 2:10).

Believers are converted and transferred, brought from afar off to God by the blood of Christ. Out of darkness into light is indeed a transfer. Read this change in I Peter 2:9, "out of darkness into His MARVELOUS light."

"To wait for God's Son from heaven." Then we shall be like Him, and shall have bodies like Christ's own glorified body. (I John 3:1 to 3 - Philippians 3:21). "Who shall change (metaschematizo) our body of humiliation;" "fashioned (summorphos) like unto His body of glory." (Philippians 3:21).

But here is God's revealed mystery, or secret, for members of Christ's Body: "We shall not all sleep." "We shall not all die." "But we shall all be CHANGED (allasso)." We shall be different. (I Corinthians 15:51 to 54).

The "TRANSLATED" in Hebrews 11:5 is a different Greek word, "metatithemi." Note what happened to Enoch. "By faith Enoch was TRANSLATED that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had TRANSLATED him: for before his TRANSLATION he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Hebrews 11:5).

Enoch was transformed or transfigured at the time he was transferred from earth to heaven. Enoch walked with God and he was not; for God took him. (Genesis 5:24).

Saints who are alive and remain here until Christ descends from heaven will be caught up in glorified bodies. (I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18).

Then Christ will present the Church unto Himself a glorious, holy Church, without spot or blemish. (Ephesians 5:26 and 27).

Transferred and Transformed tells the story. Some Christians experience three great changes. First, As "dead sinners" they receive Christ and by grace become "living saints." They pass out of death into life. (John 5:24 - John 11:25 - Ephesians 2:5 and 6 - Colossians 2:13.). Then they depart to be with the Lord. (Philippians 1:21 to 25). Then they will be the dead in Christ who rise first. (I Thessalonians 4:15 to 18). Many saints will be here when Christ comes

for His Church. They will have experienced the first change and will experience the third change but not the second.

LESSON FIFTY-ONE

READ REVELATION 1:8 - REVELATION 1:18 - REVELATION 5:12
HEBREWS 12:2 - I CORINTHIANS 2:8
ACTS 3:14 AND 15 - ISAIAH 9:6 AND 7 - PSALMS 24:7.

SOME OF CHRIST'S BIBLE TITLES

Let us prayerfully consider what Christ said of Himself some years after He was raised from the dead: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8). "I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Revelation 1:18).

Then note what the heavenly messengers said in Revelation 5:12: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

When we read these statements we do not wonder at the words of Thomas when he saw Christ in His resurrection body, "My Lord, and My God." (John 20:28).

Thus we see that professing Christians, who claim to worship Christ but deny that He was "Immanuel" (God with us) (Isaiah 7:14), God manifest in the flesh (John 1:1 to 3 and John 1:14), the eternal I AM (John 8:24), should decide that they are either "infidels" or "idolaters." If Christ was not God, but only a good man, to worship Him is idolatry. If He was God, not to accept and worship Him, is to be an infidel. In Ephesians 2:12 we learn that any man, religious or otherwise, without Christ, is without God, "atheos" - an "atheist."

In I Corinthians 2:8 we learn that because the rulers of this world knew not, they crucified the Lord of Glory. - "Killed the Prince of Life." (Acts 3:14 and 15).

The Prince of Life said that He was the resurrection and the life; that He had power to lay down His life and take it again. (John 11:25 and John 10:17 to 19). He proved this by showing Himself alive after His death by many infallible proofs. (Acts 1:3).

By this mighty work Christ spoiled principalities and powers, destroyed Satan's death power, abolished death and hath brought life and incorruptibility to light in the gospel. (Colossians 2:13 to 16 - Hebrews 2:14 - II Timothy 1:10).

Christ was the effulgence of God's glory, the express image of God's Person, and when He had by Himself purged sin, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in heaven, where He is a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, the believer's Advocate. (Hebrews 1:1 and 2 - Hebrews 7:1 - I John 2:1).

Christ will return as the King of Glory, the Prince of Peace, to govern this world. (Psalm 24:7 - Isaiah 9:6 and 7). He is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah; but He is the Lamb of God Which beareth away the sin of the world. (Revelation 5:5 - John 1:29 - I Peter 1:18 and 19). Is it any wonder that the Holy Spirit calls Christ's shed blood (Matthew 26:28) the precious blood?

Christ is coming as the Sun of Righteousness. (Malachi 4:2). "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." He is the Plant of Renown. He is included in Elohim (God); for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily.

Christ created the sun and the stars and all things and He is before all things. (Colossians 1:15 to 21). More than twenty times in John's Gospel Christ called Himself the "I AM." If you do not believe Christ to be the I AM, ye shall die in your sins. (John 8:24). Christ has more than two hundred titles in the Bible, from "Elohiym" and "the Seed of the woman," in the first part of the first Book, Genesis, to "the Lord Whom Ye Seek" in the last part of Malachi, and from Jesus Christ, "the Son of David," "the Son of Abraham" in Matthew 1:1 to "our Lord Jesus Christ" in Revelation 22:21.

At the present Christ is far above all heavens, the Head of the Church Which is His Body, and believers are united to Him, to be with Him, one flesh (Ephesians 4:9 to 13 - Ephesians 1:19 to 23 - Ephesians 5:31 and 32). It is wonderful to have such a Christ as Author and Finisher of our faith.

LESSON FIFTY-TWO

READ HEBREWS 7:19 - HEBREWS 10:14 - I CORINTHIANS 2:6
MATTHEW 5:48 - EPHESIANS 4:9 TO 13 - HEBREWS 5:11 TO 6:3.

HOW THE IMPERFECT SINNER CAN BE MADE PERFECT

Two very interesting and significant statements are made in Hebrews 7:19 - "The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God."

Before considering these statements let us note in Romans 5:20 why the law entered. That the offence (or sin) that entered by Adam, and passed upon the whole human race, might abound. (Romans 5:12). "Death reigned from Adam to Moses." (Romans 5:14). From Adam to the time Moses received the law at Sinai (Exodus 20) was about 2500 years. The law that was given at Sinai was good, spiritual, just and holy. (Romans 7:12 and 14). "The law of the Lord is perfect." (Psalm 19:7). And the Son of God on earth was a perfect Man.

From Adam to Moses the human race was so imperfect that, about 2350 B.C. God had to destroy the entire human race with the exception of one family; (Noah's family). (Genesis 6).

Some years after the flood God again sent an awful judgment upon the human race, because they were awfully wicked. (Romans 1:18 to 30). "God gave them up."

Then some years later, about 1500 B.C., the people whom God chose for His glory were down in Egypt. Because of the sin of the Egyptians God smote the first born of that land and then put many of the Egyptians in the bottom of the Red Sea. That was a few weeks before God gave to Moses His holy, perfect law, which no one ever perfectly kept except the perfect Man, Christ Jesus. Christ said, "None of you has kept the law." (John 7:19). Peter said the same thing. (Acts 15:10).

When God gave His perfect law to Israel He gave them a religious program, with sacrifices of animals which could not take away sin but only cover them for a year. (Hebrews 10:1

to 12). Neither the ten commandments nor the sacrifices under the law could make any one perfect. The imperfect sinner could not perfectly keep God's perfect law. The very best human being had to confess, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." (Romans 7:14 and 7:19).

Christ said, "Be thou perfect." (Matthew 5:48). Christ was under the law at the time (Galatians 4:4); and He was perfect. He offered Himself without spot unto God; a perfect sacrifice. (Hebrews 9:12 to 14). This was the bringing in of the better hope by which believers are made perfect. (Hebrews 7:19). "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Hebrews 10:14). "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Ephesians 2:13). "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ." (Hebrews 10:10).

God's perfect law demanded a sinless life. A sinless life is the expression of a sinless nature. Jesus Christ, the Righteous, was born with such a nature. The Bible has much to say concerning God's perfect law and God's perfect Son. The perfect Christ perfectly kept the perfect law and then was made sin when He died between two law-breakers. Because of this perfect sacrifice believing sinners are made the righteousness of God in Christ. (II Corinthians 5:21).

A perfected believer is a saint. God gave gifts for the perfecting of saints; for the perfecting of believers who were perfect in Christ. (Ephesians 4:10 to 13). There are saints who are called perfect, or full-aged, because they have gone from the milk of the Scriptures on to perfection, the strong meat. (I Corinthians 2:6 - Hebrews 5:12 to 6:2). What the law could not do on account of human imperfection, the perfect Christ did. (Romans 8:3). Believers are perfect in Christ. And for the finished work of perfection read Ephesians 5:26 to 28.

LESSON FIFTY-THREE

READ JOHN 13:1 TO 7 - HEBREWS 7:25 - 1 JOHN 2:1.

TWO DIVINE PARACLETES

In John 14:16 we read: "And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another COMFORTER, (PARACLETE), that He may abide with you forever."

Here the Lord Jesus, Who was going to leave His disciples, promised to send them another COMFORTER, the Holy Spirit. Both the words "another" and "Comforter" indicate that the Holy Spirit is a Person. Note Acts 13:2 - Acts 5:3 - Romans 8:26.

The word "Comforter" is literally "Paraclete." Christ is one "Paraclete" and the Holy Spirit is another "Paraclete." This is just what Jesus Christ the Righteous is called in I John 2:1: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not, and if any man sin we have an Advocate (PARACLETE) with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous."

"PARACLETOS" is from "para-kaleo" - to call near. Christ is called the believer's "Advocate." The word "ADVOCATE" is the same Greek word translated "Comforter," in John 14:16. Read Hebrews 9:24 and Hebrews 7:25 and Romans 8:34.

In chapters thirteen to seventeen in the Gospel of John we have the work of the two “Paracletes” set forth. In chapters thirteen and seventeen, the washing of the disciples’ feet and the interceding of the Lord Jesus are recorded. In chapters fourteen and sixteen, we find the work of the Holy Spirit, another “Comforter,” the Spirit of Truth, Who is to guide the believers into all truth and to be the earnest of the believers’ inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. (Ephesians 1:13 and 14).

The Lord Jesus Christ on the cross was the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. (I John 2:2).

The work of the same Lord Jesus Christ as “ADVOCATE” in God’s presence in heaven (Hebrews 9:24) is for those who have been redeemed by the precious shed blood of Christ.

Therefore, the believer should know the blessed truth of Hebrews 7:25 and Philippians 1:6: “Wherefore He is able also to save them to the UTTERMOST that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” “Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will PERFORM it unto the day of Jesus Christ.”

The word “uttermost” in Hebrews 7:25 is the same Greek root as “perform” in Philippians 1:6, and both mean “all the way to the end.” “Panteleo” - “Epiteleo.”

The prefix before the word “end” in Hebrews 7:25 is “pan” meaning “all,” and in Philippians 1:6 is “epi.” The Greek root “end” is the same as John 13:1: “Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the END.”

Christ loves His own unto the end. In John 17:24 and 25 Christ prayed that His disciples will be with Him in His glory. They will be. (Colossians 3:1 to 4). They are sealed by the Holy Spirit until the manifestation of that glory. (Ephesians 4:30).

If we have Scriptural right to speak of the carnal Christian (I Corinthians 3:1 to 4) as a back-slider, who has to come back to God, he must come through Christ at God’s right hand. It is because He is there that the believer has that sure and steadfast hope and anchor of Hebrews 6:19 and 20. Christ is in God’s presence to maintain the saints’ fellowship. He died on the cross to establish the believers’ relationship.

In John 13:4 to 12 we have the account of Christ washing the feet of His disciples and interpreting to them the meaning of that ministry. Note two different words “know” in John 13:7 and two different words “wash” in John 13:10.

When once a believer is washed all over by the blood of Christ, he needs only the work of Christ as Paraclete in heaven.

So after Christ was raised from the dead, Peter and others knew John 13:10. Compare Hebrews 10:22 and I John 2:2.

LESSON FIFTY-FOUR

READ ROMANS 1:16 - ROMANS 11:7 TO 15 - ACTS 3:26

ACTS 13:30 TO 36 - ACTS 13:46 - MARK 7:24 TO 30.

IS GOD’S ORDER TO THE JEW FIRST?

In this lesson we are considering the meaning of the statement in Romans 1:16, "TO THE JEW FIRST." Is God's order today "TO THE JEW FIRST?"

"To the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Romans 1:16). In Mark 7:24 to 30 we learn that the Jew was more than first, and the poor Greek had a difficult time getting in at all. The twelve apostles asked the Lord Jesus to send her away without a blessing (Matthew 15:23). Then Christ said, "I am not sent but unto Israel." (Matthew 15:24). Christ said to that Greek woman this significant thing, "let the children (the Jews) FIRST BE FILLED." "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs." (Mark 7:27).

Let us keep in mind that Christ "came unto His own." (John 1:11). Christ was born to be Israel's Saviour (Acts 13:23). Christ, (the Stone) had to be rejected by Israel, the Builders, (Matthew 21:42), before the salvation of Romans 11:11 would be sent to Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy. One of the most important keys to the truth concerning Gentiles salvation by grace is the truth of Acts 5:29 to 32; that Christ was raised up twice to be Israel's Saviour, first in incarnation, and second in resurrection. This same truth is stated in Acts 13:23 and Acts 13:30 to 36.

Christ said that His own, "the children of the kingdom," would be cast into outer darkness. (Matthew 8:12). After that He wept as He pled with them. (Luke 13:34 and 35).

But as we turn from this sorrowful message of Christ in Luke 13:34 and 35 to Matthew 23:30 to 39, we turn from compassionate love and indignation to awful wrath and indignation; for, in Matthew, the children of the kingdom who were to be filled FIRST, were called serpents and a generation of vipers. (Matthew 23:33). This seems to be worse than the Gentiles. The Gentiles were dogs. The Jews were "serpents" and "vipers," far worse than dogs. They were to have something worse than the darkness of Matthew 8:12; even the damnation of hell. (Matthew 23:33).

But as we think of Mark 7:26 and 27 and Matthew 23:33, the "serpents" and the "dogs," let us also think of what Paul said, years later, "to the Jews (the serpents) first and also to the Greeks (the dogs)." (Romans 1:16). You ask with me, why should "serpents" come before "dogs"? We must conclude that on the day of Pentecost the Jews were no longer considered "serpents," or they would not have been FIRST. The prayer of Christ on the cross changed them back from "serpents" to "children" (Acts 3:25 and 26). Read what Peter said to Israel:

"Unto you FIRST God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." (Acts 3:26). Remember "the children FIRST be filled." (Mark 7:27).

"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the Word of God should FIRST have been spoken to you (Jews): but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:46).

In reading Acts 3:26 also read Acts 3:25 and note that the Jews had suddenly become "children" again. Compare the denunciation, condemnation and wrath of Matthew 23:30 to 39, with the tenderness and mercy of Acts 3:12 to 18. What changed the "serpents" back to "children"? The prayer of Christ on the cross (Luke 23:34); and the truth of Acts 3:17 and 18. Then Israel was again FIRST.

The Jews continued to be FIRST until something happened to them. The wrath of God fell again and God blinded Israel; after which Israel was to obtain mercy from God through the Gentiles. (Romans 11:31). The wrath of God came unto the uttermost. (I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16). Then God's order ceased to be "TO THE JEWS FIRST." God expects His children to be wise enough to know that His order would not be "TO THE JEWS FIRST" after what God did to

the Jews, according to Romans 11:7 to 11 and 11:25 - God's order was not to the Jews FIRST in Paul's Prison Epistles.

LESSON FIFTY-FIVE

READ ROMANS 6:6 TO 13 - II CORINTHIANS 5:15
COLOSSIANS 2:13 - COLOSSIANS 3:3 AND 4

ARE CHRISTIANS DEAD OR ALIVE?

In the sixth chapter of Romans we learn that Christians, or saints, are both dead and alive. "He that is DEAD is freed from sin." (Romans 6:7). "Yield yourselves unto God, as those who are ALIVE from the dead." (Romans 6:13).

Do these statements seem contradictory; "DEAD" - "ALIVE from the dead"?

Let us note carefully the words of the Lord Jesus: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the DEAD shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall LIVE." (John 5:25). "Jesus said unto her. I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were DEAD, yet shall he LIVE: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John 11:25 and 26).

Without faith in Christ, without Christ, every person is dead. When a dead sinner hears God's Word and receives God's Son, trusting in His death and resurrection, he is made alive. (John 5:24).

Note how this is stated in Colossians 2:13 and Ephesians 2:5 and 6; "And you, being DEAD in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He made ALIVE together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses." (Colossians 2:13). "Even when we were DEAD in sins, hath made us ALIVE together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved); And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:5 and 6).

Christ said that believers pass out of death into life. John 5:24). This is when they pass out of Adam into Christ. (II Corinthians 5:17 - I Corinthians 15:22 - I John 3:14).

We read in II Timothy 1:10 that "Christ hath abolished DEATH and hath brought LIFE to light through the gospel." Christ had power to yield up His life in death and take it up again in resurrection. (John 10:17 and 18). In this work of death, and resurrection from the dead, the Lord Jesus established the law of the Spirit of life that makes the believer free from the law of sin and death; even alive from the dead. (Romans 8:2 to 4). The Lord Jesus called His death, His "baptism." (Luke 12:50).

The moment this Divine law (the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus) operates by grace and God-given faith, that moment the believer is baptized into the death of Christ, is "buried with Christ in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead." (Colossians 2:12). "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into DEATH: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of LIFE." (Romans 6:3 and 4). At the same time the death and burial of the believer takes place, his resurrection and ascension also take place. "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was

raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:4). “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.” (Ephesians 2:6). “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” (Colossians 3:1).

Living saints can say with Paul: “I am CRUCIFIED with Christ: nevertheless I LIVE; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20). Living saints “should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.” (II Corinthians 5:15). Living saints, seated in the heavenlies, should seek those things where Christ is at God’s right hand and not set their affections on things on earth, for they are crucified to the flesh and to the world. (Colossians 3:1 and 2 - Galatians 5:24 and 6:14). “For ye are DEAD, and your LIFE is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” (Colossians 3:3 and 4). Read Romans 6:11: Reckon yourselves to be DEAD AND ALIVE.

LESSON FIFTY-SIX

READ EPHESIANS 4:1 TO 3 - I TIMOTHY 3:15 AND 16 - COLOSSIANS 3:1 TO 3
ROMANS 6:4 TO 6 - EPHESIANS 5:15 AND 16.

WALK WORTHY OF THE CALLING

Let us meditate upon the meaning of the exhortation that came from the heart and pen of a prisoner. “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation (calling) wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:1 to 3).

The man who wrote that exhortation, measured by true standards and values, was the greatest man who ever lived on this earth, with the single exception of the Man Christ Jesus, Who was in a class by Himself, for Christ was God in human form. This prisoner called himself “the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ.” He wrote in another message; “Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20).

That bond-slave and prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ was in jail for telling a Secret, God’s Mystery kept secret from the foundation of the world. (Romans 16:25 - Romans 8:28 to 32 - Colossians 4:3 and 4 - Ephesians 6:19 and 20 - Ephesians 3:1 to 4). He was Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles. (Romans 11:13). Paul was Christ’s masterbuilder. (I Corinthians 3:10).

The apostle Paul practiced what he preached; “he walked to please God.” (I Thessalonians 4:1).

If a Christian is to walk worthy of his calling, he must know what his calling is, and, in God’s way, he must know what is the hope of God’s calling and what the riches of the glory of God’s inheritance in the saints. (Ephesians 1:16 to 18). He must know “the Mystery of Christ.” (Ephesians 3:1 to 4). A Christian cannot walk as his calling demands until he knows what his calling is.

The word “worthy” is also translated “as becometh” in Philippians 1:27 - Romans 16:2, and “after a godly sort,” in 3 John 6.

We have very much the same exhortation in I Timothy 3:15 and 16, “that thou mayest know how to behave in the House of God, Which is the Church of the living God.” This did not refer to the Christian’s behavior in the meeting-place, but what he is to do and not to do every day, hour and moment, as a member of the Body of Christ.

Members of the Body of Christ are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10). They are not saved, or members of the Household of God, (Ephesians 2:8 and 9 - Ephesians 2:19 to 22), because they are worthy, or walk worthy; but because “worthy is the Lamb that was slain.” (Revelation 5:12) (Ephesians 2:8 and 9).

But to be new creatures in Christ Jesus means to be raised with Christ, “to walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:4). These new creatures have been raised up to sit in the heavenlies in Christ. “Our citizenship is in heaven.” (Philippians 3:20). If our citizenship is where Christ is, our affections and hope should be on things above. (Colossians 3:1 to 3 - Colossians 1:5). And let us ever remember that while here on earth we walk not by sight, but by faith. (II Corinthians 5:7). We walk spiritually when we are not walking physically.

The Holy Spirit would not have us walk as Gentiles (sinners) walk. (Ephesians 4:17). That is what the carnal saints at Corinth did. They walked as men. (I Corinthians 3:2 to 5).

Saints are to walk in the Spirit. (Romans 8:4 and Galatians 5:16 and 25). “Walk honestly as in the day.” (Romans 13:13 - I Thessalonians 4:12). “Walk in love.” (Ephesians 5:2). “Walk as children of light.” (Ephesians 5:8). “Walk worthy of the Lord.” (Colossians 1:10). “Walk in Jesus the Lord.” (Colossians 2:6). “Walk in wisdom toward them that are without.” (Colossians 4:5). “Walk worthy of God.” (I Thessalonians 2:12). “Walk in truth.” (3 John 4). “Walk as Christ walked.” (I John 2:6).

If we are to walk in truth, we must rightly divide the Word of truth, and not walk in Israel’s hope and calling, but in the light of the revelation which the risen Christ gave to and through Paul concerning our heavenly position.

LESSON FIFTY-SEVEN

READ I JOHN 3:23 - ROMANS 3:20 - ROMANS 5:20 AND 21
ROMANS 7:14 TO 25 - ROMANS 8:15 - GALATIANS 4:1 TO 7.

NO CREED BUT CHRIST—NO LAW BUT LOVE

Note carefully I John 3:23: “And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment.”

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth (Romans 10:4). Love is the fruit of the Spirit. Love is the fulfilling of the law. (Galatians 5:22 and Romans 13:10). Against Christians, who manifest the fruit of the Spirit, love, which the law demanded, there is no law. (Galatians 5:22 and 23). The law demanded righteousness. Christ is the believer’s righteousness. (I Corinthians 1:30 - II Corinthians 5:21).

“By the law is the knowledge of sin.” (Romans 3:20). “The law entered that sin might abound.” (Romans 5:20). “The law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.” “If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.” “The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do.” (Romans 7:14 to 25).

Sin is the transgression of the law. Thou shalt not kill, steal, commit adultery, lie, or take God’s name in vain, or covet. Thou shalt love God perfectly and thy neighbor as thy self. It is just as great a sin not to love God with undivided affection and strength, as it is to steal or transgress the other commandments.

But, under grace, Christians have not received the spirit of bondage unto fear, but the Spirit of adoption, and God’s Spirit assures believers that they are the children of God, and joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:15 to 17). “Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” (Galatians 4:7). God has made believers accepted in Christ, the Beloved, and they have redemption through Christ’s shed blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of God’s grace. “Accepted” is the verb form of the Greek word, “grace.” God has “graced” us in Christ Jesus. What the law could not do Christ did. (Romans 8:3 - Hebrews 7:19 - Romans 3:20 and 24). What the law demanded (righteousness) believers have by the grace of God and faith in the perfect redemptive work of the perfect Christ. (Galatians 2:16 - Acts 13:39).

Under the law God’s people were servants. The law was their tyrannical child-trainer to bring them to Christ for righteousness by faith. (Galatians 3:24 and 25 - 2:16).

Christians are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and although they are not their own, being bought with a price, they are voluntary, and not compulsory, servants. (Galatians 3:26 - I Corinthians 6:19 and 20 - I Peter 1:18 to 20 - Acts 20:28 - Revelation 1:5). But they are exhorted to love one another with a pure heart fervently. (I Peter 1:22).

Christ lives in the believer (Galatians 2:20 - Colossians 1:27). The believer is in Christ, not condemned; but complete. (Romans 8:1 - Colossians 2:10). Christ fulfilled the law and died for the law-breaker. (Matthew 5:17 and Galatians 4:4 and 5).

Christ, by His blood, obtained eternal redemption for the believer and He is the believer’s redemption, righteousness, holiness, peace, hope and life. (I Corinthians 1:30 - Ephesians 2:13 to 16 - Colossians 3:4 - I Timothy 1:1 - Hebrews 9:12).

“He that hath the Son hath life.” (I John 5:12). “He that denieth the Son, hath not the Father.” (I John 2:23).

The Christian’s creed is a Person, Christ. His law is love. The end of the law is love. (I Timothy 1:5). The end of the law for righteousness is Christ. (Romans 10:4). The fruit of the Spirit is love; against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:22 and 23).

LESSON FIFTY-EIGHT

READ ISAIAH 9:6 AND 7- LUKE 1:27 TO 33 - LUKE 2:14 - LUKE 12:51 AND 52

ROMANS 5:1 - COLOSSIANS 1:20 - COLOSSIANS 3:15

I THESSALONIANS 5:1 TO 5

PEACE-SAFETY-SUDDEN DESTRUCTION

Many Christians have been puzzled as to just what the Lord's messengers meant when they delivered the Lord's message to the shepherds 1900 years ago, "Glory to God in the highest, and ON EARTH PEACE, good will toward men." (Luke 2:14).

This is so entirely contrary to the words of the Lord Jesus Christ about 33 years later: "Suppose ye that I am come to give PEACE ON EARTH? I tell you, NAY; but rather DIVISION." (Luke 12:51).

"Peace on earth" and "no peace on earth" are contradictory statements. DIVISION is not PEACE. Did that heavenly messenger give out a false message like the false prophets of Jeremiah 6:14, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace?"

And then some years after Christ went back to heaven He led Paul to warn Christians not to be deceived when certain messengers cry "peace and safety," for there would be destruction instead of peace. (I Thessalonians 5:1 to 5). And in Revelation 6:1 to 6, we learn positively that before Christ comes to establish PEACE ON EARTH something will happen. "And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon TO TAKE PEACE FROM THE EARTH, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." (Revelation 6:4).

Now let us note this outline and God's "PEACE" program:

1 - PEACE on earth with Christ on David's throne. 2 - PEACE made on the cross. 3 - PEACE with God through Christ. 4 - The PEACE of God that passeth all understanding.

We have recently emerged from the most cruel, brutal war of all ages. We are all sick and tired of war. We want peace on earth. But Christ is the center of every "PEACE" program of God. The statesmen and politicians insist that we will have to compromise, sacrifice, be tolerant and diplomatic and gracious, with a new international spirit, if we are to maintain the peace which we are now trying to win. Even then they are more skeptical than hopeful. Paul wrote to some faithful Christians, "Christ is our PEACE." (Ephesians 2:14).

It was at the time Gabriel announced that the purpose of Christ's birth was to take David's throne and reign over the house of Israel, that the heavenly messenger announced "PEACE ON EARTH." (Luke 1:30 to 33 - Luke 2:14 - Luke 1:67 to 77). Christ's own nation did not know the things that belonged to their PEACE. (Luke 19:42). They knew not the time of their visitation. (Luke 19:44). They said concerning Christ, "we will not have this man to reign over us." (Luke 19:14). They chose to release Barabbas, the notable criminal, and kill the Prince of life. (Acts 3:12 to 15). They cried, "we have no king but Caesar," "let the blood of this man (Jesus), Who claims to be the King, be upon us. (Matthew 27:21 to 25 - John 19:15). It is still there.

Christ did not go to David's throne: but He will. (Acts 15:15 to 18 - Isaiah 9:6 and 7 - Ezekiel 37:24 to 28). So Christ said, instead of universal peace, there will be division, tribulation, wars, famine. Peace for believers only. (Luke 12:49 to 52 - John 16:33 - John 14:27 - Luke 21:24 to 33).

Instead of going to David's throne to take over the government, Christ went to Calvary. He made PEACE through the blood of His cross. (Colossians 1:20). PEACE on earth was postponed. There is now no world-wide peace on earth for lost sinners, Their future is not peace but wrath and misery. Eternal perdition awaits all who refuse to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and receive Him as Saviour. Quite often in the cemetery on the stone over the sinner's grave, the word "PEACE" is carved.

Note how "PEACE WITH GOD" comes: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have 'PEACE WITH GOD' through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:1). There is no other way to

be at peace with God. But this is the sure guarantee of peace. Then the PEACE OF GOD, (Philippians 4:7).

Note carefully I Thessalonians 5:1 to 4.

LESSON FIFTY-NINE

READ ROMANS 3:10 TO 19 - ROMANS 3:22 AND 23
ROMANS 11:32 - GALATIANS 3:22

THE UNIVERSALITY OF SIN

In these Scriptures we read of the universality of sin “There is none righteous, no not one. There is none that doeth good, no, not one.” “For there is no difference; For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” This is a part of man’s record of sin in Romans Three.

This is God’s verdict and indictment against all the children of Adam in all of the Scriptures.

“For there is no man that sinneth not.” (I Kings 8:46).

“For there is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not.” (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

“But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin.” (Galatians 3:22).

“For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all.” (Romans 11:32).

“So death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Romans 5:12).

“That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.” (Romans 3:19).

“If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” (I John 1:8).

“If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His Word is not in us.” (I John 1:10).

Sin is measured by the glory of God. All have sinned and come short of that glory. Sin is the transgression of the law. The glory of God was revealed in His holy, just and perfect law. Then God revealed His glory to Isaiah; and even that man of God cried out: “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.” Isaiah 6:5. The glory of God was revealed in the face of Jesus Christ, Who was the express image of God’s person and the effulgence of God’s glory. (Hebrews 1:1 and 2 - II Corinthians 4:6). Christ said, “he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.” “Father, glorify Thou Me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.” (John 14:9 - John 17:5).

When Simon Peter caught a glimpse of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, Simon cried out, “depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” (Luke 5:8). But Christ came into the world to save sinners and He did not depart; but received sinful Peter (I Timothy 1:15 - Luke 15:1 to 3).

When Paul saw the glory of the Lord in the holy law. He cried out “the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.” (Romans 7:14 to 20). “O wretched man that I am; who shall

deliver me from the body of this death?” (Romans 7:24). Then the risen Lord revealed to Paul His infinite, matchless, abounding grace, Paul then wrote, “by the grace of God I am what I am;” “Where sin abounded grace did much more (over) abound.” (I Corinthians 15:10 - Romans 5:20).

The Scriptures do not teach that all men have sinned alike but that all men have alike sinned.

“But they that measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves among themselves are not wise.” (II Corinthians 10:12).

If we would see what sinners we are by nature, let us measure ourselves by the glory of God at Sinai and in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Sin began with the anointed cherub when he said to God, “I will.” Then with Eve and then with Adam, and by Adam sin passed upon all.

But let us praise God for the truth of I Timothy 1:15: “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”

Then read the most wonderful news that man ever heard, in II Corinthians 5:21, the truth that the sinless Christ, on the cross, was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him; “to bring us unto God.” (I Peter 3:18).

God gave the law that sin might become exceeding sinful. (Romans 7:13). God gave His Son to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. (Hebrews 9:26). “In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace.” (Ephesians 1:7).

LESSON SIXTY

READ ACTS 28:25 TO 28 - JOHN 12:40
MATTHEW 13:14 AND 15 - ISAIAH 6:9 TO 12

THE SUDDEN ENDING OF ACTS

Note Acts 28:25 to 28; “And when they (the Jews) agreed not among themselves they departed after that Paul had spoken one word. Well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet unto our fathers. Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.”

These are the words given by God to His faithful servant Isaiah several centuries before Christ uttered the same words in Matthew 13:14 and 15. Read John 12:37 to 41. It was in Isaiah that we have the question, “Who hath believed our report?” (Isaiah 53).

Israel was in a very low spiritual state at the time Isaiah confessed for them. (Isaiah 6:5). Israel was a people of unclean lips. Then followed God’s awful judgment.

Later on they went deeper into sin until finally the awful sin of Manasseh, who reigned as the most wicked of all kings for fifty-five years. Read II Kings 21:1 and 2. Soon thereafter God

said, in so many words, “Politically, from now on, Israel, you are going to be under heathen government.” God turned Israel over to Gentiles’ political government. But spiritually Israel remained the children of the Kingdom. (Matthew 8:12).

In Act 28:25 to 28, where Isaiah 6:9 is quoted, God said, to Israel, in so many words, spiritually, from now on, you will be subject to Gentile government. This is the message of Romans 11:11 to 32.

This turning from Israel to Gentiles was gradual. (Acts 13:46 - Acts 18:6 - Romans 11:11 - Romans 11:25 and 26 - Romans 11:30). It marked the beginning of something very special for Gentiles.

There was a definite break with Israel in Romans 11:5 to 11 and a most radical change right after the pronouncement of Acts 28:25 to 28. Then God’s order was no longer “to the Jews first.” (Romans 1:16).

After that pronouncement Paul wrote in detail concerning the eternal purpose of God, the truth concerning the hope and calling and inheritance of members of the Body of Christ; God’s own secret, “the dispensation of the mystery.”

This mystery is referred to, before the close of Acts, in I Corinthians 2:6 and 7 - Romans 8:28 to 32 - Romans 16:25 and 26 - Romans 12:4 and 5. But the clear revelation was not written until after the close of Acts in Paul’s prison Epistles; Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, II Timothy (and perhaps two or three of his other Epistles were written after the close of Acts). After the pronouncement upon Israel quoted from Isaiah 6:9 to 12 God changed His spiritual program.

But now let us very seriously consider this question - What was the Lord’s purpose in bringing the Book of Acts to such a sudden ending?

In II Timothy 4:11, Paul wrote at the end of his ministry on earth, “Luke is with me.” Luke wrote the Book of Acts. In the last sixteen chapters of the Book of Acts Paul is mentioned more than 130 times. In fact, those sixteen chapters record only the sayings and acts of Paul and such other people as had dealings with the apostle Paul, who wrote about half of the Books of the New Testament Scriptures, and who used the first person pronoun in referring to himself about one thousand times.

The Epistles of Paul written after the close of Acts reveals the eternal purpose of God, God’s Masterpiece, the Church, one flesh with Christ, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, with different gifts and a different order. The Body of Ephesians and Colossians is the same Church as Romans 12:4 and 5 and I Corinthians 12:13, but with neither signs nor religion.

But surely there is good and sufficient reason why the Book of Acts suddenly ended several years before Paul’s earthly career ended and why the close of Acts marks the dividing line between Paul’s Epistles.

LESSON SIXTY-ONE

READ I CORINTHIANS 12:8 TO 11 - I CORINTHIANS 12:28
I CORINTHIANS 13:8 TO 13 - ACTS 28:31.

SIGNS AND GIFTS BEFORE AND AFTER ACTS 28

In I Corinthians 12:8 to 11 and I Corinthians 12:28 we learn that God gave certain gifts to members of the Church during the years covered by the Book of Acts. These gifts were exercised by the Corinthian saints who were neither unusually spiritual nor faithful, most of them were quite the opposite. (I Corinthians 3:1 to 8; I Corinthians 6:5 to 9).

What is the meaning of I Corinthians 13:8 that certain gifts would pass away? The most Scriptural dispensational explanation I know of is printed in a pamphlet by A. E. Bishop, published and distributed for 25 years by the Moody Bible Institute.

Read carefully and prayerfully some statements copied from this pamphlet:

“Is it the Spirit of God or Satan who attempts to revive the sign-gifts that were divinely retired after having fulfilled their purpose? Every widespread attempt to revive them has, without exception, resulted in confusion, divisions, injury and disgrace.”

“Is it the Spirit of God or Satan who turns the eyes of sincere Christians back to Pentecost and away from the goal placed before them in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians?”

“In the latest Epistles of Paul not only is it noticeable that the sign gifts are nowhere in manifestation, but a different order is brought forth by the Holy Spirit for the correction of prevailing hobbies and fanaticisms.”

“A careful study of the Epistles, especially of the latest Epistles of Paul, which give the normal course of the Church during the present dispensation, would dismount-all from their hobbies, eliminate the last vestige of Judaism from their lives and teachings, and would adjust things in general, placing secondary things in their place and first things where they belong.”

“If we give heed to this fact, it will be easy for us to see later on why God, who is sovereign in the giving of signs, afterwards retired completely the sign gifts.”

“In contrast with the sign-gifts of I Corinthians 12, limited to a portion of the believers and operative only during the Book of Acts period, let us note the non-sign gifts of Ephesians 4:10.”

“The fact that the Bible does not give a hint of the manifestation of the sign-gifts after the close of the Book of Acts, must carry convincing evidence to the careful student who compares Scripture with Scripture, that they have been retired.”

What is your answer to the first two questions asked by the writer of this pamphlet entitled, “Tongues, Signs and Visions Not God’s Order For Today?” This answer, of course, is Satan and not the Holy Spirit. In another paragraph in this same pamphlet the writer states that the normal course of the Church is set forth in Paul’s Epistles written after the close of the Book of Acts and he suggests that, which every steward of the mysteries of God (I Corinthians 4:1 to 5) should know, the fact that all other Scriptures must be interpreted, applied and appropriated in the light of the different and new order, the signless and If religionless” program in Paul’s Epistles written after the close of the Acts period, in which now abide, faith, hope and love. (I Corinthians 13:13).

Read carefully I Corinthians 12:28 what God set in the Church and ask why the carnal Corinthians exercised those gifts and they are not exercised today by the most faithful and spiritual.

Note again in the “Bishop” pamphlet: “Also after careful restudies of the Book of Acts and of the Epistles written before its close, I am convinced that those who contend for a purely kingdom dispensation covering the Book of Acts period are as much deceived by Satan as are those who contend that the sign gifts are still in the Church and would be in manifestation everywhere if God’s people were in a healthy spiritual state and exercising faith to that end.”

LESSON SIXTY-TWO

READ MATTHEW 4:23 AND 24 - MATTHEW 8:16 - MATTHEW 10:5 TO 8
LUKE 9:6 - ACTS 5:15 AND 16 - ACTS 19:11 AND 12 - I CORINTHIANS 12:8 TO 11.

SPIRITUAL HEALING OF THE BODY

In Matthew 8:16 we read that Christ healed all that were sick. More than thirty years later Paul wrote, concerning a faithful servant; “Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.” (II Timothy 4:20). What a difference! Sinners were healed. A faithful saint was left sick. Paul wrote this to Timothy, and he also wrote to the same Timothy: “Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine oft sicknesses.” (I Timothy 5:23).

Every imaginable sickness is mentioned in the spiritual healing by Christ. (Matthew 4:23 and 24 and Matthew 8:16). Christ commanded and empowered His disciples to do the same supernatural work, and they did. (Matthew 10:5 to 8 and Luke 9:6). The diseases were indeed divers and the healing in almost every case instantaneous.

Then note what Peter did in Acts 5:15 and 16: “Inasmuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

This wasn’t any hit-and-miss proposition. He healed EVERY ONE. There were no misses. Neither were two days, two weeks or two months required for the healing. They healed on the spot.

Then note what Paul did: “So that from his body were brought; unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.” (Acts 19:12).

So we have instantaneous, spiritual healing by work, hands, shadow, aprons and handkerchiefs, and a slower process by wine in the stomach and a faithful servant left sick. Then the elders of James 5:14 smeared with oil. And remember no woman could qualify as an elder, the husband of one wife. (Titus 1:5 to 7 - I Timothy 3:2). In John 9:1 to 6 it was clay and a pool of water. Read John 9:1 to 25. This healed man did not know the Son of God.

The carnal fruitless Corinthians of the “Acts” period had the gift of miracle healing (I Corinthians 12:9). Did they do it with hands or shadows or aprons or handkerchiefs or clay or oil or wine or just the spoken work? Which should we use today?

We should not try to do spiritual healing of physical diseases, with the slogan, “Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday and for ever,” and then say that the person must accept the blood of Christ first for soul salvation, before he can have the atonement for body healing.

With the exception of the palsied man in Mark 2:1 to 12, Christ generally healed the body first. After Christ had healed the blind man Christ said, “Dost thou believe in the Son of God?” (John 9:35). Note the answer in 9:36: “. . . Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?” Some, whom the Lord healed did not receive Him as Saviour.

God is sovereign and omnipotent. All Christians believe in Divine healing in harmony with the Scriptures, rightly divided, elective healing in this dispensation of grace, but those who obey II Timothy 2:15 do not believe in the religious healers of the day.

Read Philippians 2:26 to 30 - I Timothy 5:23 - II Timothy 4:20.

These three Scriptures furnish for the Christian the key to Divine healing of the body in this age and economy of grace. Here we have three faithful saints. There were none more faithful than Timothy. He was instructed to take a physical remedy. His sickness seemed to be a chronic case. Earnest prayer was made for Epaphroditus, and God had mercy on him and raised him up to health. Trophimus was left sick. This is elective healing. Many of God's most faithful saints have trusted Him and His elders, but did not get well.

LESSON SIXTY-THREE

READ HEBREWS 6:19 TO 7:28 AND HEBREWS 8:4 - GENESIS 14:18 AND 19
PSALMS 110:4 - JOHN 17:1 TO 25.

MELCHISEDEC AND CHRIST

In Hebrews 8:4 we read that if the Lord Jesus Christ were on earth He would not be a priest. But in Hebrews 6:20 we read that He has entered into heaven, made a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec. He has entered within the veil. He entered by His own blood. (Hebrews 9:12). He appears in God's presence for believers. (Hebrews 9:24).

The Lord Jesus was made under the law (Galatians 4:4). "Our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood" (Hebrews 7:14).

In Numbers 1:50 we read, "thou, Moses, shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle." "These are the names of the sons of Aaron the priests." (Numbers 3:2) "Aaron and his sons keeping the charge of the sanctuary - and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death". (Numbers 3:38).

Levi was one of Jacob's (Israel's) sons. So was Judah. Aaron and God's earthly priests, under the law, descended from Levi. The Lord Jesus Christ is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." (Revelation 5:5). Christ could not have had a place as an earthly priest. And every such priest today is a usurper and a false priest spared only by the grace of God.

There was a priest by the name of Melchizedek (Melchisedec), who lived several centuries before Aaron and his sons were appointed priests over the sanctuary. There is something mysterious about Melchizedek. We have a statement about him in just two verses in Genesis 14:18 and 19: "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the most high God." "And He blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth."

Now concerning Christ, we read in Psalm 110:4: "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Melchisedec is from two Hebrew words meaning "king" and "righteousness." He was king of Salem, priest of the most high God. (Hebrews 7:1), "Salem" means "peace." "King of Righteousness" - "King of Peace."

Now note Hebrews 7:3: "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually."

In the twelfth chapter of Nehemiah we learn how careful the Israelites were to keep the record of their priests for hundreds of years. They knew their fathers and mothers right back to Aaron and Levi “because the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.”

The priests of God presented man to God. Only Christ in this day of grace can do this. The preachers of grace present God to man in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Abram was an uncircumcised Gentile when he paid tithes to Melchisedec. That was more than four hundred years before Moses appointed and anointed Aaron and his Levites to be priests. So four hundred years before the first Levitical priest, Levi was in the loins of Abraham. (Hebrews 7:4 and 10).

Aaron, with his offerings, was a type and figure of Christ and His once-for-all sacrifice on the cross. But Christ, without beginning of days, nor end of life, is a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron (Hebrews 7:3 and 11). Aaron and his successors died, but Christ has an unchangeable Priesthood (Hebrews 7:23 and 24) “Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Hebrews 7:25.

See the Son, Who is consecrated for evermore (Hebrews 7:28), doing His work of intercession in the Seventeenth of John.

In the Thirteenth of John we see the High Priest as the believer’s Advocate and Washer of feet. Having loved His own which were in the world He loved them unto the end. (John 13:1). In Hebrews 7:25 He is able to save them all the way to the end (uttermost). Read I John 1:7 to 2:2.

LESSON SIXTY-FOUR

READ LUKE 7:1 TO 12 MARK 15:39 - ACTS 10:1 TO 5
ACTS 10:22 - ACTS 13:5 TO 15.

THREE ROMAN OFFICIALS

Carefully read the Scriptures listed for this lesson. We learn in these Scriptures that so far as there is any record in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the Roman official, in Luke 7:1 to 12, was the first Gentile man, if not the only Gentile man, to whom the Lord ministered while He was here on earth as Jesus of Nazareth. It cannot be dogmatically stated that Christ ministered to only one Gentile man and one Gentile woman (Mark 7:25 to 33). But it is significant that these two instances only are mentioned, and that the Lord Jesus most emphatically and positively told His apostles “go not into the way of the Gentiles.” (Matthew 10:5). Christ words were “I am not sent but unto Israel.” (Matthew 15:24).

There are some who believe that the centurion of Luke 7:1 to 12 is the same centurion who witnessed the crucifixion of Christ, and said “surely He was the Son of God.” (Mark 15:39). But this cannot be said with absolute certainty.

There are some Christians who even believe that the centurion, of Luke 7:1 to 12, was Cornelius. But this too seems to be speculation based upon a comparison of Luke 7:5 and Acts 10:22, rather than by recorded fact. Note what is said concerning the centurion in Luke 7:5 -

“For He loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.” He took his place in subjection to Israel.

Then note concerning Cornelius, in Acts 10:22 and Acts 10:4. “And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews.” “Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.” The first centurion was of great faith and asked an Israelite to give his petition to Christ. (Read the story in Luke 7:1 to 12).

Both of these Roman officials had more than respect for Israel, Israel’s religion and Israel’s God. The first Gentile knew the Gentile’s place of subjection to Israel. (Luke 7:3 and 6). The second (Cornelius) knew that Israel had the true God and the true religion and he was even willing to bow unto Peter. (Acts 10:25). Cornelius was the first Gentile to whom Peter preached, and Acts 15:7 is very significant. Peter said the Gentiles by MY MOUTH should hear the gospel. (Acts 15:7). Then when Peter said this he agreed with Paul and others that he (Peter) would preach to the Jews. (Galatians 2:9).

Consider the words, “let the children (Israel) first be filled” when the Lord Jesus blessed the Gentile woman (Mark 7:27), and the words “the children of the kingdom (Israel) shall be cast out,” when Christ blessed the Gentile man (Matthew 8:12). It was shown that there was really dispensational teaching in these two “Gentile” exceptions. Read Christ’s statement in Matthew 15:24 - Luke 19:9 and Luke 13:16. In the Book of Acts we find a transitional period during which “Israel is first filled” and then “Israel is cast out.” - Acts 3:26 - Acts 13:46 - Acts 28:25 to 28 - Romans 11:15.

Some of this is told in Acts 13:45 and 46. And it is in this chapter we read of the first recorded Gentile, by name at least, saved under Paul’s ministry. He, too, was a Roman official, Sergius Paul, a Roman deputy. Saul the preacher also became “Paul.” We may be sure that a Gentile name was a stigma in the eyes of the religious Jews. Certainly we have the beginning of a very definite turning point when the Roman official, Paul, believed what Saul preached to him, because blindness from God fell upon the Jew. “Bar-Jesus.” This was indeed a dispensational miracle. Read it prayerfully and carefully in Acts 13:5 to 13 and compare Acts 13:5 with Romans 11:11 and 11:25. “Bar-jesus” blinded by God spoke of Israel blinded by God in Romans 11:5 to 9. This doctrine should cause every Gentile to do what the Roman official did; accept Christ.

LESSON SIXTY-FIVE

READ JUDGES 7:1 TO 8 - JUDGES 7:16 TO 21 - II CORINTHIANS 4:5 TO 7

GIDEON’S THREE HUNDRED

In the seventh chapter of Judges we find a very interesting account of the defeat of God’s enemies by three hundred Israelites under the leadership of faithful and courageous Gideon.

Of course Gideon gave God the glory; for the Israelites cried, “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon,” (Judges 7:20).

In Ephesians 6:17 and Hebrews 4:12 the Word of God is called the Sword of the Spirit and described as sharper than any two edged sword.

There were at first 32,000 Israelites. But the Lord told Gideon that if his men should be victorious over the Midianites, with a host, they would take the glory unto themselves. (Judges 7:21). So 22,000, with fearful hearts, left Gideon. Then God had Gideon eliminate 9700 of his men, selecting those who did not stoop down to drink water.

Then note God's word to Gideon in Judges 7:7: . . . "by the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand." The Midianites were as numerous as grasshoppers. (Judges 7:12).

We note in Judges 7:15 that Gideon worshipped, and "He divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers." "When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." "And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried; "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." "And they stood every man in his place round about the camp; and all the host ran, and cried, and fled." (Judges 16 and 18, 20 and 21).

The Israelites had their lamps in earthen vessels, in their left hands, near their hearts. They brake the vessels, held the lamps in their left hands and with their right hands put the trumpets of their mouths and cried "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." God's enemies fled defeated.

Note God's will concerning members of the Body of Christ in this age of grace: "Be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, with out rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. Holding forth the Word of life." Philippians 2:15 and 16.

Then Christians are "to show forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness unto His marvelous light." (I Peter 2:9).

Surely we can see how the weapons of Gideon and his army, and their method of attack, picture the ministry of Christians as described in II Corinthians 4:5 to 7: "For we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us."

God's enemies today are many, but we read this truth in Romans 5:10: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

The trumpets of Gideon and his followers spoke of Christians preaching Christ. We have the light of II Corinthians 4:6 in pitchers, earthen vessels, our bodies.

Christians are to live Christ and preach Christ and to give out the Sword of the Spirit.

LESSON SIXTY-SIX

READ ROMANS 9:4 AND 5 - ISAIAH 41:8 AND 9 AND 14
ISAIAH 43:1 TO 7, 10 AND 15 ISAIAH 44:21 AND ISAIAH 45:17.

THE NATION ISRAEL

The word “Israel”, (“Israelites”), is found about 2570 times in the Bible. The name “Israel” was given to Jacob, in Genesis 32:28 and Genesis 35:10: “Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but ISRAEL: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.”

Jacob (Israel) called the place where his name was changed “Peniel” (meaning the face of God); for Jacob saw God face to face, and yet his life was preserved. Something there happened to Jacob’s thigh, because God touched the hollow of Jacob’s thigh. Some of God’s servants prevailed with God before Jacob became “Israel”; but let us know that from Adam to Abram, Isaac and Jacob, the human race was not divided into Jews and Gentiles. The word “Jew” first referred to Judah and his descendants, and was not used until many years after Jacob became Israel.

We learn when the word “Israel” was first used in the Bible. The meaning of the word “El” is “God”, “strength”. Israel means “power with God” or “prevailing with God.”

Jacob, or Israel, was the son of Isaac and the grandson of Abraham. Judah was Jacob’s son. In Romans 11:28 Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are called “the fathers”. God confirmed with Isaac and with Jacob (Israel) the covenants that He made with Abraham. (Genesis 28:13 - Genesis 35:12 to 27).

We learn in Exodus 32:13 that Moses pled God’s covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to keep God’s wrath from being visited upon Israel. God redeemed Israel from Egypt, because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (Exodus 2:24).

In Romans 11:26 to 29 we learn that after this age of grace has come to an end, Israel’s Messiah is coming out of Zion to deliver Israel: Because of God’s covenants; “For the fathers’ sake.” In Romans 11:29 we read, “the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” So Israel will surely be elected and saved. “For the fathers’ sake.” For the same reason that God saved Israel in Exodus 2:24, and Exodus 32:13, God will gather Israel from among the Gentiles and plant them in their own land. (Jeremiah 23:7 and 8 - Amos 9:11 to 15).

Note Exodus 1:5: “And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls; for Joseph was in Egypt already.”

Here we read of the birth of the nation Israel, about 1700 B. C., in fulfillment of Genesis 12:2, “And I will make of thee a great nation.” Note Hebrews 11:12: “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.”

In the “Isaiah” verses we listed above, we learn that Israel was created for God’s glory, to be God’s witnesses. Note Romans 9:4 and 5: “Who are Israelites? to whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God and the promises: Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.”

Here we learn that Israel, and not the Gentiles, has given to us the great spiritual and eternal blessings. As Paul said in Romans 15:27, “Gentiles have been made partakers of Israel’s spiritual things.” Then Gentiles obtained mercy, because of Israel’s unbelief. (Romans 11:30).

In John 4:22 our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who was an Israelite, said, “salvation is of the Jews.” Gentiles receive the “kingdom” blessings, with the rise of Israel; and “grace” blessings, with the fall of Israel. (Romans 11:11 to 15 and Romans 11:30).

Israel gave us our Bible and our Saviour. Israel is being miraculously preserved for a glory on earth that will surpass Israel's former glory. (Isaiah 62:1 to 4).

So then God says to Gentiles, "boast not against the branches." "Because of unbelief they were broken off." "Be not high minded, but fear, If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee." (Romans 11:18 to 23). The Jews, in this age of grace, are to obtain mercy by the testimony of Gentile Christians. (Romans 11:31).

LESSON SIXTY-SEVEN

READ ACTS 22:17 TO 21 - ROMANS 15:16 - GALATIANS 1:15 AND 16
ROMANS 11:13 - EPHESIANS 3:8 - I TIMOTHY 2:7 - II TIMOTHY 1:11.

PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES

Note the testimony of the apostle Paul in Romans 11:13 and I Timothy 2:7: "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office." "Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not,) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity."

In Acts 22:17 to 21 the apostle Paul told how he saw, in a vision, the Lord Jesus Christ in the temple in Jerusalem; and at that time Christ said to Paul: "Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." (Acts 22:21).

With this command of Christ, read also Paul's testimony in Galatians 1:15 and 16: "But when it pleased God, Who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen (Gentiles); immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."

From these Scriptures and many others, every student of the Scriptures should know that the apostle Paul was the Lord's chosen messenger to the Gentiles, as was no other apostle.

This should cause us to stop and consider what was in the mind of the Lord Jesus when He told the other apostles (Peter and the Eleven) to "disciple all nations." (Matthew 28:19 and 20). If that meant that the Twelve were to go all over the world preaching the gospel of grace, was not Paul rather presumptuous and egotistical when he called himself "the apostle of the Gentiles?"

Now read Romans 15:16 and Ephesians 3:8: "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit." "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

After reading all of these Scriptures surely we should know that Galatians 2:9 means something more than that the twelve apostles should go to the Jews with the great commission of Matthew 28:19 and 20, and Paul should go to the Gentiles. Note Galatians 2:7: "But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter."

Now read Acts 20:24 - Galatians 1:11 and 12 and I Corinthians 3:10. In these Scriptures we learn that Christ, by special revelation from heaven gave Paul His "grace" gospel and ap-

pointed him to be His general foreman, (His wise masterbuilder) during the period of grace when God is building-up the Body of Christ. Read I Corinthians 3:10 and Ephesians 4:9 to 13.

It is more than noteworthy that in the Book of Acts we find no record of any missionary journeys of the twelve apostles to the Gentiles outside of the land of the Jews. Several of Paul's are recorded.

Let us carefully and prayerfully consider several other important and significant facts. 1 - Peter declared in Acts 10:28 that it was not lawful for the Twelve to go to Gentiles about 7 years after Pentecost. 2 - Then one mouth of the Twelve preached to Gentiles (Acts 15:7 - Acts 10:32 to 34), but not because of Israel's unbelief and fall. (Romans 11:30 and Romans 11:11). 3 - Note that the "Church" leaders at Jerusalem objected to Peter's eating with Gentile saints. (Galatians 2:10 to 14).

After Paul, in II Timothy 1:9 and 10, set forth God's eternal purpose and grace he added that he was the apostle of the Gentiles. Then in II Timothy 4:16 to 18 Paul told us how Christ miraculously preserved him, so that the preaching, by him, might be fully known unto the Gentiles.

Peter with the Kingdom Keys, preached to the Gentile household (Cornelius and his house). (Acts 15:7). But then Peter and his associates were sent to the Jews (Galatians 2:9). Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles (Romans 11:13).

LESSON SIXTY-EIGHT

READ I TIMOTHY 1:1 - EPHESIANS 2:12 - ROMANS 15:13

I THESSALONIANS 4:13 TO 18 - TITUS 2:13

AS OTHERS WHICH HAVE NO HOPE

We read in Psalms 116:15: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

But how about the death of those who are not God's saints? The answer is Hebrews 9:27 and John 3:36: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

There is nothing precious in the death of an unsaved sinner, except a precious soul is forever lost.

In I Timothy 1:1 we read that Jesus Christ is our hope. In Romans 15:13 we read that God is "the God of hope." In I Peter 1:3 to 9 we learn that by faith in the resurrected Christ believing sinners are begotten into a living hope. The ascended, interceding Christ is for the believer an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, a hope (Hebrews 6:18 to 20). Christ is within the veil, appearing in the presence of God for us, to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God through Him. (Hebrews 6:20 to 7:3 - Hebrews 7:25 - Hebrews 7:24). Read John 13:1 .

The Greek word translated "hope" is "ELPIZO," (the verb) - "ELPIS", (the noun). This is not our expression "I hope so," in which there is an element of doubt. "ELPIZO" means to expect with confidence. There is assurance for all who trust and rest in the perfect work of the perfect Christ, in harmony with Philippians 3:3, "with no confidence in the flesh"; a "know-so" salvation. (I John 5:13).

The adults of the human race are divided into two groups, a very large group of “dead sinners”, and a much smaller group of “living saints.” Read Ephesians 2:1 to 9.

We have the awful pathetic predicament of the “dead sinners” in Ephesians 2:12: “That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.” “Alienated from the life of God.” (Ephesians 4:18).

This should be enough to startle any “dead sinner”, whether he is a moral, religious, churchgoing “dead sinner” or an immoral, ungodly sinner, in or out of jail.

“Without God” is “ATHEOS.” Why is the sinner an “ATHEIST?” Not because he is a blaspheming infidel, who denies the existence of a Supreme Being, but because he is “without Christ.” “Without Christ” means “without hope.” There is only one way from unrighteousness to righteousness, from Satan to God, from earth to heaven. Christ and Calvary. (John 14:6 - Hebrews 10:19 and 20 - I Peter 3:18).

Now note I Thessalonians 4:13 and 5:9: “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, EVEN AS OTHERS WHICH HAVE NO HOPE.” “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.”

In I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18 we have in detail what we read in Titus 2:13 and Colossians 3:4: “Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, our Saviour Jesus Christ.” “When Christ, Who is our Life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.”

Then for those who have no hope, who refuse, or fail, to accept the eternal redemption obtained by Christ and His shed blood (Hebrews 9:12) we read what Christ’s coming will mean: “Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.” Christ died and rose again to save us from the wrath to come. I Thessalonians 1:9 and 10. No Christ, no hope.

LESSON SIXTY-NINE

READ MATTHEW 27:22 - JOHN 16:7 TO 10
HEBREWS 10:26 TO 33 - JOHN 3:16 TO 19

A GREAT QUESTION

In this message we are to consider one of the most important questions ever asked by any individual, the question of Judge Pilate in Matthew 27:22: “What shall I do then with Jesus Which is called Christ?” Pilate washed his hands and was determined to release the Prince of Life (Acts 3:13 to 15), but he did not. (Matthew 27:24 to 26).

Judge Felix trembled when Paul preached the wrath of God to him and deliverance by faith in Christ; but his response was, “when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.” (Acts 24:25). We sincerely trust that he did.

Then his friend, Agrippa—more than a judge—acknowledged that he was almost persuaded to be a Christian, after hearing Paul preach concerning the Christ Who was delivered by Pilate to be crucified, but Whom God raised from the dead.

In John 3:16 we learn what God did with Christ; and that meant all the disgrace and agony of Calvary. The little word “so” in John 3:16, is explained at the place called Calvary. God loved us. How much? “So” loved the world that He gave Christ to die.

You know what the lad said when he heard John 3:16, he said “God said it” - “Christ did it” - “I believe it” - “that settles it.” He believed Titus 1:2; that God, Which cannot lie, promised us eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. He believed Romans 6:23; “the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” He believed John 3:18, “He that believeth on Him (Christ) is not condemned.” He believed John 3:17: “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”

Christ said no unkind words to sinners who were willing to acknowledge their guilt and receive His forgiveness.

In John 6:29 we learn that the sinner’s first work is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. This is in harmony with Romans 4:4 and 5.

We learn in John 16:7 to 9 what the Holy Spirit does for sinners. He convicts them of sin; because they believe not on Christ.

Christ suffered for sins once, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. (I Peter 3:18). When Christ loved us and gave Himself for us, He cried “finished”; and then and there put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. (Hebrews 9:26 - Titus 2:14).

We have ten thousand spiritual problems to solve, including human weaknesses, immoral habits, and our responsibility to the Father, Son, Holy Spirit and our fellowmen.

But it is worse than foolish to try and solve any of these problems and questions of immoral habits until we have become new creatures by doing our first all-important duty in answer to the question, “What shall I do with Jesus Which is Christ?” The wise thing for any and every person to say is, “I will and do hereby accept Christ and His perfect redemptive work.” Then “I can do all things through Christ Who strengtheneth me,” “Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Philippians 4:13 - Galatians 2:20).

Then God says, “Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (II Timothy 2:19).

With the question of Pilate, remember the question of Christ to them who rejected Him, “how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (Matthew 23:33). “The damnation of hell” is not a pleasant future to contemplate. Note two other questions: “how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?”; “if the righteous scarcely be saved where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” (Hebrew 2:2 and 3 - I Peter 4:18). Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”

LESSON SEVENTY

READ JEREMIAH 5:24 - JEREMIAH 3:3 - HOSEA 6:3 - LEVITICUS 26:4
DEUTERONOMY 11:14 - DEUTERONOMY 28:12 AND 24 - ZECHARIAH 10:1
ZECHARIAH 14:17 AND 18 - JAMES 5:7 - JOEL 2:23 TO 28.

THE FORMER AND LATTER RAIN

AND THE REIGN OF GRACE

In Jeremiah 5:24 we read of “the Lord our God that giveth rain, both the former and the latter in His season: He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.”

In Hosea 6:1 to 3 we learn that if God’s people follow on to know Him, “He shall come unto us as the latter and former rain unto the earth.”

This is in harmony with God’s promised reward to Israel, for faithfulness and obedience, in Deuteronomy 11:14 and 15: “I will give you the rain of your land in His due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full.”

This is confirmed in Deuteronomy 28:12. But if disobedient, God said He would shut up the heaven and give no rain. (verse 17). This is confirmed in Deuteronomy 28:24.

In Jeremiah 3:3 the Lord told His prophet that because of Israel’s sin He had withheld showers and the latter rain.

In II Chronicles 6:26 and 27, we learn that because of Israel’s sin no rain came from God; but confession brought rain.

Surely we have no Scriptural authority to spiritualize James 5:7 to mean Holy Spirit baptism where the former and latter rain is mentioned in connection with the second coming of Christ, and the precious fruit of the earth.

Now note Zechariah 10:1 and Zechariah 14:17: “Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.” “And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them, shall be no rain.”

The Hebrew word “yowreh” translated “former” has special reference to the flow of water, as sprinkling. “Malgowsh” translated “latter” has special reference to rain; perhaps the spring rains. Surely from these Scriptures, we would not interpret the former and latter rain to be first the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, when Peter and the Eleven stood up on the day of Pentecost, in Acts Two, and said, “this is that;” and then the latter rain, the mighty out-pouring of the Holy Spirit upon Israel after this age of grace has come to an end and the completed Body of Christ has been removed to heaven.

Let us carefully and prayerfully read Joel 2:23 and 24: “Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil.”

There is nothing in the context to give any Christian the Scriptural right to support the doctrine taught by some today, that the former rain, (Holy Spirit baptism), fell on the day of Pentecost, and the latter out-pouring of the Spirit is falling on the twentieth century Pentecostals. The out-pouring of the Holy Spirit is prophesied in Joel 2:28 and 29, and it is true that water sometimes speaks of the Holy Spirit. (John 7:38 and 39). But Joel knew nothing of this present age, this present dispensation and reign of grace. So Joel prophesied nothing concerning the Body of Christ. (Colossians 1:24 to 28). So Joel 2:23 to 28 and Acts 2:16 to 22 in Israel’s Kingdom program must be studied in the light of the reign and dispensation of grace. (Ephesians 3:1 to 15 - Romans 5:21)

LESSON SEVENTY-ONE

READ ROMANS 10:21 - EXODUS 15:24 - EXODUS 17:3 - EXODUS 32:1 TO 10
II KINGS 17:14; 20 TO 23 - II KINGS 23:27 - JEREMIAH 17:1 - LUKE 13:34 AND 35
MATTHEW 23:27 TO 39 - LUKE 23:34 - ACTS 3:26 - ACTS 13:46.

HOW LONG WAS ISRAEL'S ALL DAY LONG?

Note Romans 10:21: "But to Israel He saith. All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."

Our question is a most important one for every Christian who earnestly desires to be a faithful steward of the mysteries of God, in obedience to I Corinthians 4:1 to 3, and a workman who is unashamed because he "rightly divides the Word of God."

"Israel" is truly one of the keys to the Scriptures. Much of the Bible has to do with the rise and the fall of Israel, that is, Israel the head, and Israel, the tail. (Deuteronomy 28:13 and 44).

In Deuteronomy 28 we read of Israel above other nations and then, because of sin, beneath other nations. When Israel is on top, spiritually, the gospel of the kingdom is preached and the Gentiles are in subjection to Israel. When Israel is down, as God's religious nation, the gospel of the grace of God is preached and the Gentiles are not in subjection to Israel, as is the case during this present age and economy of grace (Romans 11:11 and 13 - Romans 10:12 - Ephesians 2:13 to 19).

If Israel's fall brought God's reign of grace to and for Gentiles, when did Israel fall? Certainly not when Peter, in Acts 3:26, said "to you first, Israel," and certainly not completely when Paul, in Acts 13:40 and 41, said, "Israel, beware, lest something awful happens to you," and not before Acts 13:46, when Paul said, "unto you first, Israel."

Israel was born in affliction in Egypt. Israel was supernaturally preserved and delivered. So they are today. But in spite of God's wonderful favor and mighty power in Israel's behalf, they began to murmur, complain and rebel right after they were delivered from Egypt. (Exodus 15:24 and 17:3).

Next they were worshipping a golden calf. God spoke of smiting them as a disobedient, stiff-necked people. But remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God's gifts and calling are without repentance. (Exodus 32:1 to 10 - Romans 11:26 to 29).

For forty years and then for several centuries God suffered their manners. (Acts 13:18). Then from King Jeroboam over Israel until Manasseh over Judah, the sin of Israel is told in Jeremiah 17:1: "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars."

Then note II Kings 17:23 and II Kings 23:27: "The Lord removed Israel out of His sight." "So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day." "And the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there."

Christ told the story of God's stiff-necked, gainsaying, disobedient people in Luke 13:34: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee,

how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not.”

Then followed the terrible denunciation of Christ in Matthew 23:27 to 39 and Matthew 21:33 to 46. Christ called them “serpents” and “vipers.”

Then they killed the Prince of Life. (Acts 3:12 to 15 - Acts 7:51 to 56). Christ on the cross prayed for their forgiveness. (Luke 23:34).

Then they were no longer “serpents” and “vipers.” They were “children.” (Acts 3:25 and 26). Israel’s “all day long” had not yet ended on the day of Pentecost. They were first. (Acts 3:26). Then Israel resisted the Holy Spirit and committed the additional sin of I Thessalonians 2:13 to 15. (Acts 7:51 to 56 - Acts 5:29 to 32 - Acts 13:40 and 41 - Acts 13:45 and 46).

After that something happened to Israel that brought great blessing to Gentiles. (Romans 11:25). Israel’s “all day long” did not end with Matthew 12:30 to 32 or Matthew 23:38 and 39 or John 12:37 to 41. For the end of their day read Acts 13:46 - Acts 18:6 - Acts 28:25 to 28 and Romans 11:5 to 15.

LESSON SEVENTY-TWO

READ EXODUS 25:17 - EXODUS 26:34 - EXODUS 30:6 - EXODUS 40:26
LEVITICUS 14 TO 17 - EXODUS 25:22 - MATTHEW 7:12.

“THE GOLDEN RULE”

This is a study of “The Golden Rule” and “The Golden Mercy-Seat.” “And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold; two cubits and a half the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold.” (Exodus 25:17). “And thou shalt put the mercy-seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy place.” (Exodus 26:34). “Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercyseat, and before the mercy-seat.” (Leviticus 16:15). “And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.” Exodus 22:25. The mercy-seat was not under the law, but the law was under it. God is both just and the Justifier. (Romans 3:24 to 26).

We know that Matthew 7:12 has been called “The Golden Rule.” Concerning the Golden Rule, note the statement “This is the law.”

With this let us read Galatians 3:10; the curse of God upon those under the law. Referring to the law, note what Peter said to his fellow-disciples in Acts 15:10: “Why tempt ye God to put a yoke on the necks of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?” Now James 2:10; “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”

Then concerning the law note what Paul said in the Seventh chapter of Romans: “for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do.” (Romans 7:15). “For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” (Romans 7:19 and 20). Because of inherent,

indwelling sin the natural man is not subject to the law of God. The spiritual man, by the law of the Spirit of life, can walk in the Spirit and fulfill the righteousness of the law. (Romans 8:4).

We read in Exodus 26:34 that the mercy-seat of pure gold was placed on top of the ark. The Ten Commandments, the law, was placed in the ark. The ark and the mercy-seat were behind the veil, in the most holy place in the tabernacle. Note Hebrews 9:7: "But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." Christ entered within the veil (heaven) by His blood. (Hebrews 9:12).

God is just and the Justifier of every one who trusts in the blood propitiation of Jesus Christ (Romans 3:24 to 27). The law is just. (Romans 7:12). True justice knows no mercy. But because of Christ and Calvary God can be just and merciful and do what He could not do by the deeds of the law; justify the believing law-breaker. (Romans 3:19 and 20 - Romans 8:3 - Acts 13:39).

Remember the law was under the golden mercy-seat. The law worketh wrath. (Romans 4:15). The Golden Rule is the law. Christ made peace through the blood of His cross. (Colossians 1:20). Read Galatians 2:21 and 3:21.

The law condemned the Pharisee. The bloodsprinkled mercy-seat justified the publican, who went down justified. (Luke 18:10 to 14). The law is the ministration of condemnation (II Corinthians 3:9). Believers are justified by the blood of Christ (Romans 5:7 to 10). In Christ Jesus there is no condemnation. (Romans 8:1 - 32 to 35 - John 3:18).

The place of safety is not under the law, but under the blood and under grace, (Romans 6:14), "in Christ." Think of the foolish, religious person who prefers "under the law" to "in Christ."

Then those who have been to the blood sprinkled mercy-seat (Calvary) and there received the Divine Nature want to keep the Golden Rule by yielding to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus and obeying Romans 8:4.

Sinners, though moral, religious, conscientious and sincere, cannot get near to salvation and heaven by struggling with the golden rule. The blood sprinkled mercy-seat first.

LESSON SEVENTY-THREE

READ JOHN 10:28 TO 30 - ROMANS 8:28 TO 39 - PHILIPPIANS 1:6 - ROMANS 6:23
I CORINTHIANS 11:32 - JOHN 6:37 TO 39 - JOHN 17:2 AND 12

SECURE IN CHRIST

According to Romans 6:23, the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. We read these words of the Lord Jesus Christ in John 6:37 and 39: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." "And this is the Father's will Which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

This is in harmony with the words of the Lord Jesus in John 17:2 and 12: "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him." "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest Me

I have kept, and none of them is lost; but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.”

If God gives the believers to Christ and all those given shall come unto Christ and Christ will in no wise cast them out, but gives them eternal life and they shall never perish, because the Father does not want any of them to be lost, surely all that the Father gives to Christ will be with Him and behold His glory in answer to Christ’s prayer in John 17:24.

God is not a merchant offering eternal life for sale. God is a very gracious King and offers eternal life without money and without price, except the price which Christ paid for the sinner’s redemption. (Hebrews 9:12 and I Corinthians 6:16 to 19). Christ suffered on the cross to bring us to God. (I Peter 3:18). We are brought to God by believing; not by religion or by working.

Because of sectarianism and tradition, because of failure to rightly divide the Word of truth, and because most of the members of the human race are incurably religious and many do not know the difference between being religiously moral and being spiritual, it is almost impossible to persuade sinners to believe Ephesians 2:8 and 9. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast.” This is “grace” salvation. It is thus stated in II Timothy 1:9, “God Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”

God is truly “the God of all grace.” (I Peter 5:10). God, for nineteen hundred years, has been offering salvation, by grace, as His free gift, to any and every sinner, religious and otherwise, who will meet Him at Calvary and receive His Son, Who put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And then God will pay well for all of the service rendered by the redeemed sinner in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Colossians 3:17 - I Corinthians 3:14 - 1 Corinthians 15:58). Christians are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.” (Ephesians 2:10). Salvation is without human works or endeavor or merit or worthiness, but Divine rewards are for service and sacrifice and suffering in the name of Christ.

No one is saved by working for salvation either before or after being saved. Christ said, “I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish.” (John 10:28 to 30). No person and no thing can separate the believer from the love of God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:35 to 39).

God foreknew, predestinated, called, justified and glorified. (Romans 8:28 to 34 - Ephesians 1:4 to 7 - Ephesians 1:11). Therefore, the believer cannot be condemned with the world. (I Corinthians 11:32). He may be saved, so as by fire, as were some of the carnal saints at Corinth. (I Corinthians 3:11 to 15). He may grieve the Holy Spirit, but by Him he is sealed unto the day of redemption. (I Corinthians 6:5 to 9 - Ephesians 4:30). “Shall, never perish” are Christ’s words. “No condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1). THE FREE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH CHRIST.

LESSON SEVENTY-FOUR

READ JOHN 1:10 TO 13 - LUKE 19:41 TO 44 - LUKE 13:34 AND 35
MATTHEW 21:42 - ROMANS 11:30

CHRIST AND ISRAEL

Two of the most sorrowful and touching messages from the lips and the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth are recorded in Luke 13:34 and 35 and Matthew 21:33 to 46. First let us read His pleading in Luke 13:34; “Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee” “How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not.” Then His Parable of the Vineyard in Matthew 21:33 to 46: “And the husbandmen took His servants and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, He sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all He sent unto them his Son, saying, They will reverence my Son. But when the husbandman saw the Son, they said among themselves, This is the Heir; come let us kill Him, and let us seize on His inheritance. And they caught Him and cast Him out of the vineyard, and slew Him.” “Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The Stone which the builders rejected, the Same is become the Head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing and it is marvelous in our eyes?” (Matthew 21:42). Then He foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and Israel’s agony. (Matthew 22:7).

Those were sad words which Christ uttered in John 5:40: “And ye will not come to Me that ye might have life.” Then in Luke 19:41 to 44 Christ told Israel that they knew neither the things that belonged to their peace nor the time of their visitation. So Israel would receive wrath and judgment instead of peace and deliverance. (Matthew 23:33 to 39 - Luke 21:20 to 24).

Christ came unto His own; but they received Him not. They said; “We will not have this Man to reign over us.” (Luke 19:14). “We have no king but Caesar.” (John 19:15). “His blood be on us, and on our children.” (Matthew 27:25). Then hear God’s word to Israel; “Ye men of Israel, hear these words,

Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

Christ called Israel “the Builders” and Himself “the rejected Stone.” (Matthew 21:42) “Behold, I lay in Sion a Stumblingstone and a Rock of offence.” (Romans 9:33 and I Peter 2:6 to 8). Even today the preaching of Christ Crucified is to the Jews a Stumbling-block.

Christ was born of David’s seed to be Israel’s Saviour (Acts 13:23). Christ was sent to Israel only. (Matthew 15:24). Christ was the Seed of Abraham to be Israel’s Saviour (Hebrews 2:16 and 17). Christ was born in the house of David, in the city of David, to sit on David’s throne and reign over the house of Israel. (Luke 1:26 to 33). He came to deliver Israel from Gentile political domination. (Luke 1:67 to 77). He was “the King of Israel” (John 1:49).

“He came unto His own and His own received Him not.” (John 1:11). Christ’s own received Him not before his death and after His resurrection. (Acts 5:29 to 32 - Acts 13:30 to 46). When and because Israel refused Christ in resurrection, the Gentiles received mercy and salvation. (Romans 11:30 - Romans 11:11 and Acts 13:46).

Many individual Jews did receive Christ. (John 2:23 - John 7:31 and 40 - John 10:42 and John 11:45). And concerning them, we read in John 13:1 that Christ having loved His own, which were in the world, loved them unto the end.

On the day of Pentecost three thousand Israelites accepted Christ after He had prayed in the hour of His death, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34 - Acts 2:41). Then many more Jews believed (Acts 4:4 - Acts 5:14 - Acts 6:7).

But still His own received Him not as King and Messiah and the promised Deliverer. They killed the prophets! They killed the Son of God! They received Him not after His resurrection. (Acts 5:29 to 32). They blasphemed and resisted. (I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16).

LESSON SEVENTY-FIVE

READ JUDGES 13:1 TO 7, 24 AND 25 - JUDGES 16:20 TO 22; 28 TO 31
JEREMIAH 52:1 TO 11 - ACTS 13:1 TO 15.

THREE BLIND JEWS

In this lesson we read concerning three blind Jews, “Samson,” “Zedekiah” and “Barjesus.”

One of the most fascinating and yet pathetic stories in the Bible is the birth, life and death of Samson. He judged Israel for twenty years. He had a wonderful beginning, although like all of Adam’s children, he was conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity.

As in the births of Isaac, Benjamin and Joseph, Samuel, John the Baptist, and others, God undertook for a barren woman, and Samson was the promised son of his parents, born by special favor of God.

In Judges 13:1, we read of the wonderful opportunity, challenge and task for Samson. He was a Nazarite. His long hair was the symbol of his mighty power from God, as told in Judges 13:24 and 25 - Judges 14:19 - Judges 15:15.

Note Judges 14:6, “The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him. “But something awful happened to Samson; and then note Judges 11:20, “Samson wist not that the Lord was departed from him.” Then the Gentiles, the great enemies of Samson’s God, disgraced Samson and God’s nation. After his hair was cut off his power was gone. He failed in his God-given duty to the Gentiles. They put out his eyes, mocked him, and used him as a beast.

But later something happened to both Samson and the Gentiles. This we will note after we read about blind Zedekiah and blind Barjesus.

Like Judge Samson, all of Israel’s kings, beginning with Jeroboam, were idolaters, not one good one in several hundred years. In II King 17:18 we read, “Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of His sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.”

Then note some time later, in II Kings 23:26 and 27, that because of the terrible sins of Judah’s King Manasseh, God also cast off Judah (with Benjamin) about 600 B. C.

Israel and Judah had dishonored and profaned the name of God in the presence of the Gentiles. Israel and Judah were cast off, politically, and “the times of the Gentiles,” politically, began with a blind Jew, Zedekiah.

The king of Babylon, the heathen, had his men put out the eyes of Zedekiah, the king (II Kings 25:5 to 7 - Jeremiah 52:1 to 11). From the day of Zedekiah’s blindness, politically, Israel

has been the tail, not the head, in fulfillment of Deuteronomy 28:13; 36 and 44. The times of the Gentiles, politically, began with a blind Jew, and blind Israel. (Isaiah 6:9 to 10).

About twelve years after Israel had rejected Jesus, their Messiah in incarnation, (Acts 5:29 and 30 - Acts 13:23 - Matthew 21:42 - John 1:11), they rejected Him in resurrection, and Paul said, “we turn to the Gentiles.” (Acts 13:46). This was at the time God blinded a Jew, with a good name “Bar-jesus.” Then the blind Israel.

God sent blindness on Israel and the times of the Gentiles spiritually, began about the middle of the first Christian century (Romans 11:6 to 9, 25 and 26). Read Acts 13:5 to 15.

The Jew, “Bar-jesus” (“the child of Jehovah Saviour”) tried to keep the seeking Gentile, Paul, from hearing the Word of God from Saul. Paul believed Saul when God blinded “the child of Jehovah Saviour;” and Saul the apostle became Paul. “Bar-jesus” spoke of Israel, God’s child. (Romans 11:5 to 11).

Samson, with his hair growing again (Judges 16:22), although blind, speaks of Israel today, still spiritually blind, but growing rapidly economically and politically. What happened to the Philistines when Samson took down their pillars? Read it in Judges 16:25 to 31.

This will happen to the pillars of Gentile civilization when Israel shall be thrust into the great tribulation, Then Israel’s Deliverer, Christ, will come. (Luke 21:24 to 33 - Romans 11:26). God again will make Israel the head (Romans 11:21 - II Thessalonians 2:2 to 12).

Read Isaiah 62:1 to 4 and the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh chapters of Ezekiel.

LESSON SEVENTY-SIX

READ EPHESIANS 2:8 TO 10 - II TIMOTHY 1:9 AND 10 - LUKE 13:16
ACTS 2:38 - ACTS 10:34 TO 38 - MATTHEW 24:13 AND 14

SALVATION—IN THE FOUR GOSPELS

It should prove both interesting and profitable to compare the salvation messages of Christ and the twelve apostles in the Synoptic Records (Matthew, Mark and Luke) with the message and program of grace which the risen Lord gave to the apostle Paul to proclaim, after Paul said in Acts 13:46, “LO, We TURN TO THE GENTILES.”

It is not by mistake that in the message of salvation to sinners, in Matthew, Mark and Luke, we do not find the word “grace” one time. There is plenty of grace in some of those messages, but for some reason the word, “grace” is not given once in those sixty-eight chapters in the sinner’s salvation. There is much grace in Luke 7:41 and 47 and Luke 14:21, but the dispensation of grace was not yet.

The word “grace” is found twelve times in the six chapters of Ephesians. In that Epistle we have the clear unmixed message of grace: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8 to 10).

The Epistle to the Ephesians was written after the close of the period covered by the Book of Acts. It was written after the fall of God’s religious nation, Israel. (Romans 11:11).

Remember the fact that from Sinai to Calvary God demanded both righteousness and religion. (Hebrews 9:10). During most of the “Acts” period God permitted religion with righteousness. (I Corinthians 9:20 to 25).

There were many wonders and signs and sign gifts during the “Acts” period. They were to cease. (I Corinthians 13:8). There were different gifts mentioned in connection with the “signless” and “religionless” age, after the close of Acts. Compare I Corinthians 12:8 to 11 with Ephesians 4:9 to 13 and I Corinthians 13:9 to 13, with Ephesians 4:14.

After the close of the “Acts.” period God demanded righteousness without religion. Salvation - through grace - by faith - not of yourselves - it is the gift of God. It is even stronger than this in II Timothy 1:9 and 10.

What a difference between Peter’s messages to Israel, in Acts 2:38, also Peter’s message to the Gentiles in Acts 10:34 to 36, and Paul’s unmixed grace message in Romans 4:4 and 5.

Like the message of Mark 16:16, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,” Peter preached “repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins.”

Then he preached to Cornelius, “he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of God.” Paul preached the very opposite in Roman 4:4 and 5. Compare them.

There is a sense in which God’s message for the Gentiles differs with the fall and rise of Israel. (Romans 11:20 and Romans 11:11).

The word “grace” is found more than twenty times in the Epistle to the Romans, where the fall of Israel is recorded. With that fall, God ushered in the dispensation of grace for Gentiles, His long concealed mystery. (Ephesians 3:1 to 4).

In this age and dispensation of grace we do not preach to sinners Luke 13:16 - Matthew 24:13 and 14 - Luke 18:19 to 22, Acts 2:38 - Mark 16:16 to 18 - Acts 3:19 to 21 - Acts 10:34 and 35.

In Luke 13:16 they were to strive (agonize) to enter in and then may not get in. Compare this with Titus 3:5 to 7.

In Matthew 24:13 and 14, they were to endure unto the end to be saved. Enduring, striving to enter in, being baptized for the remission of sins is “of yourselves.” Grace salvation is not. (Ephesians 2:8 to 10). All salvation messages must be studied in the light of Ephesians 2:8 to 10 and Ephesians 3:1 to 6, and the student thus learns the difference between grace in a dispensation and “the dispensation of the grace of God.” (Ephesians 3:1 and 2 - Acts 20:24 - Romans 3:24 to 26).

LESSON SEVENTY-SEVEN

READ ISAIAH 33:23 - JOSHUA 6:1 TO 5 - JOSHUA 6:15 AND 16
JUDGES 3:31 - JUDGES 7:20 TO 22 - JUDGES 15:15 TO 17 - I SAMUEL 17:49 TO 51.

THE LAME TAKE THE PREY

In Isaiah 33:23 we are told that the lame take the prey.

In I Corinthians 1:21 we read a most important truth: “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” God has only one way to save lost humanity. We learn in the first two

chapters of I Corinthians that this way does not please the wisdom of this world. But we read in I Corinthians 3:19 that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: and that God taketh the wise in their own craftiness. "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (I Corinthians 1:20). "The foolishness of God is wiser than men." "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." "That no flesh should glory in His presence." (I Corinthians 1:27 to 30).

We read in Isaiah 33:23, "THE LAME TAKE THE PREY." This is true only in the spiritual realm. In Satan's world, in this present civilization, those who are mentally, financially or physically weak do not take the prey. They are preyed upon.

We read this truth in Acts 4:13 - "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

Then note what the educated wise man, Paul, said in I Corinthians 2:1 to 5 - "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

The Lord selected twelve unlettered, humble men to be His apostles. Then He later chose a cultured, well-trained man, and even this one was determined not to make a show of his excellency of speech or enticing words of man's wisdom. The twelve apostles and Paul believed that the lame take the prey. "And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." I Corinthians 1:28.

The lame take the prey. How did the Israelites take the well-defended Jericho? With the ark of God and the blowing of trumpets. How did Shamgar smite the 600 Philistines? With the ox goad. How did Gideon's 300 defeat thousands of Midianites? With pitchers, lamps and trumpets. How did David subdue and kill the mighty Goliath? With a stone in his sling. These are the stories told in our Scripture reading for this lesson. Read them. The lame take the prey. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called"; I Corinthians 1:26).

How are Christians to overcome the world and win the victory for Christ among sinners. "Faith is the victory that overcometh the world." (I John 5:4). "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. But we preach Christ crucified." I Corinthians 1:21 and 23. The Lame take the prey. "The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth." (Romans 1:16). The greatest need of this twentieth century civilization with all its culture, wisdom and pride is the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed unto Paul in the first Christian century. (I Timothy 1:11). The truth of I Corinthians 1:18 to 23 is right up to date.

LESSON SEVENTY-EIGHT

READ JOHN 1:51 - JOHN 3:14 - JOHN 12:34 - MATTHEW 12:32

WHO IS THIS SON OF MAN?

A very interesting question was asked by some Jews in John 12:34, “Who is this Son of man?” And here is an interesting fact: in this verse we have the only record where any person addressed Jesus Christ as the “Son of man” or called Him the “Son of man” while He was on earth.

Christ, about eighty times, called Himself the “Son of man” in the Four Gospels.

Then Stephen called Him the “Son of man” in Acts 7:54 to 58. “One like the Son of man.” (Revelation 1:13).

According to the words of the Lord Jesus the angels of God were to ascend and descend upon the Son of man. Surely Jacob’s ladder must have been a type of the Son of man in John 1:51. (Genesis 28:12). The angels of God ascended and descended upon Jacob’s ladder let down from heaven. Christ came down from heaven. (John 6:38).

Then the statement in John 3:13 is more than mystical: “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.”

Then we have the words of the Lord Jesus, that the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath day, that the Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins. (Luke 6:5 - Mark 2:10). The Son of man is to be glorified and ascend up where He was. We read that the Son of man came to be sinned against, that the Son of man came to give His life a ransom for many, that He must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. (Matthew 20:28 - Matthew 26:24 - John 12:32 to 34 and 3 to 15 - John 12:23 - John 6:62).

Then Jesus said, “except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.” (John 6:53).

Surely the eternal Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be comprehended by flesh and blood by calling Him the “Son of man” instead of the “Son of God.” In John’s Gospel, from beginning to end, the eternal Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ is emphasized and yet in that Record Christ is called “the Son of man” twelve times.

The Son of man came to be sinned against. (Matthew 26:24 - Matthew 20:28 - John 3:14 and 15 - Acts 3:18 - 4:25 to 28 - Acts 2:23 - Acts 13:29).

Therefore, the Lord Jesus said “if you sin against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven you.” (Matthew 12:30 to 32).

The Son of man was lifted up and those who sinned thus against Him did what God’s hand and counsel determined to be done. (Acts 4:25 to 28). Therefore their great sin was pardonable. (Matthew 21:42). Read carefully Acts 3:17 to 21 - Acts 2:22 and 23.

The Holy Spirit was sent down to witness to Israel that the Son of man had been raised from the dead. (Acts 5:29 to 32).

The Son of man prayed that Israel would be forgiven for their sin against the Son of man. (Luke 23:34). God heard that prayer. (Acts 3:15, 17 and 18).

Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit and he saw the Son of man standing at God’s right hand in heaven when he accused Israel of resisting the Holy Spirit. (Acts 7:51 to 56).

This sin was Israel’s unpardonable sin. (Acts 3:18). Then they added another sin and were set aside. (I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16 - Acts 13:45 - Acts 18:5 - Romans 11:15). They resisted the Holy Spirit and forbade the apostles to preach to Gentiles.

The Son of man will come back in the clouds with power and great glory for Israel's redemption. (Luke 21:27 to 33).

When the Son of man returns to earth He will not find faith on the earth; therefore, He will not find the Church. (Luke 18:8). Christ is not the Son of man to the Church and when He calls His Church to glory He will not be on earth. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man." (Luke 17:26).

LESSON SEVENTY-NINE

READ JONAH 1:11 TO 17 - JONAH 3:1 TO 3, 10 - JONAH 4:10 AND 11
MATTHEW 12:39 AND 40 - I THESSALONIANS 2:4 TO 6 - EZEKIEL 36:25 TO 36

JONAH-CHRIST AND ISRAEL

Jonah means "dove" or "pigeon." (This is another study). When the Jews asked a sign of Christ He replied, in Matthew 12:40, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Now note several verses in Jonah: "So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging." "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." "And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." "I went down to the bottom of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me forever; yet hast Thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God." "And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." (Jonah 1:15 and 17 - Jonah 2:6 and 10).

Again Jonah 3:5 and 6 and 3:10 - "So the people of Ninevah believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Ninevah, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes." "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that He had said that He would do unto them; and He did it not."

Note the words of Christ right before He went to Calvary, and how in His resurrection He fulfilled the Holy Spirit's prophecy in Psalm 16:10: "For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy one to see corruption." "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death." (Mark 14:34). "Because Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." (Acts 2:27).

Note Jonah's words in Jonah 2:2 - "out of the belly of hell cried I, and Thou (God) heardest my voice."

Christ spoke of Jonah as the type of Himself in death and resurrection.

The Lord told Jonah to "arise, go to Ninevah, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." (Jonah 1:1 and 2).

Ninevah was a city of Gentiles. The Jews hated the Gentiles; even more than the Gentiles hated the Jews. In John 4:9 we read that the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. They certainly had no religious dealings with the Gentiles. They were forced to deal with them politically. (Luke 2:1 and 2).

The Jews wanted to tear Paul in pieces when they thought he led Trophimus, a Gentile, into the Jews' temple. (Acts 21:28 to 31). The Jews tried to kill Christ when He told how God had blessed two Gentiles. (Luke 4:24 to 30). The twelve apostles said concerning the Gentle to whom they might have preached while Christ was on earth, "Send her away." (Matthew 15:21 to 27). Then eleven apostles condemned Peter for preaching to Gentiles. (Acts 11:1 to 4). Even saved Jews did not want to sit at the same table with saved Gentiles. (Galatians 2:12 to 15).

God sent Jonah to preach to Gentiles. He refused and got into trouble. The big fish could not assimilate or destroy him. God sent Israel to be His witness to all Gentiles. (Isaiah 43:10 and 15 - Romans 9:4 to 6 - Isaiah 49:6 - 66:12). Israel refused and got into trouble with Nebuchadnezzar and Caesar and many others. Since Christ pronounced His judgment on Israel, in Luke 21:20 to 24, they have been where Christ said they would be. But the nations cannot assimilate or destroy God's kingdom nation. (Numbers 23:9 - Jeremiah 30:11). God will bring Israel back to their land. (Isaiah 42:3 to 7 - Amos 9:11 to 15). Even on the troubled ship Jonah was a great blessing to the Gentiles as to the truth of the Bible. The Jew in this troubled world should confirm our faith in the Bible.

When Jonah was delivered from the fish he went to Nineveh and there was a great revival; multitudes saved. When the Jews are delivered (Romans 11:26) they will be Spirit-filled messengers, and many Gentiles will be saved. Read Ezekiel 36:25 to 36.

LESSON EIGHTY

READ EPHESIANS 1:9 - EPHESIANS 6:19 AND 20 - EPHESIANS 3:9 TO 11
EPHESIANS 3:1 TO 5 - COLOSSIANS 1:24 TO 27 - COLOSSIANS 4:3 AND 4.

THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S WILL

In Ephesians 1:9 we read "Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself." Then in Ephesians 6:19 and 20, Paul wrote that he was in the Roman jail for "the mystery of the gospel."

As we read the Epistle to the Ephesians, we learn that "the mystery of God's will" was "the mystery of the gospel." What was the mystery mentioned in these verses? The mystery has been made known and God, the Father, wants all of His children to know it. (Ephesians 3:9). (Ephesians 1:16 to 23 - Ephesians 3:14 to 19).

Christ, in John 6:39 and 40, told us something of the will of God: "And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." "And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

This is still God's will, "by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Hebrews 10:10). But God's eternal purpose is to have a company of redeemed sinners separate and distinct from all other companies.

In I Corinthians 15:1 to 4 we read of the gospel by which believing sinners are saved. But note in these verses these words, "according to the Scriptures." Christ's death and resurrection was that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. (Acts 13:29 and 30). - (Luke 24:44 to 46). Therefore,

when Paul preached that saving gospel, it was not “the mystery of the gospel,” for that “mystery” message was not made known by, or to, any of Israel’s prophets. (Colossians 1:25 and 26). That is why it is called “the unsearchable riches,” meaning “untraceable” or “unprophesied riches.”

“The dispensation of the mystery” is, “according to God’s eternal purpose in Christ.” (Ephesians 3:9 and 11). This grace and purpose was given members of the Body of Christ before the world began. (II Timothy 1:9 - Ephesians 1:4 and 11 - Romans 8:28 and 29). It was God’s secret until after Israel rejected Christ in resurrection. It was revealed to, and through, the apostle Paul, who was born out of due season; chosen by Christ to be “the apostle of the Gentiles.” (Romans 11:13 - I Corinthians 15:6 to 10). It was for this reason that Paul (Saul) was the only unbeliever, the only unsaved person on earth, who saw Christ after He was raised from the dead. Then he said by God’s grace He was the Lord’s master builder, who laid the foundation and saints must build with him. (I Corinthians 3:10).

For this distinctive message and ministry, because he was the custodian of this Divine deposit, he suffered as an evil doer in chains, the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ for Gentiles. (II Timothy 2:8 and 9 - Ephesians 3:1 to 5). And he added that others should be partakers of the same afflictions and suffer persecution. (II Timothy 1:8 and 3:12).

Before Israel was created for God’s glory, before all of the promises concerning Israel’s coming glory and the millennial reign of Christ on earth, yea, before Adam had sinned, or was created, God predestinated that members of the Body of Christ should be conformed to the image of His Son. (Romans 8:28 and 29). They would be seated in the heavenlies in Christ.

These predestinated and justified believers are to be joined to Christ as one flesh, to make One New Man, the Perfect Man, with heavenly citizenship, to appear with Christ in glory. (Ephesians 2:6 - Ephesians 5:31 and 32 - Ephesians 2:5 - Ephesians 4:13 - Philippians 3:20 and 21 - Colossians 3:1 to 4).

This the Father wants every Christian to make known (Ephesians 3:9). Satan hates this message with a vicious hatred.

Thus we see something of “the mystery of God’s will,” something that differs from the prophesied kingdom. (Acts 3:19 to 21 - Amos 9:11 to 15). God is now building up the Body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:9 to 13). Christ will return to earth after the close of this age and dispensation of grace to build again the tabernacle of David. (Acts 15:15 to 18).

LESSON EIGHTY-ONE

READ JOHN 15:1 TO 12 - II PETER 2:21 AND 22
HEBREWS 4:1 TO 11.

SCRIPTURES USED AGAINST ETERNAL SECURITY

Can a person once saved lose his salvation? This has caused some very unpleasant controversies. There are certain Scriptures that seem to teach that a person may be saved and then lose his salvation. But some other Scriptures are positively against this teaching.

Those who believe that it is possible for a saved person to be lost refer to the experiences of King Saul and Judas and Ananias.

The Scriptures call Saul, the Lord's anointed, even at the time of his death. (II Samuel 1:4 - 10 and 14). But the Scriptures say that the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul. (I Samuel 16:14). Then read Saul's experience with the witch of Endor. (I Samuel 28:7 to 20).

What about the prayer of the Psalmist, "take not Thy Holy Spirit from me?" (Psalm 51:11).

We read in Acts 1:15 to 26 that Judas lost something, and that Judas went to his own place. But when the Lord Jesus chose eleven apostles and Judas, the Lord said, "have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 6:70). When did Judas become a devil? He was the only one of the Twelve to be lost. Judas was the lost son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. (John 17:12). Read Acts 1:20.

Ananias lost his life; but we cannot find in Acts 5:1 to 10 that Ananias became a saint and then lost his salvation. We do read in Revelation 21:8 that all liars shall have their part in the lake of fire. Is there a difference between lying sinners and lying saints? (Ephesians 4:25). Some saints in I Corinthians 5:5 were delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that their spirits might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Some saints, in I Corinthians 11:27 to 33, because of their carnal behaviour, were chastened of the Lord, with sickness and death; but they were not condemned with the world.

The Lord does say, in Revelation 3:5, "I will not blot his name out of the Book of Life." Does this mean that some members of the Body of Christ, new creatures in Christ Jesus who have passed out of Adam into Christ, out of death into life, do go back out of Christ into Adam, out of life into death and lose their new creation or new birth? Well there is the great "if" of salvation; the "if" of continuing in faith. (Colossians 1:23 and I Corinthians 15:2). Christ said "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." (John 10:28). God's free gift is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23). If a believer once saved, loses his spiritual life, was it eternal life that he lost?

Some branches are cut off of Christ, the Vine, in John 15:6, so they must be lost after they have been saved, is the teaching of the "lose-your-salvation" Christians. And they are sure that the dog and the hog of II Peter 2:20 to 22 prove their doctrine, that many who are Christians on the way to heaven lose their salvation. But they have some difficulty reconciling this with I Peter 1:2 and Ephesians 1:4 and Romans 8:28 to 32. Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

They have the same difficulty trying to reconcile Hebrews 10:26 with Hebrews 10:2 and Hebrews 10:4, or to reconcile the falling away of Hebrews 6:4 to 5 and Romans 11:22 with the strong consolation of Hebrews 6:18 and Romans 8:37 to 39.

It is strange how many Christians in their thinking change "no more sacrifice" in Hebrews 10:26 to read "no more forgiveness."

In Hebrews 6:4 to 6 we read that it is impossible for certain people, if they fall away, to be renewed again unto repentance. Many of the Hebrews, to whom the Epistle was addressed, wanted to offer for their sins Old Testament sacrifices after Christ had offered Himself to God as the perfect Sacrifice. Christians are told to restore a fellow-Christian, who sins. (Galatians 6:1). The "lose-your-salvation" Christians believe that back-sliders can be renewed. Therefore, Hebrews 6:6 does not refer to back-sliders.

LESSON EIGHTY-TWO

READ LUKE 10:18 - II CORINTHIANS 11:13 TO 15 - JUDE 9 - ISAIAH 14:14 TO 17
EZEKIEL 28:14 TO 18 - EPHESIANS 6:11 TO 14 - LUKE 4:1 TO 12
REVELATION 20:9 TO 12 - REVELATION 20:2, 3 AND 10.

SATAN FALLING FROM HEAVEN

How few Christians have seriously considered the words of Christ in Luke 10:18: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Was Satan in heaven? Is Satan in heaven? We read in I Peter 5:8 that the devil is our adversary and like a roaring lion he walks about seeking whom he may devour. As we take in the present condition of the human race we would say that the devil has been very successful; and we can believe I John 5:19.

As the prince of this world, Satan tempted Christ in the wilderness and wanted Christ to worship him. Christ was the victor. (Luke 4:1 to 13).

There is much about Satan that is more than a mystery. Many cannot truthfully say with Paul, "we are not ignorant of Satan's devices." (II Corinthians 2:11). In Ephesians 6:10 to 12 we read of the wiles of the devil. He is very "tricky."

Satan and Michael contended for the body of Moses. Michael would not bring railing accusation but said, "the Lord rebuke thee" (Jude 9).

Satan, through his subtilty, beguiled Eve. (II Corinthians 11:1 to 3).

Satan is the god of this age; and is transformed into an angel of light. (II Corinthians 4:3 and 4 - II Corinthians 11:13 to 15).

Satan wants to be worshipped and will have his man, the son of perdition in God's temple, receiving worship. (II Thessalonians 2:4).

In Ezekiel 28:12 to 18 we have the story of Satan as the anointed cherub. Then we read that he was perfect until iniquity was found in him. His heart was filled with pride because of his beauty.

He was corrupted by reason of his wisdom. We think of him as being wise. But perhaps we have not thought of his original beauty.

Then in Isaiah 14:12 to 16 we read "how art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer," the light-bearer, the day, or morning, star. Satan transforms himself yet into an angel of light, (II Corinthians 11:13 to 15). Christ saw him as lightning fall from heaven. When he beguiled Eve he was not an ugly snake. The serpent was a shining one, more subtle than any beast of the field. (Genesis 3:1).

Lucifer said, "I will ascend into heaven." "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God." "I will be as the Most High." But God said, "thou shalt be brought down to hell."

The anointed cherub was upon the holy mountain of God. (Ezekiel 28:14).

Now note Revelation 12:9: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

Then will go out the cry, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea!" (Revelation 12:12).

Well if Satan can do what he is now doing to both sinners and saints, while the Church and the Holy Spirit are on earth, what will he do during the tribulation when the Church has been taken to heaven? But God's saints will be able to overcome him by the blood of the Lamb.

We read in Ephesians 2:1 to 3 of the work of the spirit of the prince of the power of the air. In Ephesians 6:11 to 14, we read of Satan at the head of heavenly principalities and powers, the ruler of world darkness, controlling spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies. Think of the paradox; the angel of light controlling world darkness.

Paul was in jail for the mystery and said, flesh and blood put him there, but it was really Satan. (Ephesians 6:12, 19 and 20). Satan fell from the mountain of God into the lower heavens. He will fall to the earth. Note in Revelation 12:11 and Ephesians 6:11 to 18 how to overcome Satan.

Note in Matthew 25:41 that the lake of fire is prepared for the devil and his angels. In Revelation 20:2 to 10 we learn that Satan will go to the bottomless pit for one thousand years: then to the lake of fire.

Satan's course is down, down, down, down, down.

LESSON EIGHTY-THREE

READ II TIMOTHY 1:10 - I THESSALONIANS 1:9 AND 10
PHILIPPIANS 1:21. - ROMANS 14:17 - TITUS 2:11 TO 14

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

In this lesson we are to consider the very interesting question: "What is Christianity?" As we know, the word "Christianity" is not in the Bible. The word "Christian" is used just three times.

Christianity has been defined as the fruit and flower of Judaism and again as the religion of Jesus Christ. These definitions do not satisfy those who have obeyed II Timothy 2:15, "rightly dividing the Word of Truth."

A rabbi one said to an outstanding evangelical pastor, "Doctor, it was not your Jesus who gave you Christianity as you evangelicals preach it. It was the apostle Paul. Your Jesus was a Jew in the two-fold sense of the word. He descended from Judah and He was a Jew by religion." (John 4:22).

This answer was neither 100% wrong nor 100% right.

When we get into Paul's final Epistles, we learn that Christianity is life, love and heaven, and not religion. Moreover, all that Paul preached in his "dispensation of the grace of God" (Ephesians 3:1 to 4), in what he called "my gospel" (Romans 16:25 - II Timothy 2:8) Paul received from the risen glorified Christ by revelation. It was Christ's message and program.

Christ on earth was under the law, and while here He did not end the time of reformation mentioned in Hebrews 9:10, that brought an end to the Judaism therein described. (Read Galatians 4:4 - Acts 13:23 - Romans 15:8 - Matthew 8:4 - 23:1 to 3 and the religious program of the Jews in Hebrews 9:10).

Christ on earth did not interfere with that part of Israel's religious program that was given by Jehovah, not even with their feasts, sacrifices and offerings. Christ said that His mission on

earth was to Israel (Matthew 15:24 - Matthew 10:5); and not to destroy the law. (Matthew 5:17). Later something happened. (Colossians 2:13 to 16).

Judaism, according to Acts 15:1 to 19, and the Epistle to the Galatians, was quite different from Christianity, as revealed to Paul by Christ.

In Romans 14:17 we have one good definition of Christianity when we realize that the Lord Jesus Christ is the believer's righteousness and peace: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

Then again the very heart of Christianity is II Timothy 1:10: "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel."

Read what the law of life does according to Romans 8:2 and 4. It frees from sin and death and enables the believer to walk in the Spirit and demonstrate Christianity. In Titus 2:11 to 14 we read how Christians are saved, how they should live and what is their hope. A Christian has been turned to God to serve God and to wait for His Son from heaven. (I Thessalonians 1:9 and 10). God's order is salvation, separation and service.

Christ has brought life, with the guarantee of incorruptibility to light in the gospel and Paul says, "for me to live is Christ, to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21). "And the greatest of these is love." (I Corinthians 13:13). Read II Corinthians 5:17 and Galatians 2:20 and Colossians 1:27.

So that we may well say that Christianity is life, love and heaven. But we must explain what we mean when we define Christianity as "the religion of Jesus Christ." Jesus Christ, as Jesus of Nazareth, was a man in the midst of Israel; made under the law, a Minister of the circumcision. (Acts 2:22 - Galatians 4:4 - Matthew 15:24 - Romans 15:8). Sinners do not need the religion of the Jews, but a new creation in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 6:15 - Ephesians 2:10 - II Corinthians 5:17). They need life and Christ is that life.

LESSON EIGHTY-FOUR

READ HEBREWS 9:12 - EPHESIANS 1:6 AND 7 - EPHESIANS 1:13 AND 14
EPHESIANS 4:30 - COLOSSIANS 1:13 AND 14 - ROMANS 8:23 - LUKE 21:27 TO 33.

REDEMPTION—ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

Note in Hebrews 9:12 how eternal redemption was accomplished: "By His (Christ's) own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

Then we read in I Corinthians 1:30 that Christ is the believer's redemption. In Colossians 1:13 and 14 we learn that the believer has been delivered and translated, and in Christ, he has redemption through Christ's blood. This same truth is thus stated in Ephesians 1:6 and 7: "To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved: In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

The word "accepted" is the verb form of the Greek word translated "grace." God has "graced us in Christ; and our redemption by Christ's blood is according to the riches of God's grace. Who can tell the riches of God's grace? Only eternity. (Ephesians 2:7).

But note the condition of the believer in Romans 8:23 and in II Corinthians 4:16: "We (Christians) ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of

our bodies.” “Though our outward man decay, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.” “For in this we groan earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven.” (II Corinthians 5:2).

Living saints who were formerly dead sinners have been made alive by God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Who said, “I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” (John 11:25). Christ is the believer’s life. Christ lives in him. (John 14:6 - Philippians 1:23 - Galatians 2:20 - Colossians 3:3 and 4). Saints have passed out of death into life and have been created anew by God. (II Corinthians 5:17 - Ephesians 2:10). And yet they are in dying bodies; and will be made alive at Christ’s coming. (I Corinthians 15:20 to 22).

Until the great transformation of Philippians 3:21 and I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18 and I Corinthians 15:51 to 54, the living saints may die physically although they have received eternal redemption, and for this they groan within themselves, waiting for the redemption of the body. This is why living saints are told to wait for God’s Son from heaven. (I Corinthians 1:7 and I Thessalonians 1:9 and 10).

The moment the believers receive Christ and eternal redemption they receive the Holy Spirit Who is the earnest and assurance of the believers’ inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. (Ephesians 1:13 and 14).

The indwelling Holy Spirit is God’s guarantee that incorruptibility, as well as life, is in the gospel, because of God’s eternal purpose and grace and because of Christ’s victory over death. (II Timothy 1:9 and 10). “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” (Ephesians 4:30).

The believer is sealed unto THE DAY OF REDEMPTION. Let us note at least four days of REDEMPTION. Those greatest of all days: the day Christ cried “finished,” then arose from the dead, and then ascended and sat down in heaven. Then the day that you and I, by faith, accepted that accomplished redemption. Then the day of the rapture, the redemption of our bodies, as told in Philippians 3:20 and 21 - I Corinthians 15:51 to 54 and I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18.

Then Israel’s great tribulation (Luke 21:24 to 26). Then the coming of the Son of man in the clouds with power and great glory. (Luke 21:27 to 33).

“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” (Luke 21:28). Then finally the restitution of all things; the new heavens and the new earth. “Behold, I make all things new.” (Revelation 21:5).

LESSON EIGHTY-FIVE

READ II CORINTHIANS 1:10 - LUKE 4:18 - PSALMS 18:50 - PSALMS 32:7
PSALMS 40:17 - PSALMS 70:5 - PSALMS 144:2 - II SAMUEL 22:2.

SONGS OF DELIVERANCE

Concerning the Lord, the Psalmist said, “Thou art my hiding place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with SONGS OF DELIVERANCE. Selah.”

Surely the three young men in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace had A SONG OF DELIVERANCE. They defied the idolatrous king, and said, "our God, Whom we serve, is able to deliver us." (Daniel 3:17).

In the case of Daniel in the lion's den, it was the idolatrous king who gave forth the message of deliverance; for Darius said to Daniel, "Servant of the living God, is thy God able to deliver thee from the lions?" (Daniel 6:20).

We are told in Romans 11:26 that a Deliverer is coming out of Sion to deliver Israel. That Deliverer is the Lord Jesus Christ. He was born into this world as a King to deliver Israel from the hands of her enemies, (Luke 1:67 to 71). Hear His own words in Luke 4:18, "He hath anointed Me to preach DELIVERANCE to the captives." God's own people were slaves under the Gentiles.

But concerning Christ, they said, "we will not have this man to reign over us." Luke 19:14. To them He said, "ye shall not see Me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is He That cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matthew 23:39). That will be the time when the Deliverer shall come out of Sion and Israel shall be saved. (Romans 11:26).

The first time Israel hated Him without a cause and by wicked hands crucified Him. (John 15:25 - Acts 2:22). But He was DELIVERED according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23).

Read the wonderful truth in Romans 8:32 and Romans 4:25: "He that spared not His own Son, but DELIVERED HIM UP FOR US ALL, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?" "Who was DELIVERED FOR OUR OFFENCES, and was raised again for our justification."

Christ said before His death, "The Son of man must be DELIVERED into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and the third day rise again." (Luke 24:7).

Because Christ was DELIVERED up to Calvary's death Christians are compassed about with SONGS OF DELIVERANCE.

Hear the wonderful truth of Hebrews 2:14 and 15: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He (Christ) also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death, He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. And DELIVER them, who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Think of being delivered from the fear of death. This is but one of the Christian's songs of deliverance.

DELIVERED from the wrath to come. (I Thessalonians 1:10). DELIVERED from the power of darkness. (Colossians 1:13). DELIVERED from the present evil age. (Galatians 1:4). DELIVERED from the terrors of the law. (Romans 7:6). DELIVERED from judgment and temptations. (II Peter 2:9). DELIVERED from the body of this death. (Romans 7:24). DELIVERED from the lion's mouth. (II Timothy 4:17).

We trust in God: "Who DELIVERED us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in Whom we trust that He will yet deliver us." II Corinthians 1:10.

We can surely say, with Darius: "He delivereth and rescueth, and He worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, Who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." Daniel 6:27.

A great deliverance is coming to Israel and then to all the human race. "In Jerusalem shall be deliverance." (Joel 2:32 - Obadiah 17). "The creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption." (Romans 8:21).

LESSON EIGHTY-SIX

READ EPHESIANS 3:1 TO 11 - COLOSSIANS 1:23 TO 28
ROMANS 16:25 AND 26 - I CORINTHIANS 12:28 TO 13:8

PETER IN JERUSALEM—PAUL IN ROME

It will prove both profitable and interesting to study God's programs from the time of Peter's question in Acts 1:6 to Paul's statement in Acts 28:28. Note Peter's question to Christ; Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? This question meant "wilt Thou, Lord, at this time build again the tabernacle of David, prophesied in Amos 9:11 to 15?" Between Christ's resurrection and ascension He spoke to Peter and the Eleven things "pertaining to the kingdom of God." (Acts 1:3). But their question, in Acts 1:6, proves that they knew nothing of the program of Ephesians 3:1 to 10, "the dispensation of the grace of God" and the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6. They tarried at Jerusalem and when the day of Pentecost, the Jewish feast day, fully came, something happened. The Holy Spirit came in power, not in the form of a dove as in the case of the Lord Jesus, but "there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." (Acts 2:3). They had obeyed Luke 24:49 and tarried in Jerusalem. They were still in Jerusalem in Acts 8:1, Acts 15:1 to 19 and Galatians 2:1 to 14.

Now by the way of contrast, note Paul's statement in Acts 28:28: "the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles." This was about 30 years later. Paul was not in Jerusalem, but many miles away, in Rome. There is a great difference between restoring the kingdom to Israel and sending salvation to Gentiles, because of God's awful judgment upon the kingdom nation. (Acts 28:25 to 28 - Romans 11:5 to 11).

On Israel's feast day, Pentecost, Peter and the Eleven stood up, in Jerusalem, (12 apostles) and addressed Jews, all the house of Israel, (12 tribes). Acts 2:5 - Acts 2:36). Twelve is the number of Israel; not the number of the Body. It was unlawful for them to fellowship or come unto Gentiles. (Acts 10:28). Peter and the Eleven preached to Israel concerning Joel's prophecy, David's prophecy, and what Samuel and all the prophets had foretold concerning Israel's kingdom blessing; "these days." (Acts 2:16 to 32 - Acts 3:19 to 21 - Acts 3:24).

Some time after Paul reached Rome he became the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ, because Christ revealed from heaven a message and program for Gentiles, called "the mystery of Christ," "the mystery of the gospel," "the dispensation of the mystery," "the unsearchable riches of Christ," "the eternal purpose of God." (Colossians 4:3 and 4 - Ephesians 6:19 and 20 - Ephesians 1:9 - Ephesians 3:8 to 11 and Ephesians 3:1). All of this had to do with the heavenly position of members of the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6, and nothing to do with "these days" of Acts 3:24 and 21.

Let us now note a most important question copied from a pamphlet, published and distributed by the Moody Bible Institute for the past 25 years. (By A. E. Bishop and Dr. C. I. Scofield):

"IS IT THE SPIRIT OF GOD, OR SATAN, WHO TURNS THE EYES OF SINCERE CHRISTIANS BACK TO PENTECOST AND AWAY FROM THE GOAL PLACED BEFORE THEM IN EPHESIANS, PHILIPPIANS AND COLOSSIANS?"

In progressive revelation, in doctrine, God's instructions are "on to perfection" (Hebrews 6:1 to 3); and not "back to Pentecost" before the dispensation of grace for Gentiles began.

Another popular cry is, “give me the program of Jesus.” This means to study Paul’s ministry in the light of the Four Gospels, which is a reversal of God’s way.

With Mr. Bishop’s question, let us carefully consider a most important truth by the pastor of the Moody Church (his lectures on Romans 16:25 and 26).

“THE MYSTERY WAS NOT HID IN THE SCRIPTURES TO BE BROUGHT TO LIGHT EVENTUALLY; BUT WE ARE DISTINCTLY TOLD IT WAS HID IN GOD UNTIL SUCH TIME AS HE CHOSE TO MANIFEST IT.” “THIS WAS NOT UNTIL ISRAEL HAD BEEN GIVEN EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE CHRIST BOTH IN INCARNATION AND RESURRECTION.”

Study Pentecost for Israel in the light of the mystery for Gentiles. Note in II Timothy 2:8 and 9 - Colossians 4:3 and 4 - Colossians 1:24 to 26 - what Paul suffered for us.

LESSON EIGHTY-SEVEN

READ ROMANS 13:10 - GALATIANS 5:22 AND 23 - I TIMOTHY 1:5 - I JOHN 4:8 TO 11
I JOHN 3:14 - I CORINTHIANS 16:22 - I CORINTHIANS 13:1 TO 8, 13.

THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE

In Romans 3:19 we read that whatever the law saith it saith that every mouth may be stopped and all the world be guilty before God. The law saith, “thou shalt love the Lord thy God perfectly and thy neighbor as thyself.” “Love mercy, do justly and walk humbly with thy God” (Micah 6:8). “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

We learn in the Bible, what the law demanded, grace provides. What the law could not do, because of man’s weakness, against the strength of sin (which is the law), God sent Christ to accomplish by living a sinless life under the law and then taking the lawbreaker’s place in death. (Romans 8:3 - I Corinthians 15:56 - Hebrews 9:15 to 17). The law entered that the offence might abound, but where sin abounded grace did much more abound, reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:20 and 21).

Man could not love God perfectly and his fellow-man as He loved himself; but Christ did. His love was perfect. His life was sinless. He perfectly kept God’s perfect law. Then Christ loved us and gave Himself for us. God loved us and gave His only begotten Son for us. To any sinner who will accept God’s “love Gift,” believing II Corinthians 5:21, God will give His own perfect Divine righteousness, which the law demanded. (Romans 4:4 and 5 - Romans 10:4 and 10). (Hebrews 7:19 Acts 13:38 and 39).

Therefore, we love Him because He first loved us. (I John 4:19 to 21). If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.” (I Corinthians 16:22).

The very moment the believing sinner receives God’s “Love Gift” and God’s righteousness (Christ is our righteousness. I Corinthians 15:30), that believer receives in addition to righteousness and eternal life, another free gift from God, the Holy Spirit. “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Who is given unto us.” (Romans 5:5).

Then the believer is told to walk in the Spirit, (Galatians 5:25); and to walk in love, “as Christ also hath loved us.” (Ephesians 5:2). We know we have passed out of death into life because we love the brethren. (I John 3:14).

“Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Romans 13:10). “Love is the end of the law.” (I Timothy 1:5). The law demanded righteousness and love. Grace provides for the believer’s righteousness and love. “Love is the fruit of the Spirit” . . .” against such there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22 and 23).

In his Gospel and Epistles, John used the word “love” (in different forms) 102 times. Paul used it 109 times. “The greatest of these is love.” (I Corinthians 13:13). In I John we find it 27 times.

In the story of the Good Samaritan, in Luke 10:25 to 37, which Christ told after He explained to the lawyer that man’s moral and spiritual duty was to keep the two great “love” commandments, Christ pictured Himself as the Neighbor. He was also God.

Therefore, as we read the conclusion of the whole matter, “Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man” (under the law) in Ecclesiastes 12:13; we read the conclusion of the whole matter, under grace, in I Corinthians 16:22, “if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.” “Love worketh no ill to his neighbor.” (Romans 13:10). “Though I have prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains and have not love, I am nothing.” (I Corinthians 13:2).

LESSON EIGHTY-EIGHT

READ Romans 18:31 TO 34 - Romans 9:6 - I CORINTHIANS 15:1 TO 4
ROMANS 16:25 AND 26 - ROMANS 10:8 TO 10.

DIFFERENT GOSPELS

We have often heard the statement that there is only one gospel in the Bible. In I Corinthians 15:1 to 4, we are told that the gospel, by which we are saved, is the truth that Christ died, was buried and was raised the third day. Then in Romans 10:8 to 10 we are told that the Word of faith is in our hearts and mouths. Think this over. Confess Jesus as Lord, and believe in His bodily resurrection, and be saved. So we see that there is no salvation in this age of grace, except by faith in the shed blood and bodily resurrection of Christ. We have often heard that the people of faith, who were saved before Christ’s death and resurrection were saved by looking forward to his perfect sacrifice; so to speak, “on credit.”

But now note Luke 9:6: “And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.” Here we learn that the twelve apostles were doing two things which have no place in God’s program in this present age and dispensation of grace. They were healing every where and preaching the kingdom gospel of Matthew 10:7 and 8 and Luke 9:2. When people learned that the sick and crippled could be cured, that was good news, “gospel.”

Some months later Christ told these Twelve that He was going to die on the cross, be buried, and be raised the third day. (Luke 18:31 to 33). This is what Christ did to provide the gospel of I Corinthians 15:1 to 4, by which we are saved.

How did the Twelve receive this truth? “THEY UNDERSTOOD NONE OF THESE THINGS: AND THIS SAYING WAS HID FROM THEM, NEITHER KNEW THEY THE THINGS WHICH WERE SPOKEN.” (Luke 18:34). Was the Word of faith of Romans 10:6 to 10 in their hearts?

Dwell carefully and prayerfully on this statement and you will never again say there is only one gospel in the Bible; However you can and should dogmatically contend that there is only one gospel of the grace of God by which sinners can be saved. (Ephesians 2:13 and Ephesians 2:8 to 10).

When the twelve apostles were preaching the gospel and healing every where (Luke 9:6), we know that they were not saying to lost sinners “the word of faith is in your heart and mouth; acknowledge the Deity of Christ and believe that God hath raised Him from the dead, and thou shalt be saved.” In the gospel of the kingdom Israel is in favor with God and David’s throne and kingdom is included, and the Gentiles are in subjection to Israel.

In John 20:9 we read that Christ’s two leading apostles knew not the Scriptures that Christ should be raised from the dead. In Acts 1:6, after Christ’s resurrection, the twelve wanted to know if Christ would restore the kingdom to Israel. Nothing of the gospel of the grace of God is in this. (Acts 20:24).

So what is the answer to this question: “what gospel were the twelve apostles preaching when they were healing every where and preaching the gospel?” (Luke 9:6). Were they saying to their people, “soon Christ is going to be rejected and die on the cross and be buried and be raised from the dead, and if you will believe this is going to happen, you may be saved in accordance with I Corinthians 15:1 to 4 and Romans 10:8 to 10?” The answer is Luke 18:34. “The twelve apostles understood none of these things.” The saying was hid from them. Neither knew they the things that Christ spoke of His approaching death and resurrection.

So, of course they were not preaching the saving gospel of I Corinthians 15:1 to 4; but the kingdom gospel of Isaiah 35:4 to 6 - Matthew 4:23 and 4:17 - Matthew 10:5 to 8.

The gospel of the kingdom is quite different from Paul’s “my gospel” according to the revelation of the mystery. (Matthew 24:13 - Romans 16:25). The fall of Israel marked the beginning of the gospel of grace. (Romans 11:11 - 10:30).

In another lesson we shall consider the difference between the gospel of the circumcision committed unto Peter and the gospel of the uncircumcision committed unto Paul. (Galatians 2:7). But let us be assured that either Jew or Gentile can be for ever saved by trusting and resting in the perfect redemptive work of CHRIST.

LESSON EIGHTY-NINE

READ MATTHEW 5:1 TO 16 - MATTHEW 5:38 TO 48
MATTHEW 6:5 TO 18 - MATTHEW 7:12

FOR WHOM IS THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT?

The question is often asked, “how does the Sermon on the Mount, Christ’s commands in the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of Matthew, fit into ‘the dispensation of the grace of God’

which the same Christ revealed to ‘the apostle of the Gentiles.’ (Romans 11:13 - Ephesians 3:1 to 3) some years after He delivered His Sermon on the Mount?”

It is agreed that there is little or no grace for the sinner in Matthew 5 to 7. God’s Word is clear, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. (Galatians 3:10). If righteousness could be attained by man’s doings, then Christ died in vain. (Galatians 2:21 and 3:21).

One important truth for any one in this age of grace to learn is, that no child of Adam can practice “the ethics of Jesus” until he first receives “the Divine nature of Jesus.” Christ said, in very plain language, “except a man be born from above he cannot see (understand) the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3). This same truth is told in different language in I Corinthians 2:14 and Romans 8:8.

The Lord Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and He was born sinless. In His perfect life Christ was the embodiment and exemplification of His own ideal perfect philosophy; and Christ did perfectly what He commanded in Matthew 5:48, “be thou perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” In Hebrews 10:10 and Hebrews 7:19 and Hebrews 10:14 we are told how to be made perfect.

All human beings have descended from fallen, sinful Adam and have not been conceived by the Holy Spirit, but conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity.

God’s message for such is, “by grace are ye saved through faith; not of yourselves; not of works” - “brought nigh to God by the blood of Christ.” (Ephesians 2:8 to 10 - Ephesians 2:13 - I Peter 3:18). “Ye are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:26). Christ clearly revealed to and through Paul that Divine sonship, the new creation, for sinners is absolutely without man’s doings, but by the doing of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Christian is God’s workmanship created in Christ Jesus UNTO GOOD WORKS. (Ephesians 2:10).

Then the question: “should the Christian do the good works in the Sermon on the Mount?” These chapters in Matthew, like all other chapters in Matthew, should be interpreted and appropriated and applied in the light of God’s message and program of grace. (II Timothy 1:9 - Romans 11:6 - Ephesians 3:1 to 4 - Titus 3:5 to 8). No obedient, spiritual, intelligent child of God will ignore or eliminate or disobey any command given by Christ, on earth, that is compatible with His later “grace” program for members of the Body. Such a child knows also that some teachings in Christ’s Sermon brought over would pervert the gospel and frustrate the grace of God. (Galatians 1:8 to 12 - Galatians 2:21).

The “forgiveness” petitions in the “Our Father” prayer should be studied in the light of Colossians 2:13 and Ephesians 4:32. And all of the Sermon on the Mount should be studied in the light of Colossians 2:11 to 16 and Romans 14:17. Compare Matthew 18:32 to 35 with Ephesians 4:32.

Surely Christians should be pure in heart; poor in spirit. They should be meek. But they will not inherit the earth. They have something better. (Matthew 5:5 - Ephesians 2:6 and Ephesians 1:3 and Colossians 3:3 and 4). Christians should be peace-makers; but this will not make them God’s children. They are God’s children because Christ was the Peace-maker. (Matthew 5:10 - Colossians 1:20 and 21).

Some Christians have taught that the program of the Sermon on the Mount has been postponed until the Millennium. But in the Millennium God’s people will not be persecuted for Christ’s sake. (Matthew 5:11). Christians should let their light shine and do unto others the right thing. (Matthew 5:16 - Matthew 7:12). (Philippians 2:15 and 16 - Romans 12:10). In the Sermon on the Mount Christ was not speaking to members of His Body. In Paul’s Epistles He was. The

spiritual standard in those Epistles is certainly as high as the standard in the Sermon on the Mount.

LESSON NINETY

READ JOHN 3:3 TO 8 - I JOHN 5:8 - HEBREWS 10:22 - EPHESIANS 5:26
TITUS 3:5 TO 8 ACTS 2:38 - MARK 1:4 - JOHN 4:14 - JOHN 7:38 AND 39.

BORN OF WATER MEANS WHAT?

Christians for centuries have been divided as to the meaning of Christ's words in John 3:5, "except a man be BORN OF WATER and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

Many religious people, including saved ones, have interpreted Christ words, in John 3:5, to mean salvation by water baptism, sometimes called "baptismal regeneration."

They say that this interpretation is confirmed by Peter's words on the day of Pentecost, "repent and be baptized for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit," (Acts 2:38). They say that the same teaching is in Mark 16:16, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

They quote also, in support of their teaching, Mark 1:4 and I John 5:8: "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."

In Mark 7:20 to 23, the Lord Jesus told His hearers that man's sin was from within. "All these evil things come from within, and defile the man." (Mark 7:23).

Although intelligent reasoning should convince any thinking person that a few drops of water on the head, or gallons of water all over the sinner, cannot cleanse him of the sin that is within; yet the Scriptures quoted, unless studied according to I Corinthians 2:12 and II Timothy 2:15, seem to suggest saving value in water.

But if one man puts water on another man and the baptized person of himself submits to baptism, and is thereby saved, then Ephesians 2:8 and 9 cannot be true, "saved by grace, through faith; NOT OF YOURSELVES; not of works." Can we imagine that Paul, who became all things to all men that by all means he might win some, (I Corinthians 9:20 to 25), who was even willing to circumcise Timothy, would have thanked God for the few believers in Corinth that be baptized (I Corinthians 1:1 to 17), if there was any efficacy in water? At the time Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he would not have written I Corinthians 1:14 to 17, if water helped to save a sinner. How inconsistent is the Christian who endeavors to prove his "water regeneration" by Mark 16:16 and wholly ignore the signs following in Mark 16:17 and 18.

In John 4:14 Christ told the woman that He would give her a drink that would prove to be a well of water. In John 7:38 and 39, He likened the Holy Spirit to water flowing from within the believer. In neither case did He have in mind, water, but that which the water typified.

The believer, in Hebrews 10:22, is said to have his body washed with pure water. Does this mean that purified water must be actually applied? If so, how about Revelation 1:5 - "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood?" Christ's blood was shed for

the remission of sins. (Matthew 26:28). In order to be saved, does a sinner have to wash in Christ's blood as literally as the "baptismal regeneration" religious people tell us we must wash in the water baptism? The blood that bears witness with the water, in I John 5:8, does not really touch the believer. That blood was shed at the time Christ was baptized with the baptism that saves the sinner. (Luke 12:50).

Sinners are saved without works of righteousness, and without religious rites, or ordinances, or ceremonies; but by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. (Titus 3:5 to 8). Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for the Church; "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." (Ephesians 5:26). No religious water washing is necessary for regeneration.

Sinners are born again by the Word of God. (I Peter 1:23 - James 1:18, 21). Believers are chosen unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. (II Thessalonians 2:13). This is to him that worketh not. (Romans 4:5).

LESSON NINETY-ONE

READ MATTHEW 3:2 - MATTHEW 4:17 - MATTHEW 10:6 AND 7
MARK 1:14 AND 15 - MATTHEW 13:44 - MATTHEW 20:1
MATTHEW 22:2 - MATTHEW 16:16 TO 20

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

In the Book of Matthew the expression, "the Kingdom of Heaven" is found about 30 times. Although in Daniel's message to Nebuchadnezzar the Kingdom that is to be established on this earth when the Stone (Christ) comes down from heaven to smite man's civilization (Daniel 2:41 to 44) will be "the Kingdom of Heaven;" the particular expression is found only in Matthew.

Let us compare Mark 1:14 and 15 and Luke 21:31 with Matthew 4:17, and learn that sometimes, in the Scriptures, "the Kingdom of Heaven;" and "the Kingdom of God" are the same. But "the Kingdom of God" is not always "the Kingdom of Heaven." Now we quote the three verses mentioned.

"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye, and believe the gospel." "So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Three times we read "the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (Matthew 3:2 - Matthew 4:17 - Matthew 10:7).

Now as we study "the Kingdom of Heaven" in Matthew, let us note in Matthew 10:6 and 7 and Matthew 10:23 that when Christ sent His twelve apostles to Israel not to Gentiles) to preach "the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," He said unto them, "ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel until the Son of man be come." And in Matthew 19:27 and 28 Christ told the twelve apostles when the Son of man did come they would sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And this Christ told them after He said to Simon Peter, "I will give you the keys of "the Kingdom of Heaven." "Upon this Rock I will build My Church." (Matthew

16:16 to 19). Then after Christ's resurrection the Twelve asked Him, "wilt Thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6).

The first step in bringing about the prophesied restitution when Christ returns to earth as the Son of Man, will be Israel's redemption, which means, the Kingdom will be restored to Israel. (Acts 3:19 to 21 - Luke 21:27 to 33 - Romans 11:26 - Amos 9:11 to 15 - Acts 15:15 to 18). Then Christ, as the Son of Man, King and Judge, will sit on the throne of His glory. (Matthew 25:31 to 41). Then the Twelve will sit on twelve thrones.

This will be the fulfillment of Matthew 13:44: "Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto Treasure hid in a field; the which when a Man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." Israel is called God's treasure. (Psalms 135:4 - Exodus 19:5). Israel is hid in the world; but not from God. (Hosea 5:3).

The Kingdom of Heaven that was at hand when the King was here, and while He was standing in heaven, as the Son of man (Acts 7:51 to 56), will be at hand again when Luke 21:27 to 33 is fulfilled. In the meantime "the Kingdom of Heaven" has been postponed and God, by His Holy Spirit, His Son and His perfected saints, is conducting a different program (Ephesians 4:9 to 14). God has not abandoned His "Kingdom of Heaven" program. God's "Kingdom" covenants have been interrupted or suspended until we reach the culmination of this "grace" program mentioned in Ephesians 4:13.

We read about 9 times in the Book of Matthew, that "the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto . . . " But if you will study them carefully you will know that you cannot say, with Divine sanction, "the dispensation of the grace of God and the Body of Christ is like unto those illustrations." There is a difference between the "Kingdom of Heaven" and the Body of Christ.

How would you interpret the eleventh hour workman of Matthew 20:1 to 16 in the light of Romans 4:4 and 5 - I Corinthians 3:11 to 15 - II Timothy 1:9? Compare Matthew 10:5 to 8 with Titus 2:11 to 14.

LESSON NINETY-TWO

READ JOHN 1:11 TO 13 - JOHN 2:23 - JOHN 7:31 - JOHN 7:40 - JOHN 10:42
JOHN 11:45 - JOHN 12:45 - JOHN 2:42 - ACTS 2:5 - ACTS 2:41 - ACTS 4:4
ACTS 5:14 - ACTS 6:7 - ACTS 9:42 - ACTS 11:42 - ACTS 14:1 - ROMANS 11:30,

CHRIST CAME UNTO HIS OWN

It is so important in Bible study that we understand the meaning of John 1:11 and 12, that Christ "came unto His own and His own received him not; But as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God."

Then we should know the relation of this statement to the truth of Romans 11:30, more than 25 years after Christ died on the cross; "as ye (Gentiles) in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their (the Jews') unbelief."

The statement that Christ came unto His own follows the truth that He was in the world that was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. Christ came unto His own world and He came unto His own nation in His own world. This world belongs to Christ by right of creation, and by right of redemption. (Revelation 4:11 - 5:9).

When Christ was in the form of God (Philippians 2:5) He created Israel for His own glory (Isaiah 43:7); out of one as good as dead (Hebrews 11:12). In Matthew 21:42 Christ called the Jews, “the Builders,” and Himself, “the Stone.” He said according to prophecy, the Stone is rejected by the Builders. (Matthew 21:42 - I Thessalonians 2:14 and 15).

The first question in Matthew, is “Where is He that is born King of the Jews?” (Matthew 2:2). Christ permitted Nathanael to worship Him as “King of Israel.” (John 1:49). The woman at the well said to the Lord Jesus, “How is it that Thou, being a Jew?” (John 4:9). Christ is called “the Lion of the tribe of Judah,” “the Root of David.” (Revelation 5:5). Christ, on earth, was a Minister of the Jews and declared that He was sent only to the Jews. (Romans 15:8 - Matthew 15:24). Christ was born in the city of David, of the Seed of David, to take the throne of David and to deliver the Jews from Gentile subjugation. (Luke 1:27 to 33 - Luke 2:11 - Luke 1:68 to 74). Christ came unto His own to do more than save individual Jews. When Christ mourned over Jerusalem, with tears (Luke 13:34 and 35 and Luke 19:41 to 44), He was talking about the nation and their rulers who knew not the time of their visitation, the things that belonged to Israel’s peace. (Luke 19:42 and 44).

The very heart of the Bible is the truth that Almighty God was in the form of a man, a Jewish Man, for about 33 years. (John 1:1 to 3 and 1:14). He spent those years in the land of the Jews, in the midst of the Jews, to minister to the Jews. (Acts 2:22 - Acts 10:38 and 39 - Romans 15:8 - Matthew 15:24). He was not ashamed to call the sanctified Jews, brethren (Hebrews 2:11), “for He took on Him the Seed of Abraham.” “It behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren.” (Hebrews 2:16 and 17). Christ, on earth, was the Son of David and the Son of Abraham. (Matthew 1:1). He was born of the Seed of David to be ISRAEL’S Saviour. (Acts 13:23). “His own received Him not: but as many as received Him.” Many Jews did receive Christ.

We read in John 2:23, “many believed.” In John 7:31, “many believed” - John 10:42, “many believed” - John 11:45, “many of the Jews believed on Him” - John 12:42, “many of the chief rulers believed on Him.” Then in Acts 2:41, 3000 believed. In Acts 4:4, “many believed, about 5000” - We learn in Acts 9:42 - Acts 11:21 - Acts 13:48 - Acts 14:1 - Acts 17:12, many Jews believed on Christ.

But yet the statement is made “His own received Him not.” Many individual Jews did receive Him; but Israel did not receive the Lord Jesus, as that nation is yet to receive Him, in fulfillment of prophecy, as Messiah, King and Deliverer. They rejected Him in incarnation and in resurrection. (Matthew 21:42 - Luke 19:14 - Acts 7:51 to 60 - I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16 - Acts 13:45 and 46 - Acts 18:5 and 6 - Romans 11:5 to 15).

When they rejected Christ in resurrection, (Acts 5:30 to 32 - Acts 13:30 to 36), then God in His marvelous grace, turned to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46), and they obtained mercy because His own received Him not. But remember Romans 11:26: “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

LESSON NINETY-THREE

READ HEBREWS 10:7 TO 10 - JOHN 4:34 - JOHN 6:38 TO 40 - LUKE 22:41 TO 44
JOHN 7:17 - COLOSSIANS 1:9 - COLOSSIANS 4:12 - ROMANS 12:1 TO 3
EPHESIANS 5:17 - AND EPHESIANS 6:6 - HEBREWS 10:36 - HEBREWS 13:20, 21
I PETER 2:15 - I PETER 3:17 - I PETER 4:2 - I PETER 4:19 - I THESSALONIANS 5:18

GOD'S WILL FOR CHRIST AND CHRISTIANS

Note Ephesians 5:17: "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the WILL of the Lord is."

In this lesson every Scripture listed above should be read carefully and prayerfully, for we are told in I John 2:17 that he that doeth the WILL of God shall abide forever; and in I John 5:14, "if we ask anything according to God's WILL, He heareth us."

Then note Christ's statements in John 9:31 and John 7:17, "if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His WILL, him God heareth;" and "if any man will do His WILL, he shall know the doctrine."

First let us note how Christ did the WILL of God. He said, "I come to do Thy WILL, O God." (Hebrews 10:9).

Right after Christ had given the poor sinful woman at the well eternal life, His apostles came to Him with food saying, "Master eat." (John 4:31). Note what Christ said to them: "My meat is to do the WILL of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." (John 4:34).

Hear again the words of Christ in John 6:38: "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the WILL of Him that sent Me."

What did it mean for Christ to do His Father's will and to finish the work? The answer is John 19:23 to 30, Calvary: "It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost." (John 19:30). On the way to Calvary, it meant Gethsemane: "and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground"; "not My WILL but Thine be done." (Luke 22:42 to 44).

Then hear the good news for us, in Hebrews 10:10: "By the which WILL we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

"He that doeth the WILL of God abideth forever." What is the first step that the sinner must take before he can begin to do the will of God? Hear the words of Christ, in John 6:40 and 39: "And this is the WILL of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." "And this is the Father's WILL which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

Then after we believe the Son and have eternal life let us not be unwise, but understand what the WILL of God is. "Rejoice, pray without ceasing, in every thing give thanks. This is the WILL of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (I Thessalonians 5:16 to 18). "That ye might be filled with the knowledge of His WILL in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." (Colossians 1:9).

Let the Holy Spirit have His uninterrupted place within us in prayer, for His intercession is according to the WILL of God. (Romans 8:27). Let us obey Romans 12:1 and 2 and prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect WILL of God, as we are also instructed, in Ephesians 6:6, to do "the WILL of God from the heart." Read the will of God in Hebrews 10:36, I Peter 2:15 - I Peter 3:17 - I Peter 4:2 and I Peter 4:19.

"The God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do His WILL." (Hebrews 13:20 and 21). "It is God which worketh in us to WILL and to do of His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13).

In Ephesians 1:5 we read of “THE GOOD PLEASURE OF GOD’S WILL”; in Ephesians 1:11, THE COUNSEL OF GOD’S WILL; in Ephesians 1:9, of ‘THE MYSTERY OF GOD’S WILL.’

Then the final verse, Colossians 4:12, the fervent prayer that Christians may stand perfect and complete in ALL THE WILL of God.

No one, with God’s sanction, would have given the instruction of Colossians 4:12, concerning “all the will of God,” until the mystery of Colossians 1:25 and 26 had been revealed. So there may be quite a difference between the WILL of God and ‘THE MYSTERY OF GOD’S WILL.’

LESSON NINETY-FOUR

READ ROMANS 7:6 - II TIMOTHY 1:9 AND 10 - I CORINTHIANS 15:20
ROMANS 11:30 AND 31 - EPHESIANS 2:13 AND 19 - COLOSSIANS 1:21 TO 26

CHANGES TOLD BY THE WORD “NOW”

There is no more important study in the Bible than a study of the dispensational “NOWS.”

Let us first read Romans 7:6: “But NOW we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”

Then let us study, compare and contrast Deuteronomy 6:25 and Romans 3:21: “And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord, our God, as He hath commanded us.” “But NOW the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.”

What a tremendous difference between the two statements; the difference between law and grace. What the law demanded (righteousness); grace provides. (Romans 5:20 and 21).

What was the date when the change in Romans 7:6 first occurred? It was not while Jesus of Nazareth was on earth, under the law. (Acts 2:22 - Galatians 4:4 - Matthew 5:17 and 18 - Matthew 23:1 to 3).

When Christ was on earth, and for some years thereafter, the Jews were nigh and the Gentiles were far off, aliens. (Ephesians 2:17 - Ephesians 4:18 - Ephesians 2:11 and 12). But NOW, in Christ Jesus, by His blood the Gentiles are brought nigh.” (Ephesians 2:13). NOW no longer strangers and foreigners but in God’s Household. (Ephesians 2:19). Gentiles “NOW hath God reconciled.” (Colossians 1:21).

By Christ we “have NOW received the reconciliation.” (Romans 5:11).

When was reconciliation received by the Gentiles? Not through Peter and the Eleven before Israel rejected Christ in resurrection and fell, (Acts 5:29 to 32 - Romans 11:11); but through Paul, when and because Israel was set aside. (Romans 11:15) - Read these two most important dispensational verses, Romans 11:11 and 15.

Then God revealed His hidden wisdom, purposed in Christ before the world began. “The revelation of the mystery - NOW made manifest.” (Romans 16:25 and 26 - I Corinthians 2:6 and 7 - Ephesians 3:10). This grace and purpose was given Gentiles, in Christ, before the world

began, but is NOW made manifest by Christ's perfect redemptive work. (II Timothy 1:9 and 10). In the recorded ministry of the twelve apostles, there is no suggestion of God's eternal grace purpose.

The fall of Israel, some years after the resurrection of Christ, marked the very beginning of the program of Romans 11:30 and 31. "For as ye (Gentiles) in times past have not believed God, yet have NOW obtained mercy through their (Israel's) unbelief: Even so have these also NOW not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." Let us dwell much on these two most important verses.

What a reversal here from God's program when Peter preached to Cornelius. There the Gentiles received repentance unto life, before Israel fell. NOW the Gentiles obtain mercy because of Israel's fall and unbelief and blindness. (Romans 11:7 to 11 - Romans 11:30). NOW Israel must obtain mercy through the ministry of Gentiles.

None of this was made known to Israel's prophets: "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is NOW revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." (Ephesians 3:5). "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body's sake, which is the Church." "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but NOW made manifest to His saints." (Colossians 1:24 and 26).

You see how these "NOWS" are dispensational "NOWS," keys to the Scriptures. Read the important NOW of II Corinthians 5:16. There are other NOWS - in Hebrews 9:24 - I JOHN 3:2 - I JOHN 2:18 - I JOHN 2:28 - Ephesians 5:8 - Romans 5:9 - Romans 6:19 to 21, 22 - Romans 8:1 and 22 - Romans 13:11.

LESSON NINETY-FIVE

READ COLOSSIANS 1:16 TO 20 - JOHN 1:3 - JOHN 4:25 - JOHN 21:17
I CORINTHIANS 15:27 AND 28 - EPHESIANS 1:10 - EPHESIANS 1:22
EPHESIANS 4:10 - I CORINTHIANS 8:6 - I CORINTHIANS 3:21 - EPHESIANS 5:20
PHILIPPIANS 2:14 - PHILIPPIANS 3:21 - I THESSALONIANS 5:21 - I TIMOTHY 4:8
I CORINTHIANS 3:21 - I CORINTHIANS 14:26 - II CORINTHIANS 5:17 TO 20
HEBREWS 13:18 - II PETER 1:3 - ROMANS 8:28 AND 32

ALL THINGS

First let us read carefully I Corinthians 8:6 and Romans 8:28 and 32: "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of Whom are ALL THINGS, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are ALL THINGS, and we by Him." "We know that ALL THINGS work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

It is interesting to note that the words "THING" and "THINGS" are found more than 1600 times in the Bible (King James version). Here is a very interesting truth; in Paul's Epistles we find the expression "ALL THINGS" 76 times.

In II Corinthians 5:18 we read that ALL THINGS are of God. In I Corinthians 8:6 we read that ALL THINGS are of God and by Christ. God is Creator, Judge, King and Saviour.

Note Colossians 1:17 and 18: “And He (Christ) is before ALL THINGS, and by Him ALL THINGS consist: And He is the Head of the Body, the Church: Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in ALL THINGS He might have the preeminence.” This is in harmony with John 1:3 - ALL THINGS made by Christ.

God has committed all judgment unto Christ. (John 5:22 - Acts 17:31). Christ, as God’s Judge and King, will gather all nations before Him for judgment. (Matthew 25:31 to 41). As God’s King, Christ will put ALL THINGS under his feet. At present He is Head over ALL THINGS unto the Church, and He filleth ALL THINGS. (Compare I Corinthians 15:27 and 28 with Ephesians 1:19 to 23 - Ephesians 4:10 - and Hebrews 2:8). God will yet gather ALL THINGS together in Christ. (Ephesians 1:10).

We are told in John 4:25 - 21:17 and 2:25 that Christ, on earth, knew ALL THINGS. And now Christ upholds ALL THINGS by the Word of His power, the mighty power whereby He is able to subdue ALL THINGS unto Himself. (Hebrews 1:2 and 3 - Philippians 3:21).

When we read that God has appointed Christ Heir of ALL THINGS, let us know that we are joint-heirs with Christ; that ALL THINGS are ours, because we are Christ’s. Therefore, if we are called according to God’s purpose, ALL THINGS work together for our good. (Hebrews 1:2 - Romans 8:17 - I Corinthians 3:21 to 23 - Romans 8:28).

Our “all spiritual blessings” in Christ (Ephesians 1:3) are because of the truth of Romans 8:32 and II Corinthians 9:8: “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us ALL THINGS?” And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in ALL THINGS, may abound to every good work.”

Note Hebrews 2:10 and 2:17: “It became Him, for Whom are ALL THINGS, and by Whom are ALL THINGS, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” “Wherefore in ALL THINGS it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”

Because of all of the above, Christians are to obey Ephesians 5:20 - Philippians 2:14 - I Thessalonians 5:21: “Giving thanks always for ALL THINGS unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Do ALL THINGS without murmurings and disputings.” “Prove ALL THINGS; hold fast that which is good.”

Yes, II Peter is true: “According as His Divine power hath given unto us ALL THINGS that pertain unto life and godliness.” So also is I Timothy 4:8: “Godliness is profitable unto ALL THINGS, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” Read and believe Philippians 4:19 and Ephesians 1:3.

Pray not for more ALL THINGS - Appreciate and appropriate our ALL THINGS.

LESSON NINETY-SIX

READ EPHESIANS 1:4 TO 11 - EPHESIANS 1:19 TO 23 - EPHESIANS 2:7
EPHESIANS 3:7 - EPHESIANS 4:7 - EPHESIANS 3:11
EPHESIANS 3:16 - EPHESIANS 3:20 - EPHESIANS 4:16

ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL, PURPOSE AND PLEASURE

In the Epistle to the Ephesians we find the expression "ACCORDING TO" fifteen times and the expression "ACCORDING AS" (another form of the same Greek word) once.

Note Ephesians 1:4: "ACCORDING AS He (God) hath chosen us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." If we can begin to comprehend this truth, we can understand the rest of this message concerning "ACCORDING TO" in Ephesians. Note the first "ACCORDING TO" that follows the above statement: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, ACCORDING TO the good pleasure of His will." (Ephesians 1:5).

"Foreknowledge" and "predestination" are linked together in Romans 8:28 to 30: "Whom God foreknew He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of Christ." And in II Timothy 1:9, we learn that God's grace and purpose, given in Christ before the world began, guarantees the believer's salvation which is not ACCORDING TO His works; but ACCORDING TO God's before-the-world purpose.

This predestination is ACCORDING TO the good pleasure of God's will. Note Ephesians 1:9 and 11: "Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, ACCORDING TO His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself." "In Whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated ACCORDING TO the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

That grace and salvation which God purposed in Christ before the world is called "the mystery of God's will," "ACCORDING TO the good pleasure of His will;" "ACCORDING TO the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

In these Scriptures we learn that God is sovereign and omnipotent and determined. God is going to have His own way concerning His eternal purpose in spite of all the opposition of Satan and his heavenly principalities, in spite of religious men and their man-made religious organizations.

Note Ephesians 3:11: "ACCORDING TO the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Note in Ephesians 4:8 to 13 how God is working out His eternal purpose. By His Son and the Holy Spirit, and spiritual servants with special gifts, God is building up the foreordained, unprophesied Church, which is Christ's Body, one flesh with Christ, (Ephesians 5:31 and 32), the Perfect Man of Ephesians 4:13. So in spite of all opposition God worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. The culmination will be ACCORDING TO God's purpose and the pleasure of His will. It is wonderful and blessed to fall in with His will with all our hearts and obey Ephesians 3:9.

Consider the power and grace that the believer has in and through and by Christ. "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, ACCORDING TO the power that worketh in us." Ephesians 3:20. "What is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, ACCORDING TO the working of His mighty power." (Ephesians 1:19 and 20). God's power is unlimited. That power is available for every member of the Body of Christ and God's will is that it should work in every Body-member.

In II Timothy 1:9 and Ephesians 2:7 we learn that the member of Christ's Body is standing in an eternity of grace, the riches of God's grace. He is made accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:6). This word "accepted" is the Greek form of the noun "grace". He is "GRACED" in the Beloved, "In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins,

ACCORDING TO the riches of His grace.” Who can fathom, measure or compute the riches of God’s grace? Our redemption and forgiveness is ACCORDING TO the riches of God’s grace that God will continue to reveal in the ages to come (Ephesians 2:7). After reading Ephesians 2:7 then read Ephesians 3:7 and Ephesians 4:7 “Whereof I was made a minister, ACCORDING TO the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of His power.” “But unto every one of us is given grace ACCORDING TO the measure of the gift of Christ.”

LESSON NINETY-SEVEN

READ LUKE 9:1 TO 6 - LUKE 10:1 TO 11 - LUKE 4:16 - LUKE 1:27 TO 33
LUKE 2:24 AND 39 - LUKE 6:29, 30 and 35 - LUKE 18:19 TO 26.

CHRIST TO ISRAEL - PAUL TO GENTILES

In this lesson we are to study the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus on earth as recorded in the Gospel of Luke, with Paul’s Christ-given ministry in Romans and Ephesians.

In Romans 15:8 we read that “Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision (Israel).” In Romans 15:16 we read that “Paul was the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.” Not only were these two ministers for different people, but the ministry in the verses above quoted from Luke’s Gospel are quite different from Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles, recorded in such verses of Romans and Ephesians as Romans 10:5 to 12 - Ephesians 3:1 to 11.

We often hear that a Christian is one who follows Jesus Christ: but Paul said, in Philip-pians 3:17, “be followers together of me.” And in I Corinthians 11:1, “follow me as I follow Christ.” In I Corinthians 3:10, Paul wrote, “I, the wise masterbuilder, have laid the foundation.” How important it is to understand the meaning of II Corinthians 5:16 and 17.

Many, many sincere Christians have been workmen who needed to be ashamed, because they went to Matthew Mark and Luke to select the program for the Church, or Body of Christ, without heeding the instructions of the Lord, through Paul the wise masterbuilder. The Christian errs who does not study the earthly ministry of Christ in the light of Paul’s Epistles.

Some Christians are told to present their infants for public dedication, because the “Infant Jesus” was dedicated. But they should be Bereans (Acts 17:11) and read Luke 2:39 with Romans 6:14. In Luke 2:39 we learn that all that was done for Christ was according to the law; whereas Christian parents and children are not under the law. Some Christians want a little water put on the heads of their children; but Christ was not sprinkled when He was a little baby. He was circumcised. (Luke 2:21). The Christian’s circumcision is spiritual and not physical. (Colossians 2:11 - Philippians 3:1 to 3). Some say that the sprinkling takes the place of circumcision in the Old Testament. Then why sprinkle baby girls?

There may have been some water used in the dedication of Christ, for there were many different baptisms in Israel’s religion (Hebrews 9:10); but the principal part of the ceremony was the turtledove or pigeon. (Luke 2:24). Why not bring turtledoves to Church when little children are publicly dedicated? Christ was baptized when He was 30 years old. (Luke 3:21). Then He was baptized on the cross several years thereafter. (Luke 12:50). If we should follow Christ in baptism, which of these two baptisms? Every one who has really accepted His second baptism has been saved. Should we follow Christ in circumcision? As believers are baptized with

Christ's death baptism, so they are—and must be—circumcised with His circumcision to get into heaven. (Colossians 2:11 and 12 - Philippians 3:3). Should we do as He did, go to the synagogue of the Jews on the seventh day sabbath? (Luke 4:16).

Should we obey Luke 6:29, 30 and 35, by giving our coat when we are sued for our cloak; by giving to every one that asketh and expect nothing to be paid back when we lend money? Should we sell our property and give our money away, in obedience to Luke 12:33?

Should we, in this age of grace, tell a man to keep the commandments and sell all that he has, to receive eternal life? (Luke 18:18 and 19 to 26). How does this harmonize with Romans 4:4 and 5 and Ephesians 2:8 and 9? Let us remember that Christ on earth was under the law.

Let us test things that differ. Jesus of Nazareth, a Man in the Land of the Jews (Acts 10:38 and 39 and 2:22) is quite different from Christ in the Gentile - the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27 and II Corinthians 5:16). The one Gentile to whom Christ ministered in Luke loved Israel and built a synagogue for them. (Luke 7:1 to 12). Christ did not interfere with the offering of animals while He was on earth.

LESSON NINETY-EIGHT

READ I CORINTHIANS 10:32 - GALATIANS 3:26 TO 28 MATTHEW 10:5 AND 6
I CORINTHIANS 12:13 - EPHESIANS 2:11 AND 12

THE JEWS - THE GENTILES - THE CHURCH OF GOD

Note I Corinthians 10:32: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God."

While the Lord Jesus Christ was here on earth He said to His chosen, special apostles, "go not into the way of the Gentiles" - "go to Israel (the Jews)". At that time neither Romans 10:12 nor I Corinthians 12:13 was true. Read these two verses: "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him." "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." The Lord, on earth gave a blessing to one Greek Gentile; but she was of great faith and took her place as a "dog" under the Jews' table. (Mark 7:24 to 30). She was not then and there baptized into the Body of Christ mentioned in Ephesians 3:6.

Whatever the Church of God was in the Old Testament, the Body of Christ of Romans 12:4 and 5 Ephesians 5:31 and 32 is quite different. This Body in Ephesians 3:6 is called "the Joint-Body." Note Ephesians 2:17 and 18: "And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." The "far-off" were alienated Gentiles. (Ephesians 4:18 and 2:11 and 12). It is in this Body that there is neither Jew nor Gentile, as such; but both Jews and Gentiles joined together in Christ and baptized into His Body. (Colossians 3:11 - Galatians 3:28). There had been a great difference between Jews and Gentiles. (Matthew 15:24 to 30).

As we read the words of Christ, in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, we learn that He addressed His messages sometimes to saved Jews and sometimes to unsaved Jews. Both saved and unsaved Jews, were the children of Abraham, and Christ called all of them "the children of

the kingdom.” (Matthew 8:12). At that time the human race was divided, according to Ephesians 2:11 to 13, into two groups - “the Commonwealth of Israel,” the “nigh Jews, and “the aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel,” the “far-off” Gentiles. Now all saved Jews and Gentiles have been translated into the kingdom of Christ. (Colossians 1:13).

Under Paul’s gospel of grace (Acts 20:24 - Romans 16:25), the believing Jews and believing Gentiles were one; for believing Jews and Gentiles were reconciled by the cross of Christ in one Body. (Ephesians 2:17 and 18). This reconciliation in one Body came when and because Israel was cast away. Read Romans 11:5 to 15. In Romans 11:5, we read; “There is a remnant according to the election of grace” - “the rest were blinded.” The reconciled Gentiles became joint-heirs and joint-sharers in the Joint-Body with that elect remnant, (Ephesians 3:6). There were 3000 Jews saved on the day of Pentecost; but there was then no “Joint-Body.”

When the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, the end of this period of special favor for Gentiles, Israel will be saved. (Romans 11:26). Then the Jews will have a prominent place in God’s coming kingdom program. Because of this they are being miraculously preserved. Read Jeremiah 31:31 to 37 and Ezekiel 36:24 to 36 and Ezekiel 37:24 to 31.

In this parenthetical age, while we are waiting for the consummation of the age and the fulfilling of the times of the Gentiles both spiritually and politically, as revealed in Luke 21:24 and Ephesians 4:13, the human race is divided into the three groups: “the Jews” (unsaved). “the Gentiles” (unsaved), and the Body of Christ or “the Church of God,” Which He purchased with His own blood. (Acts 20:28). There is no salvation outside of this one true Bible Church, the Joint-Body.

There are many sectarian, religious Church organizations, but God recognizes one and only one true Bible Church in this age of grace, the Church Which Christ will present to Himself as a glorious, spotless, holy Church, Which with Christ is one flesh, one New Man. (Ephesians 5:27 - Ephesians 2:15 - Ephesians 5:30 and 31).

LESSON NINETY-NINE

READ HEBREWS 1:4 - HEBREWS 8:6 - HEBREWS 9:12 - HEBREWS 11:2

I THESSALONIANS 5:9 - ROMANS 11:30 - EPHESIANS 1:11

I CORINTHIANS 9:24 AND 25.

WHAT CHRIST AND CHRISTIANS OBTAIN

In this lesson we are to consider what Christ and Christians have obtained. There are six or seven different Greek words translated “obtain.”

In Hebrews 1:4 we read that Christ hath by inheritance OBTAINED a more excellent name than the angels.

In Ephesians 1:11 we learn that, in Christ, the Christians have OBTAINED a predestinated inheritance which God purposed.

In Hebrews 8:6 we learn that Christ hath OBTAINED a more excellent ministry than Israel’s Old Testament priests.

According to Hebrews 11:2 the Old Testament heroes of faith OBTAINED a good report by faith.

Then we read the wonderful news in Hebrews 9:12, that Christ by His own blood entered into heaven once, "HAVING OBTAINED ETERNAL REDEMPTION FOR US."

Peter addressed Christians as those, "that have OBTAINED like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (II Peter 1:1). This, of course, means the truth of I Thessalonians 5:9 and 10: "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to OBTAIN salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him."

In the Old Testament we read in Proverbs 12:2, "a good man OBTAINETH favour of the Lord." How wonderful it is to have God's favour and say with Paul, "if God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

In Romans 5:20 and I Timothy 1:13 and 16 we read some very good news; how a bad man can obtain the favour (grace) of the Lord: "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I OBTAINED mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." (I Timothy 1:13) - Then certainly Paul obtained special favour from the Lord. All through His life thereafter, Christ spoke these Words to that redeemed religious Christ-hating sinner who became the best of all Christians: "My grace is sufficient for thee." (II Corinthians 12:9). Paul, by the grace of God, laboured more abundantly than they all. (I Corinthians 15:10). The risen Lord revealed Himself and His message to Paul many times. He revealed salvation for Gentiles, in this language: "For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now OBTAINED mercy through their unbelief." (Romans 11:30).

If we never forget why Gentiles obtained mercy, we will not boast against the branches (Romans 11:18); but we will be gracious toward Israel with the message of grace, in obedience to Romans 11:31 - "Even so have these also not believed, that through your mercy they also may OBTAIN mercy." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God." (Romans 11:33).

In the message of salvation, in this age and dispensation, we know it is all of grace and all the way by grace, all-sufficient grace. (II Corinthians 9:8 - Romans 5:20 - Titus 2:11 and 14 - II Timothy 1:9 and Ephesians 2:7) - So we need not run, or do, to be saved by grace. But in I Corinthians 9:24, Christians are thus instructed, "So run, that ye may OBTAIN." Obtain, not salvation, but what the elders of Hebrews 11:2 obtained, a good report, an abundant entrance.

Men of the world run for a corruptible crown. "NOW they do it to OBTAIN a corruptible crown, but we for an incorruptible. (I Corinthians 9:25).

Is it not wonderful to know that the eternal Almighty living God is "the God of all grace" (I Peter 5:10), that "He will not only give us, free, eternal life, everlasting bliss and glory, but He will pay us well, with rich rewards for every service done in the Name of His Beloved Son?"

LESSON ONE HUNDRED

READ ECCLESIASTES 1:9 - JEREMIAH 31:21 and 31 - EZEKIEL 35:26
ISAIAH 62:1 TO 4 - MATTHEW 9:17 - MATTHEW 26:28 - II CORINTHIANS 5:17
GALATIANS 6:15 - EPHESIANS 2:15 - EPHESIANS 4:24 - HEBREWS 10:20
I JOHN 2:8 - REVELATION 2:17 - REVELATION 3:12 - REVELATION 5:9
REVELATION 21:1, 2 AND 5 - ISAIAH 66:22 AND 23

THE NEW THINGS IN THE BIBLE

In Ecclesiastes 1:9 we read “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.”

Things under God’s Sun may change form and combination; but there is nothing new under God’s Sun.

But note, in Jeremiah 31:22, how God promised something new under the Sun; that His Son, Who was above the Sun, in God’s bosom (John 1:18), would be born of a woman.

“The Lord hath created a New Thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a Man.” (Jeremiah 31:22). That Man would be the virgin’s Son and be Immanuel. “God with us.” (Isaiah 7:14). And through this New Thing on earth God promised to redeem the human race on the earth, and to have a New Heavens and a New Earth through a New Covenant. (Jeremiah 31:31 to 38 - Isaiah 66:22 and 23).

About 1945 years ago there was on this earth Something New under God’s Sun. It was God’s Son conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary. This was, indeed, something New under God’s Sun. That Son is called the Sun of righteousness. (Malachi 4:2). That New Thing was the Ancient of Days. (Daniel 7:9). He said, if ye “believe not that I AM, ye shall die in your sins.” (John 8:24). He was first, in the form of God, and created the Sun and everything that was made. (Philippians 2:5 and 6 - John 1:1 to 10 - Colossians 1:15 to 18).

That He might establish the New Covenant and produce New Creatures to make up, with Himself, the one New Man of Ephesians 2:15, and ultimately the New Jerusalem, the New Heavens, and All Things New, (Revelation 2:17 - Revelation 3:12 - Revelation 5:9 - Revelation 21:1 to 5), the New Thing, on earth, had to suffer awful shame and agony on the cross of Calvary. “This is My blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” (Matthew 26:28). Then Christ’s messengers became able ministers of the New Covenant (II Corinthians 3:6).

Then through a new apostle, Paul, God’s Son, Who had gone back to heaven, revealed that God was going to have another New Thing that would be seated above the Sun in the Son. God’s Word tells us that members of Christ’s Body are seated in the heavenlies, and there, in Christ blessed with all spiritual blessings.” (Ephesians 2:6 and 1:3). This was so New that Paul was put in jail for announcing it as New Truth. God had had other redeemed companies, “Churches,” on earth; but now He was to have that redeemed Company, Which He foreknew, predestinated and chose in, and for His Son, from before the foundation of the world. (Ephesians 1:5 - Ephesians 1:1 - II Timothy 1:9 - Romans 8:28 to 32).

This New Thing is called “Christ” in I Corinthians 12:12. It will be the Perfect Man of Ephesians 4:13. It will be One Flesh with Christ. (Ephesians 5:31 and 32). It will be One New Man of Ephesians 2:15. It will be the Filling-Up of Christ. (Ephesians 1:21 to 23). It is called the “Joint-Body” in Ephesians 3:6. The members of this New Church are New Creatures in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 6:15; II Corinthians 5:17). These New Creatures are exhorted to put on their New Man. (Ephesians 4:24 - Colossians 3:10). This Church (Body) will be completed and presented to Christ as a glorious, holy, spotless Church. (Ephesians 5:26 to 28).

Then the Son of God will come for a New Kingdom, a New order on this earth. (Read Isaiah 2:1 to 8). He will have a New Israel. Read Isaiah 62:1 to 4. We quote verse two: “The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness And thou shalt be called by a New Name, Which the mouth of the Lord shall name.” (Hephzibah. The Lord delighteth in thee). This will begin the

Restitution of all things. Then will follow the New Jerusalem - the New Heavens and the New Earth of Isaiah 66:22 and 23 and Revelation 21:1 and 2. And then ultimately after the earth has melted with fervent heat and these present things have passed away, as told in II Peter 3:9 to 13, righteousness will dwell in the New Heavens and New Earth and the final announcement of Revelation 21:5, "BEHOLD I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW."

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND ONE

READ I CORINTHIANS 15:21 TO 24 - LUKE 14:14
REVELATION 20:6 - I CORINTHIANS 15:51 TO 54

SEVERAL RESURRECTIONS

As in Adam, death, even so in Christ, life. By man (Adam) came death - by man (Christ) came also the resurrection of the dead. (I Corinthians 15:21). "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." (I Corinthians 15:22 to 24).

In Revelation 5:10 we read of some redeemed people who are going to reign on earth. And this we read in Revelation 20:6 - "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

From this verse we know that there is to be a millennium (a thousand years) on this earth when redeemed people shall reign with Christ. We also know that this will not be until the first resurrection takes place. Then we read in II Timothy 2:12, concerning members of the Body of Christ "if we suffer, we shall also reign."

From Zechariah 14:4 we know that Christ's feet shall stand upon the mount of Olives, and in that day He shall be King over all the earth. (Zechariah 14:9). At the present time Christ is far above all heavens; "Head over all things unto the Church, which is His Body." (Ephesians 1:20 to 23). This was not prophesied by Zechariah or any other Old Testament prophets. The present ministry of Christ in His relationship to members of His Body was not told by or to Israel's prophets. This truth was a part of God's secret, "the mystery of Christ": not made known in other ages. (Colossians 1:24 to 26). Therefore, those resurrections prophesied in Israel's Scripture did not contemplate what we call "the rapture of the Church."

Christ's feet did once stand upon the mount of Olives, and from there He ascended. (Acts 1:9 to 11). It was at that time God assured the apostles that the same Jesus would come back just as He went up into heaven. Zechariah 14:3 to 9 will be fulfilled so will Amos 9:11 to 15. Christ is coming back to this earth to take the throne of His glory, as King and Judge. (Matthew 25:31 to 35 - Luke 18:8 - Luke 21:27 to 32 - Amos 9:11 to 15 - Isaiah 9:6 and 7 - Acts 3:19 to 21). There can be no millennial kingdom unless and until the King comes back to earth.

As a part of "the mystery" program of God, unknown to Israel's prophets, Christ is going to call the saints of this "grace" age and dispensation to meet Him in the air. (I Thessalonians 4:13 to 19). "Behold I shew you a mystery. Christians shall not all die, but shall all be changed."

(I Corinthians 15:51 to 54). Job knew that his Redeemer would redeem his body, but he knew nothing of this secret. (Job 19:25). Neither did John and Peter in John 20:9. Read Acts 1:6 and Acts 3:19 to 21. Many Christians will be alive when the blessed hope of Titus 2:13 and Philippians 3:20 and 21 is realized. They will go to glory without dying, or falling asleep. They will not sleep, but in the twinkling of an eye they will be gloriously changed.

Surely if the first resurrection of Revelation 20 is the same as Colossians 3:1 to 4, we cannot teach that the Church will be saved from the tribulation any more than we can, if we teach that Matthew 24:31 is the Secret rapture.

Luke 18:8 - I Corinthians 15:52 and II Thessalonians 1:10, correctly translated, prove that the Church will not go into the tribulation. The Son of man will not find faith on earth after He shall have come for the Church.

So it is undoubtedly Scripturally correct to teach that Christ will call His Church to glory before the tribulation, and then come to earth, as the Son of man, in the time of Jacob's trouble. (Jeremiah 30:7 to 11 - Luke 21:25 to 33).

There is to be a resurrection out from among the dead, and not a general resurrection.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND TWO

READ TITUS 2:11 TO 14 - MATTHEW 10:5 TO 8
ACTS 13:46 - EPHESIANS 3:1 TO 4

A DISPENSATIONAL CHANGE

In Matthew 10:5 and 6 the Lord Jesus Christ commanded the apostles to go to Israel and not to the Gentiles.

If the message of Matthew 10:5 to 8 is the Lord's message for this age and dispensation of grace, there are no obedient Christians on earth. They were told to preach "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," "heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons" - "take no money for your expenses," etc. This program belonged to a dispensation different from the dispensation for Gentiles which Christ later committed to the apostle Paul. (Ephesians 3:1 to 8).

We use the word "dispensation." This is the Greek noun "OIKONOMIA" a "house law" or "government," "an economy."

In I Corinthians 9:16 and 17 and Colossians 1:24 to 26, the apostle Paul has told us that an "economy" or "dispensation" was committed unto him. In II Timothy 1:12, in the Greek, he calls it "my deposit."

Any student of the Scriptures, who has studied Paul's Epistles even casually and superficially, knows that the risen Christ deposited with Paul something different from any other Divine deposit. Yes, Christ committed unto Paul a dispensation. In Ephesians 3:9, it is called "the dispensation of the mystery."

Now read Ephesians 3:1 to 4: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words. Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)."

The dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles was God's secret (mystery) until Christ in glory revealed it to the apostle Paul. After that it was no longer a secret. It should not be a secret to any member of the Body of Christ. But every Christian should obey Ephesians 3:9 and make known what was for centuries God's sacred secret "but is now made manifest to his saints." (Colossians 1:26).

To Israel the Twelve were sent to preach the kingdom of heaven at hand, to heal and raise the dead. (Matthew 10:6 to 8).

The dispensation of grace was not revealed to Paul until after Peter had used the keys of the kingdom of heaven, (Matthew 16:16 to 19), not until Israel fell (Romans 11:11), not until the kingdom proclaimed by the Twelve was postponed. (Compare Acts 3:24 with Colossians 1:26).

During this parenthetical, unprophesied "grace" period God is building the Body of Christ and not building again the tabernacle of David, (Ephesians 4:9 to 13 - Acts 15:13 to 18). This tabernacle will again be built, but not during this economy.

Members of the Body of Christ are expected to preach now the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20:24). They are not cleansing lepers, casting out demons, and raising the dead, and they are certainly going to Gentiles, all of which is a radical change from Matthew 10:5 to 8.

In the days of the flood Noah "found grace" in the sight of God. God's grace has always been manifested to sinners, even under the law. But there is a great difference between grace in a former dispensation and the present dispensation of grace.

No servant of the Lord, while Christ was on earth, or up to the thirteenth chapter of Acts, until after Paul's message to Israel in Acts 13:46, could have preached with Divine authority Titus 2:11 to 14: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God our Saviour Jesus Christ: Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." The grace of God for all men is so different from the kingdom of heaven at hand for the Jews. Compare the message of Matthew 10:6 and 7 with the wonderful gospel of Romans 10:4 to 10 and you should understand and appreciate the dispensational change.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THREE

READ II CORINTHIANS 5:9 TO 15 AND 5:20

AMBASSADORS OF RECONCILIATION

In these Scriptures we learn why every Christian should be a faithful and fruitful ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We labor for Divine acceptance. This acceptance is not for salvation but for service and rewards. Note the word "accepted" as we compare II Corinthians 5:9 and Ephesians 1:6 and 7: "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be ACCEPTED of Him." "To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us ACCEPTED in the Beloved, In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of

His grace.” This second ACCEPTED is the verb of the Greek noun “GRACE” - God has “GRACED” us, according to the riches of His grace. Isn’t this wonderful?

Thus we see it is one thing to be saved by grace without service, because of the perfect redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ, while it is a different thing to be rewarded for faithful service done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 15:58, - I Corinthians 3:13 to 15). The word “ACCEPTED” in II Corinthians 5:9 is translated “WELL PLEASING” in Philippians 4:18.

Then we should be faithful soul winners because of the truth of II Corinthians 5:10: “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.” Read about this in I Corinthians 4:1 to 5 and in Colossians 3:23 to 25 Romans 14:8 to 10.

What a day that will be! (I Corinthians 4:1 to 6).

Then again in II Corinthians 5:11 to 15, we learn that Christians should be faithful ambassadors with the ministry of reconciliation, because they know the terror, or the fear, of the Lord; because the love of Christ constraineth them; because that Christ died and rose again and they died with Him and they should not live to please themselves, but to please Christ Who died for them. Hear Paul’s words. “Watch - by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day, with tears.” (Acts 20:31).

A great truth is stated in the last two verses of the sixth chapter of I Corinthians: “What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

Then we should think of the words of Christ: “And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.” Luke 14:14. Our labor is not in vain in the Lord. (I Corinthians 15:58 - I Corinthians 3:14).

Perhaps the meaning of I Thessalonians 2:19 and 20 and Philippians 4:1 is that the Lord Jesus Christ at the judgment seat will give the crown of joy or rejoicing to faithful and fruitful ambassadors. U. S. ambassadors are called “ambassadors extraordinary” - “ministers plenipotentiary” (full of power). Our task is far more important than theirs. (Read Ephesians 1:19 and 20).

Christians, “we are labourers together with God.” “If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.”

Then all Christians should think of the solemn and important truth in Romans 10:14 and 15: “How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?” “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”

“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” Daniel 12:3. “Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” James 5:20. Now read the ambassador’s commission and message in II Corinthians 5:16 to 21.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR

READ LUKE 18:8 - II THESSALONIANS 1:7 TO 10

PRETRIBULATION PREMILLENARIANS

A very interesting question is asked in Luke 18:8: . . . “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?”

Can you answer this question? Will there be faith on earth when the Son of man comes? The Son of man will surely visit this earth again and it will not be a short visit.

The Greek construction of this question undoubtedly calls for a negative answer. The Son of man will not find faith. Note in this same Gospel of Luke what Christ said: “As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.” “. . . the flood came, and destroyed them all.” (Luke 17:26 and 27).

Aside from the faith of Noah and his family, there was not much faith on the earth in the days of Noah. There was much lawlessness and such violence that God brought an end to it all by an awful judgment. There will be more lawlessness when the Son of man comes back to this earth. (II Thessalonians 2:1 to 12 - Matthew 24:27 to 31). Think what the dragon, the beast and the man of sin are to do.

If the Son of man will not find faith on earth when He comes, then He will not find His Church (Body) here. The reason why Christ, as the Son of man, will not find faith on earth, is because the Church will have been removed to heaven.

Concernin the coming of Christ for His Church, we have in I Corinthians 15:51 to 53 the truth of the “MYSTERY” coming of Christ when the living members of the Church will be changed, but will not sleep. Read these three verses with I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18 and Philippians 3:20 and 21.

Intelligent, spiritual obedient Christians are looking for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ will call the Church to meet Him above and that coming is imminent, not determined by prophesied political events, not in fulfillment of Old Testament prophesied signs. Otherwise, it would not be a mystery; neither could it be considered imminent until all the prophesied events were taking place. Setting dates by “signs” and the “mystery” appearing of Christ are irreconcilable.

If the Lord Jesus should call His Church to glory today, He would find on earth the greatest number of Christians who ever lived on this earth at any one time. But in thus calling His Church to meet Him in the heavenlies, He would not come down to earth as the Son of man.

According to the “revelation” truth for the “Church of the Mystery” (Ephesians 3:4 to 9), Christ is not the Son of man to the Church, which is His Body, and Christ is not coming to the earth as the Son of man, until the Church has been taken to glory and the political world and the religious world head up under the beast and the false prophet, the Antichrist. There is a great difference between the rapture of the Church and the King’s coming to earth.

Now note the awful judgment and doom of a Christless civilization in II Thessalonians 1:7 to 10: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, When He SHALL HAVE 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.”

These are solemn words, but the fulfillment of them will be far more solemn.

In II Thessalonians 2:10, "WHEN HE SHALL COME" should be "WHEN HE SHALL HAVE COME."

The coming tribulation is prophesied. "The Church of the Mystery," the hope and calling and rapture were not prophesied. For this reason and for the truth of Luke 18:8 and II Thessalonians 1:10 the Church will not be in the tribulation. Israel and the Christ-rejecting nations will be (II Thessalonians 2:9 to 11). Christ in the tribulation, will come to redeem Israel. (Luke 21:25 to 33). Therefore, members of Christ's Body, should be "Pretribulation Premillenarians."

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIVE

READ ROMANS 10:1 TO 4 - I THESSALONIANS 4:13 TO 18
I CORINTHIANS 2:6 TO 16. - ROMANS 11:25 AND 26

SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE

Because of the prayer of Christ on the cross (Luke 23:34), and because Christ's death had to be as it was, and when it was, by God's eternal decree and purpose, (Acts 3:18 - Acts 4:25 to 28 - Acts 2:22 - I Peter 1:18 to 20), God was willing to forgive Israel's murder of Christ (Acts 7:51 to 54) on the ground of ignorance. (Acts 3:12 to 17). Some of the Israelites did repent. But the rulers would not.

Later from the nation Israel God had a remnant according to the election of grace. "The rest were blinded." (Romans 11:5 to 12). Israel stumbled over the Stumblingstone. (Romans 9:32 and 33). "For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Romans 10:3 and 4).

Israelites, with the exception of a few Hebrew Christians, are still blind and still ignorant of God's righteousness. But a very large percentage of the Gentiles, including millions who are church-members, are just as ignorant as were, and are the blind Jews. They prefer to endeavor to establish their own righteousness with God, which is impossible, rather than have the righteousness of God established by Christ. (II Corinthians 5:21). This righteousness by faith is available for any Gentile or Jew.

Because the rulers of this world were ignorant, they crucified Christ. (I Corinthians 2:7 and 8). The natural man, even though cultured and exceedingly religious, is ignorant of spiritual things. They are foolishness unto him. (I Corinthians 2:12 to 14 - John 3:1 to 13).

Spiritual things are not revealed to the worldly wise, "the wise and the prudent"; but "unto babes and sucklings." This is God's way, (Luke 10:21 and I Corinthians 1:27 to 31).

The Divine truth of Romans 11:25 to 33 is so important for Christians to believe. Read very carefully Romans 11:25 and 26: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from

Jacob.” When religious Christians are wise in their own conceits, the Holy Spirit cannot teach them this wonderful truth, which must be understood, if we are to know what God is now doing and what He will do in another age.

Why does the Holy Spirit say in I Thessalonians 4:13, “ I would not have you ignorant”? Because He knew that religious sectarians would have their own creeds and programs, and that the truth of God concerning the glorious rapture of the Church would or could have no place in them.

Why do the majority of the most spiritual Christians not obey Ephesians 3:9: “And to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God”?

Only as we understand the first mystery of Romans 11:25 to 33 can we begin to understand the mystery of Christ, in Ephesians and Colossians. We must know the truth of Romans 11:30, that Gentiles received God’s mercy because of Israel’s unbelief. Salvation was sent to Gentiles, when and because of the fall of Israel. (Romans 11:11). Israel had not fallen at the time Peter preached to Cornelius. Because they have more or less of Judaism in their programs, which they cherish more than an obedience to Ephesians 3:9, most Christians will not obey Ephesians 3:9 and Ephesians 1:16 to 18.

If not ignorant of the prayers of Ephesians 1:16 to 18 - Ephesians 3:14 to 19 - Ephesians 6:19 and 20 and Colossians 4:3 and 4, they are wilfully shutting out the light which comes with receiving the Spirit of wisdom and revelation for this special glorious truth.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIX

READ PHILIPPIANS 3:20 AND 21
COLOSSIANS 3:1 TO 4.

CHRISTIANS IDENTIFIED WITH CHRIST

In Romans 6:4 we read that as Jesus Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we (believers) also should walk in newness of life.

Note the believer’s place in Ephesians 2:6: “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.”

It is quite difficult at times, if not most of the time, for Christians, in the midst of worldly sinners and worldly things, to realize that they have been raised up and made to sit in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. “Our citizenship is in heaven.” (Philippians 3:20 and 21).

But before there can be a spiritual resurrection there must be crucifixion, death and burial. So we read: “I have been crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me”. Galatians 2:20. “Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” Romans 6:6. “Know ye not, so many of us as we were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death: that like as Christ was raised up from the death by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life?” (Romans 6:3 and 4). “Buried with Him

in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who raised Him from the dead.” (Colossians 2:12).

The believer is dead with Christ, risen with Christ and his life is hid with Christ in God. He is crucified to the law and to the world. His old man has been crucified and he has crucified the flesh. (Galatians 6:14 - Galatians 5:24 - Colossians 3:1 to 4).

Thus we see that by the operation of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Christians are identified with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and ascension. This is all by grace through faith, not of works lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:6 to 9).

The very moment the sinner believes the gospel of I Corinthians 15:1 to 4, he puts on Christ by God’s Divine baptism. (Galatians 3:27). And at the very same time the believer becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. (II Corinthians 5:17). And at the same time he is baptized into the Body of Christ, God’s one and only true Bible Church during this age and dispensation of grace. (I Corinthians 12:13). The very same moment that the believer is crucified and dead, he is raised with Christ by the same operation of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, by the same Divine baptism. And of course, there must be a burial, if there is a death and a resurrection; and this burial takes place the very moment the believer receives Christ and Christ receives the believer. The believer is complete in Christ; and Christ is in the believer the hope of glory. (Colossians 2:10 and Colossians 1:27).

As the believer is dead with Christ and raised with Christ and seated in the heavenlies, with heavenly citizenship, he is exhorted to think of heavenly things and love heavenly things and look for the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Colossians 3:1 to 6) (Titus 2:12 to 14).

Christ was baptized in Jordan and baptized on the cross of Calvary. (Luke 3:21 and Luke 12:50). In His death baptism Christ died unto sin once. (Romans 6:10). “And He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live into themselves but Him, Which died for them and rose again.” (II Corinthians 5:15. “He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit.” (I Corinthians 6:17).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SEVEN

READ ISAIAH 2:2 TO 4 - JOB 19:25 - EZEKIEL 38:16 - DANIEL 2:28 - DANIEL 8:19
DANIEL 10:14 - MICAH 4:1 - HOSEA 5:3 - JEREMIAH 30:24 - JEREMIAH 23:20
GENESIS 49:1 - JOHN 6:39 AND 40 - JOHN 11:24 - JOHN 12:48 - ACTS 2:17
JAMES 5:3 - I TIMOTHY 4:1 - II TIMOTHY 3:1 - II PETER 3:3 - I PETER 1:5
I JOHN 2:18 - JUDE 18

ARE WE LIVING IN THE LAST DAYS?

The Scriptures above foretell “the last days,” “the last times,” “the latter days.” Note the question the apostles asked Christ, in Matthew 24:3, “what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the age?” After telling of some terrible events that are to take place on this earth Christ said, when the gospel of the kingdom shall have been preached as a witness unto all nations, then shall the end come. (Matthew 24:13 and 14). More than 30 years later Paul said that the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven, all over the world. (Colossians 1:5 and 6 - Colossians 1:23). The only end that came was the end of Paul’s ministry on earth. But

before he said good-bye to this sinful, condemned world, he wrote, in I Timothy 4:1 to 3, of the latter times concerning the spiritual state of some religious people who would depart from the faith and give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, and do some other ungodly things. Then he added in II Timothy 3:1 to 9, “in the last days perilous times shall come.” And again he stated that people would be religious; anything but spiritual, incontinent, covetous, blasphemers, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

Paul had already written concerning the power of the blaspheming man of sin, the son of perdition, controlled by Satan, by whom multitudes would be deceived at the time of Christ’s coming. (II Thessalonians 2:1 to 12).

Christ had much to say about the time of His return. He intimated that there would not be faith on earth when he comes back; but plenty of trouble. (Luke 18:18 - 21:25 to 33). Peter wrote that scoffers in the last days would scoff at the teaching of the second advent of Christ. (II Peter 3:3). This will be at the time when religious pseudo-Christians would preach the damnable heresy, denying salvation by the blood of the Divine Christ. (II Peter 2:1 to 5). James wrote that the rich would heap together treasures for the last days. (James 5:3). These riches will prove to be a great curse. Jude confirmed Peter’s prophecy concerning the “last day scoffers.” (Jude 18). Job said, in the latter day his Redeemer would stand on the earth. (Job 19:25).

In Daniel 2:28 - Daniel 8:19 - Daniel 10:14, we know what is to happen in the latter days with Israel (the Jews) and the Gentile world rulers. In Ezekiel 38:16, the Holy Spirit wrote of the Divine judgment upon Gog in the last days. In Micah 4:1 to 4 and Isaiah 2:2 to 4, we have the same wonderful glorious prophecy concerning the last days; “warless”, “crimeless,” “deathless” days, universal peace, blessing and righteousness. Read also Hosea 5:3 - Jeremiah 23:20 and Jeremiah 30:24.

Then read Joel 2:28 concerning the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit to which Peter referred in Acts 2:17, “In the last days.”

In I John 2:18, the Holy Spirit, by John, said. “it is the last time” - “we know it is the last time” - “even now there are many antichrists.” So the last days were here when John was on earth. We must explain our question, “are we in the last days?” Read these verses and let’s by the grace of God obey them. In the light of Ephesians 3:9, we will believe that we are living in a “signless” and “timeless” age, not trying to set days, not looking for signs but for the Son, the blessed hope. (Titus 2:13).

Old Testament prophecies concerning “the last days” do not indicate the time of the coming of Christ for His Body. (I Corinthians 15:51 to 54). Many sincere Christians have made this mistake and brought ridicule to the “Second Coming” teaching. It is most inconsistent to teach that the return of the Lord for the Church is imminent, that He might have come at any time in past years and then to teach that His coming is at hand, because. Daniel or Ezekiel is being fulfilled.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHT

READ PHILIPPIANS 1:21 TO 26 - PHILIPPIANS 3:20 AND 21
II PETER 1:13 AND 14 - JOHN 21:18 TO 23 - II CORINTHIANS 5:1 TO 8
ACTS 7:59 AND 60 - II SAMUEL 12:20 TO 23.

TO DEPART TO BE WITH CHRIST

Let us very carefully and prayerfully read Paul's testimony in Philippians 1:21 and 23 and 24: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."

In the New Testament Scriptures ten different Greek words have been translated "depart." Several different prefixes are used with the verb "chomai" - "aperchomai" - "exerchomai" - "dierchomai" - "katerchomai." This last word, translated "depart" in Acts 13:4, means "to go down."

Paul did not say in Philippians "to go down and be with the Lord is much more better." When Stephen departed he went up (Acts 7:58 to 60). Paul's earthly tabernacle may have gone down, if it was not buried above the ground. Paul used the Greek word "anago." That same Greek word is used in Acts 20:3 and Acts 20:16 and Acts 28:11. In the first two verses it is translated "sail" and in Acts 28:11, "we departed (in a ship)." The word has the thought of sailing away" or "setting out to sea."

Why did Paul say that for him to die would be gain? In Philippians 1:25 Paul wrote that he knew that he was not going to depart to be with Christ at that time; but was going to remain in the flesh until he saw the Philippian saints again. Later on Paul wrote "the time of my departure (analysis) is at hand." (II Timothy 4:6). The time of my "breaking up" is at hand.

But in Philippians 3:20 and 21 Paul wrote that he was looking for Christ out of heaven to change his body of humiliation. Paul earnestly desired to be clothed upon with his house from heaven (II Corinthians 5:2).

So many Christians have been confused and perplexed trying to reconcile Paul's statement in II Corinthians 5:8, that he was willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present (at home) with the Lord, with the statement that he did not want to be unclothed by physical death, but clothed upon by the coming of Christ, (II Corinthians 5:4).

Some, who have taught the unconscious state of the believer between death and resurrection, have tried to use this seeming contradiction of thought to prove that Paul will not be present with the Lord until the time of the resurrection of the body.

But surely there is no hint in Paul's Epistles to support the theory of the unconscious state of either believer or unbeliever between death and resurrection. There are some who interpret II Timothy 2:18 to prove that those who teach the believer's soul goes at death to be with Christ in heaven teaches the faith-destroying doctrine, that the resurrection has taken place.

Stephen saw the Lord Jesus in heaven. When Stephen left his earthly tabernacle he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." (Acts 7:58 to 60). Stephen departed to be with Christ. He was absent from the body, present with the Lord.

Some support their 'unconscious state' theory with the statement that man is a living soul (Genesis 2:7), and therefore when the man dies that is the end of the soul, that the salvation of the soul in I Peter 1:9 means the salvation of the believer at the resurrection.

But Peter did not agree with them. If Peter was a living soul, Peter said, "this living soul must put off this earthly tabernacle," (II Peter 1:14). The living soul put off the corruptible body. But Peter or Peter's soul within that body did not die or cease to be conscious.

We might mention the words of Christ to the thief "I say unto thee today thou shalt be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43).

The statement of David, concerning his baby that died is interesting: “But now he is dead. Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.” (II Samuel 12:23). David soon thereafter went to be with that child, and he was not talking about the grave. Beware of any and every “soul sleeping” or “soul destruction “ theory!

Paul said, “it is much more better to set out to sea to be with Christ.”

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND NINE

READ HEBREWS 2:8 AND 9 - HEBREWS 11:27 - HEBREWS 12:1
II CORINTHIANS 5:7 - JOHN 3:3 AND JOHN 3:36 - II CORINTHIANS 4:8
ACTS 28:25 TO 27 - I PETER 1:7 AND 8 - JOHN 6:40 - HEBREWS 12:1

CHRISTIANS SEE WHAT THEY DO NOT SEE

In the New Testament Scriptures about ten different Greek words are translated “SEE.” Some of these words are quite different in meaning.

We read in Hebrews 2:8 and 9 that we SEE Jesus, made lower than the angels for the suffering of death, that He might by God’s grace taste death for every man. But in I Peter 1:7 and 8 we read of Jesus Christ. 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.

In this second Scripture we know something of the meaning that Christians walk by faith and not by sight, (II Corinthians 5:7). In this verse SIGHT is the Greek “EIDO.” This word might imply “view” - “form” or “shape.”

The word “SIGHT” occurs 52 times in the New Testament Scriptures. But II Corinthians 5:7 is the only time “EIDO” is used. However, this same Greek word is translated “SEE” and is used many times.

When God pronounced His judgment upon Israel, in Acts 28:25 to 27, He said, “SEEING” ye shall “SEE” and not “PERCEIVE;” their eyes have they closed lest they “SEE” with their eyes.” The first “SEEING” and “SEE” are “BLEPO”, “to look at” or “behold.” The third “SEE” is “EIDO.” But the word “PERCEIVE” is also “EIDO.” This same Greek word is translated “PERCEIVE” in Matthew 13:14 - Mark 4:12 - Mark 12:28 - Acts 14:9.

But another Greek word is translated “PERCEIVE”, in John 4:19 - John 12:19 - Acts 17:22 Acts 27:10, “THEOREO.” In Hebrews 7:4 where we are told to “CONSIDER” how great was Melchisedec, this same Greek word is used. Several times this same Greek word is translated “See”, as in Acts 7:56. But note its use in John 6:40, when the Lord spoke of “SEEING” the Son and believing on Him. Then Christ said to Nicodemus, “except a man be born from above, he cannot ‘SEE’ the kingdom of God.” The word translated “SEE” in the Greek is “EIDO.” But in the same chapter (3:36) “shall not SEE life,” the Greek is “OPTOMAI”. The noun “OPTASIA” is translated “VISION” in Luke 1:22 - 24:23 - II Corinthians 12:1.

Now note again Hebrews 2:8 and 9: “We SEE” (“HORAO”) not yet all things put under Him. But we “SEE” (“BLEPO”) Jesus.”

The Greek “EIDO” is translated “KNOW” more than 200 times. “BLEPO” is translated “REGARD” in Matthew 22:16. This is the Greek word four times translated “SEEN” in II Corinthians 4:18: “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." And in I Corinthians 2:14: we learn that the natural man without the Holy Spirit, cannot receive spiritual things. Neither can he "KNOW" them, because they are spiritually "DISCERNED."

In I Corinthians 13:2 "EIDO" is translated "UNDERSTAND." There are ten different Greek words translated "UNDERSTAND." In our daily conversations we say, "we see something," when we mean, we understand it."

After this study we shall see, or perceive, or understand, or know what we mean by the statement, "Christians see what they do not see," and shall more appreciate Hebrews 11:1 and II Corinthians 5:7: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

The more faith we have the more truth we SEE. So let us pray for what God wants us to have in Ephesians 1:17 and 18. This is profound truth, the strong meat for those of full age. (Hebrews 5:14). In this prayer is a beautiful expression, "the eyes of your UNDERSTANDING." ("DIANOIA"). This Greek word means "DEEP THOUGHT." There is the milk of the Word for the babes in Christ or for carnal Christians. (Hebrews 5:11 to 13 - I Corinthians 3:1 to 4). Wordly wise, unregenerated men, though moral and religious cannot "KNOW" spiritual truths, which are spiritually "DISCERNED," ("ANAKRINO").

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND TEN

READ JOHN 20:31 - JOHN 2:1 TO 11 - JOHN 4:46 TO 54 - JOHN 5:1 TO 9
JOHN 6:5 TO 13 - JOHN 6:19 - JOHN 9:1 TO 7 - JOHN 11:41 TO 44

JOHN'S GOSPEL - SEVEN MIRACLES

We find this most interesting statement in John 20:30 and 31: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this Book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name."

Yes, Christ performed many miracles not recorded in John's Gospel, for the purpose stated in Acts 2:22 and John 5:36; that Christ might be approved to Israel; that they might believe that God sent His Son to be their Messiah and King.

There are four miracles recorded in John not found in the Synoptic Gospels. Matthew, Mark and Luke have been called the Synoptics, because so many of the same events in the life of Christ are recorded in them.

Seven miracles of Christ, before His death, are recorded in John's Gospel. And there is a reason why more than 80 per cent of the contents of John is not recorded in the Synoptics.

Seven is the perfect number of Deity. In John 1:1 to 4, Christ is God. In John 20:28, Christ is God. In John 10:30 to 33, Christ is God. He had glory with the Father before the world was. (John 17:5).

About twenty times in John's Gospel Christ calls Himself "I AM." These "I AM's" are not found in the Synoptics. Christ offered seven great miracles to prove it. When He fed the 5000

hungry people with less than a pound of fish and bread He said, "I came down from heaven." He claimed to be the true Bread from heaven necessary for eternal life. (John 6:37 to 47).

In the very first chapter (John 1:11) His own received Him not. It was after Christ's own received Him not, that "grace" came to Gentiles. (Romans 11:11 and 30). But in John 1:17 we read that grace came by Jesus Christ. We learn years later, in Romans 5:21, and Ephesians 2:8 to 10, how that grace operates.

In Romans 11:30 we learn that because His (Christ's) own received Him not, "grace" salvation was sent to Gentiles.

So the first sin question to settle, in John's Gospel, is the "Son" question, the sin of not believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

For the "Son" question, read John 16:7 to 9 - John 3:18 - John 8:24 - John 3:36 - John 6:29 - John 6:40.

In the gospel of grace the sinner is "unregenerated." The sinner is impotent." The sinner is "blind" from his mother's womb, and must wash in the pool of Siloam. The sinner is "dead."

Therefore, we have four miracles in John not found in the Synoptics.

1 - TURNING THE WATER INTO WINE - typifying REGENERATION. Born of the water by the power of Christ. Then the joy of salvation. (John 2:1 to 11). There is no physical water in God's message of grace. Compare John 3:5 with Titus 3:5 to 7 and Hebrews 10:22.

2 - THE IMPOTENT MAN HEALED, in John 5:1 to 9. Note in the Gospel of John how impotent the sinner is. He "cannot." (John 6:44 - John 6:65 - John 3:27). In grace, the sinner cannot. He cannot, and need not do one work to save himself. His good works follow salvation by grace. (Ephesians 2:10).

3 - HEALING THE MAN BLIND FROM BIRTH. This blind man had to wash in "Sent." (Siloam means Sent). (John 9:7). Count the many times Christ is the "Sent One," in John. The pool of Siloam is Calvary. Calvary is the only place where a man spiritually blind can receive sight. Read I Corinthians 2:14.

4 - RAISING DEAD LAZARUS TO LIFE. We note in John 11:39 the awful condition of dead Lazarus: corruption. This speaks of the awful condition of dead sinners in Ephesians 2:1 to 3, as well as in John 5:25. The dead sinner's only hope is Ephesians 2:4 to 10 and 13; and John 11:25; John 5:25; 24; Romans 6:23. God is rich in mercy, great in love. And salvation is by grace. The dead sinner needs the living Christ of Revelation 1:18. The grace gospel will make the believer alive and raise him up in the heavenlies. (Ephesians 2:5 and 6).

Surely the miracles in John tell the truth of Romans 5:20, the more-abounding grace of the God of all grace, reigning through Jesus Christ.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVEN

READ GENESIS 1:26 AND 27 - GENESIS 5:1 TO 3 - HEBREWS 1:1 TO 3
ROMANS 8:28 TO 32 - ROMANS 8:3 - I CORINTHIANS 15:49 TO 53.

THE DIVINE IMAGE RESTORED

In these Scriptures we have the story of the Divine image lost in Adam, and ultimately, and more than completely, restored in Christ.

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. The new creature has put off the old man and has put on the new man who is created in the image of Him Who created him. The believer has died and has been buried and has been raised with Christ (spiritually) to walk in newness of life. The believer is a member of that Church, Which is to be one flesh with Christ and Which Christ will present unto Himself as a glorious, spotless Church holy and without blemish. All of these wonderful truths we read in II Corinthians 5:17 - Colossians 3:10 - Romans 6:3 to 6 - Ephesians 5:31 and 32 and Ephesians 5:26 and 27.

In Genesis 1:26 and 27 and Genesis 5:1 and 2 we have a two-fold story of the creation of Adam. Adam was first created without Eve, in the image and likeness of God. Then Adam and Eve; "And God called THEIR name "Adam." "In the image and likeness of God. Adam and Eve were one flesh." (Genesis 2:23). Christ and the Church, one flesh, are called "Christ," in Ephesians 5:31 and 32 and I Corinthians 12:12. Christ was the one Perfect Man. Christ and the Church will be the Perfect Man of Ephesians 4:13. So we have in Ephesians the Church, as Christ, the Perfect Man, composed of the Head and the members.

Adam, the first man, was a figure of Christ, the Second Man, the last Adam. (Romans 5:14 - I Corinthians 15:45 to 48). Adam's children were born in his sinful likeness and so were we. (Genesis 5:3 and Psalms 51:5). Note the great difference between Adam in Genesis 1:27 and Adam's children in Genesis 5:3. Jesus Christ was the express image of God's person and the effulgence of God's glory. In Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily. (Hebrews 1:1 and 2 - Colossians 1:15 to 19). Christ was in the form of God; in the bosom of God. Christ was with God. Christ was God. Christ had glory with the Father before the world was. (John 17:5).

So Christ was God in human form, in the form of flesh and blood; in the likeness of sinful flesh. (John 1:14 - Hebrews 2:14 - Romans 8:3).

Before Adam sinned God foreknew and predestinated that, for the glory of His Son, He would have a race of sons conformed to the image of Christ. They are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:28 to 32 - Ephesians 2:10). Only such a new creation availeth anything. (Galatians 6:15).

So the believer can say, "Christ liveth in me, the hope of glory." (Galatians 2:20 - Colossians 1:27). The gospel is called the gospel of glory. (I Timothy 1:11). We are to behold and partake of Christ's glory. (John 17:24 and 25 - Colossians 3:3 and 4).

The believer's experience is told in II Corinthians 3:18 - II Corinthians 4:16 and in Romans 8:23: "But we all, with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." "For which cause we faint not: but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." "We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

But the Holy Spirit is the earnest, of something better. (Ephesians 1:13 and 14). We read of our glorious redemption in Philippians 3:20 and 21. Our bodies shall be like unto the glorious body of the glorified Christ. Then the Church will be the spotless glorious Church of Ephesians 5:27, because Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for the Church.

Christ, in addition to His Divine nature, took upon Himself human nature, that believing children of Adam, in addition to their human natures, might receive Divine natures. (Hebrews 2:14 - II Peter 1:3 and 4 - John 1:11 to 13). Whom God foreknew, He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of Christ and them He called, justified and glorified (Romans 8:28 to

32). We are like Christ now in a limited sense; but we are going to be like Him when we see Him. (I John 3:1 to 4).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND TWELVE

READ MATTHEW 24:3 TO 14 - MATTHEW 24:29 TO 31 - LUKE 21:24 TO 33
DANIEL 9:26 AND 27 - REVELATION 6:1 TO 17 AND REVELATION 19:11 TO 21

THE FIVE HORSEMEN

This is the study of the Five Horsemen of the Apocalypse - the Five Horsemen of Revelation 6:1 to 5 and Revelation 19:11 to 21. Four of these Horsemen are going to bring awful judgments and plagues upon humanity when this world will be, as it was in the days of Noah. (Matthew 24:38 - Luke 17:26). The awful wrath of God was sent upon the human race and the earth in the days of Noah. But the judgment of Revelation 19:11 to 21 will perhaps be worse.

The apostles asked of Christ a question which should be of vital interest to every human being, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world (age)?" (Matthew 24:3). After Christ mentioned some of the signs He said, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." (Matthew 24:13).

No one who has died since the apostle Paul went out with the gospel of the grace of God has lived in days described in some of the verses of the 24th chapter of Matthew. Paul described his personal tribulation in II Corinthians 4:8 to 12 and II Corinthians 11:24 to 33; and in the world God's saints have tribulation, but the great tribulation is yet to come on this earth.

The Jews, who suffered with the destruction of Jerusalem, in the year 70 A. D., had the touch of the tribulation mentioned in Luke 21:20 to 24. And after that intense suffering at the hands of the Roman army the apostle John wrote: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."

When asked for the signs of His coming and the end of the age, Christ mentioned in Matthew 24:5 to 9:

1. Antichrists.
2. Wars.
3. Famines.
4. Pestilences.
5. Earthquakes.
6. Intense suffering.

Some one may ask, have there not been "antichrists," and "wars," and "famines," and "Pestilences," and "earthquakes," and "religious persecution" in every generation? Has there been any more of any of these than during our recent horrible world war, which was preceded by a world-wide sweep of Christianized agnosticism, called "Modernism" by the so-called Christian Liberals, who should know that a Christian infidel is an impossible paradox?

But much of the 24th of Matthew has not been fulfilled. The end of this, another age and dispensation (of grace) will be climaxed, as described in Ephesians 4:13, before the end, described in Matthew 24:13, comes. After the present age of grace, which had not begun at the

time Christ spoke in Matthew 24, will appear the Four Horsemen of Revelation 6. The other terrible things of that chapter will come to the human race. Note how the order in Revelation 6 agrees with the order in Matthew 24:

1. The White Horse - Antichrists,
2. The Red Horse- War,
3. The Black Horse - Famine,
4. The Pale Horse - Pestilence,
5. A Great Earthquake,
6. Great Tribulation and intense Suffering.

In this connection read II Thessalonians 2:3 to 12 and Revelation 19:11 to 21. In these Scriptures we learn that two men are coming, the antichrist, and Christ, the Fifth Horseman of the Apocalypse.

As the First Horseman is restrained during this present age of grace, none of the Four Horsemen will appear on earth until after the consummation of Ephesians 4:13 and Titus 2:13.

It is significant that the First Rider of Revelation 6 is to be on a white horse and the Fifth Rider, the Lord Jesus Christ of Revelation 19:11 to 13 is to be on a white horse. There have been a number of white horse riders, but it seems that the beginning and the end of the coming great tribulation are marked by these two white horse Riders. Christ will not be on His white horse when He comes for His Church; but when He comes according to II Thessalonians 1:7 to 9 - Jude and Luke 21:27 to 33.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN

READ GENESIS 2:2 AND 3 - EXODUS 16:23 TO 29 - EXODUS 20:8 TO 11
EXODUS 31:14 TO 16 - EXODUS 35:3 - NUMBERS 15:32 - LUKE 4:16
COLOSSIANS 2:16 - ACTS 20:7 - REVELATION 1:10.

IS THERE A CHRISTIAN SABBATH?

Is the first day of the week “the Christian sabbath” or “the Lord’s day?”

Let us read Genesis 2:2 and 3 and Exodus 31:16 and 17: “And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested (sabbathed) on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the SEVENTH DAY, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.” “Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.”

In Genesis 1:31, we read that at the end of the sixth day, after man was made in the image and likeness of God, God saw that all His work was very good. God was hard at work on the first day. But God “sabbathed” in His perfect work of creation. But it was on the seventh day. God rested in His perfect work of creation. But God’s rest was surely disturbed after the serpent beguiled Eve and spoiled God’s perfect work. Now the whole creation is travailing in pain. (Romans 8:21 to 23).

Christ entered, by His blood, into heaven, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and He sat down in heaven on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Hebrews 9:12 - Hebrews 10:12 - Hebrews 1:2 and 3). This He did after He cried on the cross, “finished.” (John 19:30). Christ rested in a perfect work of redemption. Christ arose on the first day of the week. Christ was dead and in the sepulchre on the seventh day, Israel’s sabbath. Before He went to Calvary Christ said, “Come unto Me and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28). Then on the cross He became the end of the law for righteousness to believers. (Romans 10:4). “Therefore there remaineth a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.” (Hebrews 4:9 and 10).

By trusting and resting in the perfect redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ we learn that, under grace, the believer has rest, but no sabbath; as Israel, under the law, had the sabbath but no rest. Christ is the believer’s sabbath. Christians should thank God that one day in seven is set aside for special worship and spiritual activities; but the first day of the week is certainly neither the Christian sabbath nor the Lord’s day. In Revelation 1:10 John was projected into the day of the Lord and was not talking about Sunday. It seems that the “first day” was a special day with the first Christians; but we may be sure that they did not petition Caesar to force the sinners to close their shops.

There can be no sabbath without stone-throwers to execute those who gather sticks or light fires or do any servile work on that day. (Numbers 15:32 - Exodus 35:3). God gave men a perfect work at Sinai, with a sabbath. They did not and could not perfectly keep that law and they found no sabbath (rest) in the law.

Christ was a seventh-day sabbath-keeper. (Luke 4:16). But He was Lord of the sabbath day. (Mark 2:28).

The sabbath was a covenant between Jehovah and Israel. (Exodus 31:14 to 16). There can be no universal sabbath with such variations of time; especially with Israel cast away. (Romans 11:15).

Abraham had no sabbath to keep. He found rest in a Person, not in a day. So also do Christians today. There is no mention of the sabbath between Genesis 2:2 and Exodus 16:23 to 29; that period called “from Adam to Moses.” (Romans 5:14).

Christian, “let no man judge you with respect to the sabbath.” (Colossians 2:16). Christians should be glad that they can gather for worship on the first day; and while they should not be legalistic concerning the first day of the week, yet they should say with Paul, I Corinthians 8:13.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN

READ MATTHEW 28:19 AND 20 - ROMANS 16:25 AND 26
ROMANS 11:25 AND 26 - ACTS 10:28 - ACTS 15:7

WHICH IS THE GREATEST COMMISSION?

In this lesson we ask some very interesting and thought-provoking questions in connection with the so-called great commission of Matthew 28:19 and 20: “Go ye therefore, and teach (disciple) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Let us note also Christ’s words to the same apostles who received this commission. “But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.” “And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration (millennium) when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Matthew 10:23 and Matthew 19:28).

Now note Romans 16:25 and 26: “Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began.”

Did the Lord Jesus contemplate Paul’s “my gospel” and the revelation of the mystery when He gave the commission to Peter and the Eleven? Did Christ instruct Paul to preach Mark 16:16 to 18, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved and these signs and miracles shall follow them that believe?”

We note in Acts 7 and 8, that Stephen and Philip worked under the authority of Peter and the Eleven. But in Galatians 1:13 to Galatians 2:9 we learn that Paul did not recognize any authority but Christ; and that Paul’s “grace” gospel was received by revelation. (Galatians 1:11 and 12 - Ephesians 3:1 to 3 - Romans 16:25). If Paul was under the great commission, why Galatians 1:11 and 12?

If the twelve apostles were to carry out the great commission by preaching the same gospel of grace, which Paul preached, (Acts 20:24), why did Peter, in Acts 10:28, say, 7 years after the commission was given, it was unlawful for him to preach to Gentiles? Why, after he did preach to Gentiles, did the other eleven apostles condemn him? (Acts 11:1 to 3). This was something more than either prejudice or deliberate disobedience. And why did Peter say to his fellow-apostles, “God chose by my mouth that the Gentiles should hear?” (Acts 15:7). Why not twelve mouths? Why did the twelve apostles remain in Jerusalem when the other disciples went out to preach to Jews only? (Acts 11:19 - Acts 8:1 and Acts 15:1 to 5). Why is there no record in Acts that the Twelve went on missionary journeys outside of the land of the Jews to preach to Gentiles, and no record that any but Peter preached to Gentiles? In the Book of Acts 4 or 5 of Paul’s missionary journeys are recorded. Christ sent Paul far hence to the Gentiles. (Acts 22:21).

Why did Paul say that the gospel was sent to Gentiles because Israel blasphemed and put God’s Word from them? (Acts 13:45 and 46). The great commission says “disciple all nations.” But there is no Scriptural record that the Twelve did this.

We read Romans 11:30: The Gentiles obtained mercy because of Israel’s unbelief. Compare Matthew 28:19 and 20 with Romans 11:30, Romans 11:11 and Romans 11:15. Did the so-called great commission contemplate the casting away of Israel before the nations would be disciplined? When Israel was cast away the new commission of reconciliation was given by the Lord. (Romans 11:15 and II Corinthians 5:16 to 21).

Three things must be done by the individual who obeys the great commission of Matthew 28:19 and 20. He must disciple and baptize and teach what Christ had taught the Twelve, which had nothing to do with Ephesians 3:1 to 4, God’s message and program of grace for this age. If a layman discipled under Matthew 28:19 and 20, he should baptize and finish the job, not turn part of it over to the clergyman.

Matthew 28:19 and 20 applied before Israel’s fall. But II Corinthians 5:16 to 21 applied after Israel’s fall.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN

READ EPHESIANS 3:1 TO 11 - EPHESIANS 1:19 TO 23 - EPHESIANS 4:9 TO 14
EPHESIANS 2:16 TO 22 - EPHESIANS 5:31 AND 32
COLOSSIANS 1:24 TO 28 - HEBREWS 2:10

THE CHURCH OF THE MYSTERY

What is the meaning of the word C-H-U-R-C-H? In some way the word has come to us from “Kurios,” translated “Lord” many times in the New Testament Scriptures. More than 100 times we have the word “Church” in the Scriptures from Acts to Revelation. The word “Church” is used three times in (Matthew 16:18 - Matthew 18:17). There was a Church in the wilderness in the days of Moses. (Acts 7:38). Every time the word “Church” occurs in the New Testament Scriptures (with the exception of Acts 19:37, which is a mistranslation) the Greek word is “EKKLESIA” - from “EK - KALEO” - “Called - Out.” The Church is “the CALLED-OUT” and always refers to a company of people and not to a meeting house. In Acts 19:32, 39 and 41 the word EKKLESIA is translated “assembly.” That assembly was a crowd of unsaved Ephesians, idolaters. So the word “EKKLESIA” does not necessarily mean the Church of God or the Body of Christ.

Now in Colossians 1:24 to 27 we read of the CHURCH OF THE MYSTERY, hid from ages and from generations. This Mystery had to do with the Body of Christ, Which is the Church. (Colossians 1:24). By reading also Ephesians 3:3 to 6 we see the Body can be called “the Church of the Mystery.” This word “Body” is the Greek “SOMA.” The Church, in Ephesians 3:6, is called the “SUSSOMA,” meaning the “Joint-Body.” Now note in Ephesians 1:22 and 23, that Christ is the Head over all to the Church (EKKLESIA), Which is His Body (SOMA). And read what follows - “THE FULNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL.” Isn’t this an unusual definition of the Church? But it is certainly Scriptural.

Now in Ephesians 4:13, the finished Church, or Body, is called the Perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. We would not be Scriptural if we should call any sectarian organization, the Perfect Man.

Yes, we have Scriptural right to define the Body, or Joint-Body, of Christ as “the Church of the Mystery,” “the Filling, Up of Christ.” Referring to the SOMA, after the Holy Spirit describes the make-up of the human body (SOMA), made up of many members, He adds, “SO ALSO IS CHRIST.” This, then speaks of “the Filling-Up of Christ.” So the Church is called “Christ” in I Corinthians 12:12. You have heard the Church called “the Mystical Christ.” The Head and all the members are “CHRIST”—the two “ONE FLESH.” (Ephesians 5:31 and 32).

The word “Church,” as used in Hebrews 2:12, does not refer to the one Body of Ephesians 4:4 and I Corinthians 12:13. The “Church” of Hebrews 2:12 is the “Congregation,” prophesied in Psalm 22:22. No prophesied Congregation could be “the Church of the Mystery.” In the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament Scriptures the word “EKKLESIA” is used a number of times, generally translated “Congregation.” So “EKKLESIA” was not a new, mystical word first used to mean “Church.”

CHRIST is the “Church of the Mystery,” according to I Corinthians 12:12 and 13 and I Timothy 3:15 and 16. The “Church” in the Bible is not always the Body of Christ. Paul said he persecuted “the Church of God.” (I Corinthians 15:9 - Philippians 3:6 - Galatians 1:13). But he did not persecute the Joint-Body of Ephesians. There was no Joint-Body when Saul was persecuting. Paul persecuted the Church of God formed under Peter’s ministry, with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, (a Church of Jews). When Paul (Saul) was persecuting the Church (Acts 9:1 to 4) it was not lawful for Peter and the Eleven to go to Gentiles. (Acts 10:28). Peter and the Eleven had a “prophesied kingdom” program rather than God’s eternal purpose. (Ephesians 3:11).

Peter told his hearers that what he was preaching was made known by all the prophets since the world began.(Acts 3:21 and Acts 3:24). Paul declared that the truth concerning “the Church of the Mystery” was not made known to or by them; but it was a very special program purposed before the world began.

Note Adam in Genesis 5:2. (Compare Genesis 2:21 to 25 with Ephesians 5:31 and 32).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN

READ GENESIS 6:13 TO 22 - EXODUS 25:1 TO 22 AND 40 - EXODUS 35:20 TO 35
EXODUS 36:7 AND 8 - EXODUS 39:42 AND 43 - I KINGS 5:3 TO 18
I KINGS 6:7 TO 9, 37 AND 38 - ACTS 15:13 TO 18 - EPHESIANS 4:9 TO 13

GOD’S BUILDINGS AND FOREMEN

“Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.” Hebrews 8:5.

Several centuries before God told Moses to build, He told Noah to build an ark. God said to Noah, in Genesis 6:14: “Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.” Now Genesis 7:6: “And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.” Noah built that ark strictly according to the Divine pattern.

Now God’s order to Moses in Exodus 25:9 - Exodus 35:10 and 11 and Exodus 39:42 and 43: “According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.” “And every wise hearted among you shall come, and make all that the Lord hath commanded: The tabernacle, his tent, and his covering.” “According to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work. And Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them.”

God had another foreman for the building of the temple. His name was King Solomon. “And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither, so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.” “So he (Solomon) built the house, and finished it; and covered the house with beams and boards of cedar.”

Now we read Acts 15:16 - "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up." This is to be a very large building that will mean much to this world. Then we quote Ephesians 4:11 and 12 - I Corinthians 3:10, Philippians 3:17 and I Timothy 1:16 "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying (building up) of the Body of Christ." "According to the grace of God which is given unto me (Paul), as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon, But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." "Brethren, be followers together of me." "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern."

God's foremen were Noah, Moses, Solomon, Christ and David, Christ and Paul.

God is, and always has been, a great Builder, with human foremen and permitting men to help Him build. The Lord Jesus Christ was more than Foreman in creation. (John 1:1 to 4 - Colossians 1:15 to 17). Christ made all things, the heavens and the earth. In Ephesians 5:26 and 27, we read that Christ's finished Church will be glorious, holy and spotless. God's faithful foreman always worked according to the blue prints and specifications and built according to God's patterns,

God chose Noah to build the judgment proof ark. (Hebrews 11:7). God chose Moses to be His foreman in building the tabernacle. His many helpers did not deviate from the instructions of their foremen. The Scriptures (Exodus) above tell the story. If each of the twelve tribes had disregarded the Lord's instructions through His foreman, as do most of the 250 sectarian churches today, what would have resulted?

Solomon had foremen under him and a multitude of workers. But they received all instructions from Solomon, the foreman.

Christ and King David and the twelve apostles will have most important places over Israel in rebuilding the tabernacle of David. (Amos 9:11 to 15 - Matthew 19:27 and 28). Surely Christ gave Paul the blue prints and specifications to build one and only one Church. Let's build according to the pattern.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN

READ ACTS 19:1 TO 4 - II CORINTHIANS 1:20 TO 22
EPHESIANS 1:13 AND 14 - EPHESIANS 4:30

HAVE YE RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The interesting question and answer in Acts 19:1 to 4 has confused many Christians. The question Paul asked of certain Jews, who had received John the Baptist's baptism, is: "PISTEUSANTES, received ye the Holy Spirit?" (Acts 19:2). Not "since ye believed," but "at the time ye believed." These men believed the wrong thing for the age of grace. (Acts 19:3 to 6).

The same Greek participle of the word "believe," in Paul's question in Acts 19:2 is translated, in Ephesians 1:13, "after that ye believed." Here again the Greek is "PISTEUANTES, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise"; "sealed unto the day of redemption."

(Ephesians 4:30). "PISTEUSANTES" should be translated "believing" or "on believing." It is the participle of the verb "believe."

Christians, who have stressed Holy Spirit baptism as a Divine work subsequent to and separate from Holy Spirit salvation, have tried to prove by Acts 19:2 and Ephesians 1:13, that there might be a short or long period between the time of the believer's salvation and the time that he receives Holy Spirit baptism for sanctification. They perhaps have not read II Thessalonians 2:13 or I Corinthians 6:11.

In support of their teaching they quote John 14:17, the words of Christ when on earth, "the Holy Spirit dwelleth WITH you; and shall be IN you." They quote also Luke 24:49, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." These men of God were thus instructed before the advent of the Holy Spirit.

They quote also Acts 1:5, "Ye shall be baptized with (in) the Holy Spirit not many days hence."

They offer as proof for their second work of grace, the fact that the twelve apostles received the Holy Spirit several years after they became disciples of Christ. Could the apostles have received the Holy Spirit before the Spirit was sent down from heaven? Let us not fail to reckon with John 7:38 and 39 and John 16:7 to 9; for in these Scriptures we learn that the twelve apostles lived the other side of Calvary before the Holy Spirit was sent down from heaven; before the beginning of the dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles. We are not living in the land of the Jews, in the days of the Son of man with those disciples, who were saved before the dispensation of the grace of God began. (Ephesians 3:1 to 3).

The apostles had to wait several years for the advent and baptism of the Holy Spirit. However, the 3000 Jews, saved on the day of Pentecost, did not wait very many minutes for Holy Spirit baptism. They murdered the Son of God, but they received the Holy Spirit when they were saved by obeying Acts 2:38.

In this age of grace believers do not have to tarry for the baptism, the anointing, or the sealing of the Holy Spirit. Not one of these is a future experience with a saved person. The very moment the believing sinner is saved, he becomes a baptized member of the Body of Christ. (I Corinthians 12:13). If a person has not received Holy Spirit baptism, that person is neither saved nor in the Body. There is one Body and one baptism. (Ephesians 4:4 and 5). (I Corinthians 12:13).

At the very same moment of salvation, the believing sinner becomes a "Christ One," a "Christian." That means that he has received from God, "the anointing." "Christ" (Christos) means "Anointed." A Christian is one whom God has anointed by the Spirit. That anointing remains. (II Corinthians 1:20 to 22 - I John 2:26 to 28). The sealing remains (Ephesians 4:30). The Holy Spirit is received by faith in Christ and his redemptive work without striving, praying, or tarrying. (Galatians 3:14).

Saved by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit is the truth of II Thessalonians 2:13. When saved, the believer receives all of the Holy Spirit: for the Holy Spirit is a Person. Then and there the believer is blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies, and all the mighty power of God is placed at his disposal. (Ephesians 1:1 to 3 - Ephesians 1:19 to 23). No person with "all blessings" needs a "second blessing."

"Be it unto you according to your faith." Holy Spirit baptism produces salvation.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN

READ ACTS 11:26 - I PETER 4:16 - ACTS 26:28 - I CORINTHIANS 1:21 AND 22.

WHAT (WHO) IS A CHRISTIAN?

Many define a Christian as one who is a follower of Christ. This definition needs to be clarified: for Jesus Christ, on the earth, was under the law, and members of the Body of Christ, in this age and dispensation of grace are not under the law. (Galatians 4:4 - Luke 4:16 - Romans 6:14).

It is interesting to know that the word "Israel" is found in the Scriptures about 2570 times, whereas the word "Christian" is found only three times. (Acts 11:26 - I Peter 4:16 - Acts 26:28). The Gospel of John is a great favorite with most Christians. In that Book we find the word "Jew" about 70 times, but not once the word "Christian." However, it is interesting to compare John 15:8 with Acts 11:26. "Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples." "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." While Christ was on earth His disciples were under the law: but Christians are not.

Here then we can say that a Christian is a fruit-bearing branch abiding in Christ, the true Vine. A Christian is one in whom Christ lives (Galatians 2:20), one who lives in Christ, (Colossians 3:3 and 4).

Undoubtedly the Jews, in derision and hatred, called the disciples of Christ, "Nazarenes." (Acts 24:5). The word "Nazareth" was a despised name of reproach with the Jews. Perhaps the Romans gave the name "Christians" to the disciples of Christ. Paul said; "for me to live is Christ." "If any man be in Christ there is a new creation" - "God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus" - "translated into the kingdom of the Son of God's love." (II Corinthians 5:17 - Ephesians 2:10 - Colossians 1:13). We read in II Corinthians 1:21 and 22; "now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath ANOINTED us (made us Christians) is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

Paul used the word "saints" many times in his recorded oral and written ministry; but we have no record where he used the word "Christian." In II Thessalonians 2:13 we are told of the Divine process by which God makes Christians or saints. Note it carefully. "God hath chosen us to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit."

Then, if you would visit God's "saint factory" and again study the Divine process of grace and power and the human material out of which God makes saints, read carefully Titus 3:3 to 8 - Ephesians 2:1 to 10 and I Corinthians 6:11. Every Christian and every sinner should read and re-read these wonderful verses and see how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit change "dead sinners" into "living saints."

If we would form the habit of asking the church-members, "are you a saint" instead of "are you a Christian," the question would cause more searching of the conscience and the heart, for there seems to be the prevailing idea that any moral, religious Gentile who is not a Jew, is a Christian. But God's command is that each individual be born again or become a new creature in Christ Jesus. Then, in such chapters as the third of Colossians, the fourth and fifth chapters of Ephesians, the twelfth and thirteenth chapters of Romans, and in many others, the Holy Spirit tells the Christian how he can by spiritual behavior prove to his fellow-men that he is indeed a genuine Bible Christian.

Paul addressed Ephesians, “to the saints.” (Ephesians 1:1). Then he instructed them how to conduct themselves “as becometh saints.” (Ephesians 5:1 to 5). How did they become saints? Not by conducting themselves “as becometh saints,” but by grace, through faith, without works or Christian behavior. (Ephesians 2:8 to 10). No one becomes a Christian by behaving, but by believing. Then Christians should behave “as becometh saints.”

But if Christians try to follow Jesus of Nazareth in Matthew, Mark and Luke (Acts 2:22) without obeying I Corinthians 11:1 and II Timothy 2:15 they may find themselves to be Old Testament Jews in Israel’s land instead of members of the Body of Christ seated in the heavenlies. (Ephesians 2:6).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEEN

READ II TIMOTHY 3:1 TO 5 - II TIMOTHY 4:1 TO 5 - ROMANS 9:30 TO 10:4
II CORINTHIANS 11:13 TO 15

ARE THE PERILOUS TIMES HERE?

First we quote four of the verses mentioned in our Scripture reading: “This know also that in the last days PERILOUS TIMES SHALL COME.” “Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. From such turn away.” (II Timothy 3:1 and 5). “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” (II Timothy 4:3 and 4).

In Jude Four we read of certain men who have crept in unawares. These men are described as religious men, religious leaders. Peter also described these religious leaders in II Peter 2:1 to 3 and wrote: “And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.” II Peter 2:2.

Paul, in II Corinthians 11:3, tells how such pernicious ways begin. Then he describes Satan and his religious servants in II Corinthians 11:13 to 15: “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”

We here learn how religious leaders creep in under the control of the angel of light. They get into religious groups even among Christians who have failed to obey II Timothy 2:15 and II John 7. Some of them “speaketh great swelling words,” (Jude 16). Of course, they claim to be Christians and especially anointed apostles or servants of Christ.

As we look about today and behold the tremendous increase of so-called modernists in the evangelical seminaries, pulpits and pews, propagating their Christianized agnosticism, we should think seriously of the Spirit’s warning concerning the perilous times. These “Liberal” leaders use the Bible and some Christian phraseology to deceive and seduce their followers. They neither teach nor endure sound doctrine. They turn God’s Word into a fable and preach another Jesus and another gospel, pleasing the religious people with itching ears. But Christians, remember I John 2:26 to 28 and II John 3 to 8.

Then think of the several million people in our own land, who have been seduced into some of the antichrist or metaphysical cults propagating, in Bible phraseology, the satanic vagaries of some false prophets. Several million who were formerly members of some so-called Christian Church have accepted these delusions.

Because of the lack of real Scriptural evangelical Holy Spirit conviction on the part of the “Modernist” leaders and even among some of the indifferent religious leaders in dead orthodoxy, there is comparatively little real evangelistic zeal in most of the churches and comparatively little conviction of sin on the part of the sinners.

Christianity has always had to earnestly contend for the faith in the face of legalism or ritualism, rationalism and agnosticism. Paul wrote in Galatians 5:9, “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” John wrote there were many antichrists even in his day. (I John 2:18).

Satan had his servants put in the leaven in the grace gospel to pervert that gospel, and to subvert souls. (Galatians 1:6 to 9 - Acts 15:24). Read these verses and see how the gospel was perverted and souls subverted.

Satan is still using religious men to put in the leaven. Take an inventory today and see the ritualism, rationalism and fanaticism, which abound. All began with that leaven.

In Romans 9:30 to Romans 10:4 we read of religious men who sought righteousness, not by faith; but by the works of the law. They found “Christ crucified” a stumbling-block. The rationalist today finds the cross foolishness (Romans 9:32 - I Corinthians 1:21 to 25).

They have a zeal toward God; but not according to knowledge. Many today have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY

READ ROMANS 11:20 TO 2.4 - II THESSALONIANS 2:1 TO 13
HEBREWS 10:28 TO 31

THE GOODNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD

In Romans 11:22 we read: “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.” Romans 11:22.

A strange combination - the goodness of God - the severity of God. We understand the meaning of the goodness of God; but this word “SEVERITY” means “decisive action.”

This is the same combination we find in Romans 1:18 and in Romans 5:8 and Ephesians 2:4 and 5: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness.” “But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” “But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved).”

So much is said in the Bible concerning the wrath of God and yet we read in I John 4:8, “for God is love.”

All through the Bible God is revealed as a holy, just and a righteous Judge Who declares that every disobedience and transgression shall receive a just recompense of reward. (Hebrews 2:2).

But God is also revealed as a merciful, compassionate, long suffering, gracious loving Saviour, even the God of all grace (I Peter 5:10), Who is not willing that any should perish but will have all men to be saved. (II Peter 3:9 - I Timothy 2:4 to 7). In Titus 3:4 we read: "After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared." Then we read in Romans 2:4, "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

Here is a very solemn fact recorded in Romans 14:12: "So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." Let us consider God's kindness, and love, and goodness, grace and mercy.

And hear these words from the heart and mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ in John 5:22: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." This is confirmed in Acts 17:31: It was Christ who said when He was going to the cross, "Now is the judgment of this world." John 12:31 to 33. Dealings with the Lord Jesus Christ are inescapable. Every individual must meet Him here as Saviour and receive eternal life or meet Him hereafter as Judge and receive everlasting punishment. (Romans 6:23 - Revelation 20:10, 14 and 15). Every knee shall bow to Christ and acknowledge His Deity. (Philippians 2:5 to 10).

Read and believe John 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Hear God's warning to Gentiles in Romans 11:21: "For if God spared not the natural branches (the Jews), take heed lest He also spare not thee (the Gentiles)."

But this is nothing to compare with the awful judgment of God that is going to fall upon the present evil age when II Thessalonians 2:1 to 12 is fulfilled, when the political and religious world heads up under Satan's beast and false prophet: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Now read Hebrews 10:28 to 31, comparing the law-breakers, who died without mercy under the reign of law, with the foolish sinners in this age and reign of grace, who despise God's grace and spurn His love and treat the blood of Christ as something unholy. Judgment-vengeance. But for believing sinners read I Thessalonians 5:9. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

Even a superficial reader of the Bible knows that the Bible clearly and definitely teaches that the human race is divided into two groups, "living saints" on the way to eternal glory and "dead sinners" on the way to eternal conscious perdition. It is for every person, either the blood of Christ or the lake of fire.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-ONE

READ COLOSSIANS 4:14 - II TIMOTHY 4:11 - ACTS 16:10 - ACTS 16:16 AND 20
ACTS 21:15 ACTS 27:20 TO 37 - ACTS 28:16.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DR. LUKE

In this lesson we are to have the autobiography of one of the most faithful and noble men in the Bible.

In Colossians 4:14 the apostle Paul calls this man, "Luke, the Beloved Physician." He is mentioned in Philemon 24 - II Timothy 4:11. Luke is mentioned at the end of Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians. How then are we to have Luke's autobiography?

We quote Acts 16:10 - Acts 21:15 - Acts 27:20 and 37 and Acts 28:16: "And after he had seen the vision, immediately 'WE' endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called 'US' for to preach the gospel unto them. "And after those days 'WE' took up 'OUR' carriages and went up to Jerusalem." "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on 'US,' all hope that 'WE' should be saved was taken away." "And 'WE' were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls." "And when 'WE' came to Rome."

Luke went through that storm and shipwreck with Paul. The Beloved Physician was on a piece of the wreck that reached the shore. (Acts 27:44).

Then Acts 28:16, "And when 'WE' came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard." Then several years later Paul wrote II Timothy 4:11, "only Luke is with me."

If you want to study the biography of this noble, courageous faithful servant of the Lord, find the "WE" used about fifty times in Acts, the "Us" and "OUR", quoted more than twenty-five times, that tell of the heroic deeds of Luke, the Beloved Physician.

Here are some of the references: Acts 16:10, 11, 12, 13, 16 - Acts 20:6, 13, 14 and 15 - Acts 21:1,2, 3, 4, 5, - Acts 27:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 26, 27, 29, 37, - Acts 28:1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 - Luke 1:1 to 3 - Acts 1:1 and 2.

The Beloved Physician is included in the 'WE' in these verses; for Dr. Luke wrote the Book of Acts. The 'WE' included Paul. What a comfort and encouragement Luke must have been to Paul all the way, until the time of Paul's death, when Paul wrote, "only Luke is with me." (II Timothy 4:11).

Luke wrote, what has been called, the Third Gospel, Although there are more chapters in Matthew and Acts than in Luke, yet Luke's Gospel contains more words than any other Book in the New Testament Scriptures. Luke also wrote Acts. One word is almost enough to convince us of this, if we need be convinced, the word "certain," found in Luke more than 40 times and in Acts more than 50 times.

In Luke and Acts there are 2158 verses; whereas in all of Paul's Epistles to the Church and to Gentiles, 13 messages (not including Hebrews), there are 2034 verses.

In these Epistles of Paul, Paul used the first person pronoun in speaking of himself about 1000 times. He was the chief human actor; the wise masterbuilder. (I Corinthians 3:10). We can read the wonderful achievements of Paul in these Records, but we must "dig" for Luke's achievements.

But Paul was neither presumptuous, deluded nor egotistical. Luke was his fellow-laborer, and a good one. (Colossians 4:14 - Philemon 24). Paul was in jail in Rome when he wrote these Epistles. Luke was with him undoubtedly unto the end.

Now note Luke 1:3 and Acts 1:1: "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus." "The former treatise have I made O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began to do and to teach." Here we learn of the only time that Luke used "I" and "me." Even in Luke 1:1 and 2 he said "us."

In Acts 16:10 (Luke) the writer of Acts used the “we” to let us know when he joined Paul. Then in the verses following we have Luke’s journey with Paul from Troas by several cities thence to Philippi.

On the sabbath Luke went to prayer (16:13). This, and Acts 16:20 causes any true Berean to doubt if Luke was a Gentile.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-TWO

READ MATTHEW 26:38 TO 46 - JOHN 11:46 TO 55 - JOHN 12:30 TO 33
I CORINTHIANS 15 - JOHN 16:7 TO 12 - 14:1 TO 3 - GALATIANS 2:21
GALATIANS 3:21 - ROMANS 10:9 AND 10 - JOHN 8:24 - I PETER 4:18

SOME OF THE BIG “IF’S” OF THE BIBLE

Perhaps we are not surprised that there are more than 1500 “IF’S” in the Bible. There is an “IF” to all the “things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue.” (II Peter 1:3). After we read the good news that Christ made peace through the blood of His cross, to reconcile all things to God (Colossians 1:20), we have the big “IF” of Colossians 1:23 and I Corinthians 15:2: “IF ye continue in the faith”; “IF ye keep in memory what I preached unto you.”

First let us note the all-important Gethsemane “IF” of Matthew 26:39 and Luke 22:44: “O My Father, IF it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” “His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” Was it possible? Was there another way for God to be just and the Justifier of believing sinners? (Romans 3:24 to 26). There was not. The answer is His agony and cry on the cross, “Finished.” (John 19:30). Note the “IF” of John 11:48 and 53: “IF” we let Him (Christ) thus alone, the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.” “Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death.” Then Christ’s “IF” in John 12:31 to 33: “Now is the judgment of this world: And I, IF I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die.”

Christ was lifted up and at Calvary the judgment of the world took place. (Hebrews 2:9 - Hebrews 9:26 - I Peter 3:18). By Christ all who believe are justified from all things. (Acts 13:39). There is no judgment for believers in Christ. (Romans 8:1 - Romans 4:5 to 8).

Then the all-important “IF” of I Corinthians 15:17 and 18. “And IF Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.”

“IF” Christ had not come forth from death, as He foretold in John 10:17 and 18, what we call “Christianity” would have passed away with the death of the apostles of Christ. But Christ shewed Himself alive after His death to more than 500 Christians, by many infallible proofs. (I Corinthians 15:4 to 8 - Acts 1:3). Yes, Christ was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification, and He is the only One whereby we must be saved. (Romans 4:20 to 25 - Acts 4:12). This brings us to consider two great “IFS”: “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for IF righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” “IF there had been a law given

which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” (Galatians 2:21 and 3:21).

Consider these “IF’S”. IF the children of Adam could have been saved by any human scheme or religious program, there was absolutely no reason why Christ should have been foreordained, before Adam was created, to die on the cross to be the Saviour of the world. (I Peter 1:18 and 19). As we read Christ’s “IF” in Gethsemane and the “IFS” of Galatians 2:21 and Galatians 3:21, we marvel at the presumption, audacity and ignorance of religious sinners who think they can please God and get into heaven without accepting Christ and Calvary. But the explanation is, “the god of this age.” (II Corinthians 4:3 and 4 - Revelation 12:9). The Lord Jesus on earth said that He would have to go back to heaven, before the Holy Spirit would come down from heaven to convict sinners of the sin of rejecting Him. “IF I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but IF I depart, I will send Him unto you.” (John 16:7).

“IF any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.”

Now we consider three “IF’S”: “That IF thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” “IF ye believe not that I AM HE, ye shall die in your sins.” “IF the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” (Romans 10:9 - John 8:24 - I Peter 4:18). As Christians, let us remember the “IFS” in I Corinthians 3:14 and Romans 8:17 - I John 1:9 - John 14:3.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THREE

READ GENESIS 30:22 TO 2 - GENESIS 37:2 TO 39
GENESIS 39:2 TO 6 - GENESIS 42:6 - GENESIS 45:1 TO 9 - GENESIS 45:28.

JOSEPH THE WORLD SAVIOUR

As we read the biography of Joseph in the 14 chapters of Genesis - chapters 37 to 50, we conclude that Joseph was a very noble character. Surely there is some Divine reason why the name “Joseph” is found 137 times in Genesis.

In Romans 5:14 we read that Adam was the figure of Christ. In Hebrews 11:17 to 19 we learn that Isaac on the altar and then restored to his father Abraham was a figure of God’s only begotten Son; not spared (Romans 8:32), but raised from the dead the third day. (Read Genesis 22:4 and Genesis 22:11 to 19).

There is a sense in which Joseph was a figure, or a type, of the Lord Jesus Christ; but we know that all types, figures and shadows of Christ and His redemptive work are imperfect.

Joseph was the eleventh son of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. Benjamin was Joseph’s brother by the same mother as well as by the same father. “God remembered Rachel and she conceived and bare a son ... and she called his name Joseph.” (Genesis 30:22 to 24). “Joseph” is from the Hebrew word meaning “to add.” Joseph was added; but Rachel seemed to have the assurance that God would add Benjamin. We read in Genesis 29:17 and 18 and 30: “Rachel was beautiful and well favored, and Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah.” Leah was Rachel’s sister, whom he also married.

Joseph was the son of Jacob's old age and his father loved Joseph more than all his children. Jacob made Joseph a coat of many colors. (Genesis 37:3).

The Lord Jesus Christ was God's eternal Son. He was crowned with glory and honor, anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. Christ was the effulgence of God's glory. (Hebrews 2:9 - Hebrews 1:9 - Hebrews 1:3).

Joseph's brethren hated him with cruel jealousy, and when they were told that they would have to bow in subjection to Joseph, they hated him with a vicious hatred. (Genesis 37:4 and 9 to 11). They put him in a pit and covered his coat with blood. Then they sold him to God's enemies for 20 pieces of silver; and took the blood-stained garment back to the father that loved Joseph so much. (Genesis 37:12 to 36).

Israel envied and hated Christ (even without a cause - John 15:25). They said, "we will not have this man to reign over us." (Luke 19:14). Christ was sold for 30 pieces of silver and delivered to God's enemies to be disgraced and humiliated. His coat of many colors was really stained with blood. (Matthew 26:15 - Matthew 27:18 - Matthew 27:26). Christ took His blood into the presence of His Father, having obtained eternal redemption for us. (Hebrews 9:12 - Hebrews 1:1 to 4).

God exalted Joseph after he had suffered much, and gave him a name above every name in the world. (Genesis 41:42 to 45). Joseph was the ruler and Saviour and all bowed down before him. (Genesis 42:6). God overruled man's treachery and crime in the case of Joseph.

After Christ suffered obedience unto death God highly exalted Him with a name above every name, "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." (Philippians 2:5 to 11).

Then when Joseph's brethren bowed before him and wept, confessing their sins, Joseph said some wonderful things to his brethren. (Read Genesis 45:1 to 7). Then read how God delivered Christ by His determinate counsel and foreknowledge. (Acts 2:22 and 4:25 to 29). Joseph's father said, "My son is alive," (Genesis 45:28). God wants every sinner and saint to know that His Son is alive. (Revelation 1:18 - Romans 6:9 - Hebrews 7:25).

The true JOSEPH is coming back and His brethren will weep as they look on Him Whom they pierced. (Zechariah 12:10 - Revelation 1:7). Then Christ will take His world throne and rule the whole earth and bring about the restitution of all things. (Isaiah 9:6 and 7 - Acts 3:19 to 21 - Isaiah 2:2 to 8).

The people of Joseph's time would have starved to death, physically had he not provided bread for the world. See what Christ, the Bread of Life, said in John 6:48 to 51.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOUR

READ GALATIANS 5:1 TO 4 - I CORINTHIANS 3:8 TO 15 - I CORINTHIANS 15:58

STAND FAST AND STEADFAST

Let us compare Galatians 5:1 and I Corinthians 15:58: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

It is obvious that a person must first have liberty before that person can stand fast in that liberty. Believers have liberty because they are in Christ, and there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Romans 8:1 and 2).

Christ said, in John 8:36; "Whom the Son sets free shall be free indeed". Then we read in Romans 6:18 and Romans 7:6, "Being made free from sin ye became the servants of righteousness." "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held: that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Liberty in Christ Jesus, by the grace of God.

So we learn that Christians are delivered from the law of sin and death, from sin and from the law given at Sinai; by the work of Christ - (Romans 8:2 and 3).

The Gentiles, throughout Galatia, as sinners, had not been under the law. But many of them, who were saved by Paul's grace gospel, were bewitched by zealous religious Jews described in Acts 15:9 and 5, who taught the Gentile Christians . . . "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved."

Paul called these bewitched Gentile Christians, "foolish Galatians", (Galatians 3:1 to 4). Even Peter the minister of the circumcision, said . . . "why tempt ye God, to put a yoke (the law) upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" (Acts 15:10).

Note Paul's words to those Gentile Christians who went back from Calvary to Sinai: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." (Galatians 5:4).

Paul wrote in Romans 5:2 of this grace wherein we stand. He pled with the Galatians not to make the vain attempt to supplement the grace of God or make their salvation more secure by getting under the law.

Note Paul's words in Galatians 2:21: "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." In Romans 6:14 Paul wrote: "Ye are not under the law but under grace."

Christ had suffered intense agony to deliver all who were under the law (Galatians 3:13) and to give liberty to believing Jews and Gentiles.

So Paul urged the Christians not to be entangled with the yoke of bondage but to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath set them free.

Now compare Romans 4:5 with I Corinthians 15:58: "But to him that worketh not, but believeth, on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." Now read I Corinthians 3:11 to 15 and learn that it is possible to be saved so as by fire without works that will be rewarded. The thief on the cross was saved, but he had no good works for reward. But if we build on Christ the foundation our works will abide; will be wellpleasing to God and will be richly rewarded. (Read Colossians 3:15 to 25).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE

READ ROMANS 1:16 - ACTS 3:26 - ACTS 13:46 - MARK 7:24 TO 30
MATTHEW 23:33 - ACTS 3:25

ISRAELITISH SERPENTS AND GENTILE DOGS

First let us carefully note the statement of Christ in Matthew 21:42, that He would be the Stone rejected by the Builders. The nation Israel, with her rulers did reject their Messiah and Divine King. The wonderful Parable of the Vineyard in Matthew 21:33 to 43 tells the story: "They caught Him (the Heir) and cast Him out of the Vineyard and slew Him." (Matthew 21:39.

After felling something of Israel's history in this parable Christ used some very strong language in denouncing His own nation. After calling them "blind fools," "blind guides" and "hypocrites" (Matthew 23:17, 19, 23, and 24) Christ said: "Ye SERPENTS, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Shortly thereafter these same Israelites, whom Christ called "SERPENTS," killed the Prince of Life." (Acts 3:14 and 15). So we might ask this question; if the Israelites were "SERPENTS" and vipers, headed for hell, before they put Christ to death, were they worse than SERPENTS after they added to their long list of sins? Read Acts 7:51 to 56 and I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16.

Before we answer this question let us read what Christ said to a Gentile woman in Mark 7:27: "But Jesus said unto her, Let THE CHILDREN first be filled: for it is not meet to take the CHILDREN'S bread and to cast it unto the DOGS." Here we learn that the Lord Jesus in no uncertain language called Gentiles, "DOGS." But at this time the Israelites, who were "CHILDREN," had not yet become the "SERPENTS" and "vipers" of Matthew 23:33. Then note what Christ said about the "CHILDREN" in Matthew 8:12: "They shall be cast out into outer darkness," But the "children" were to be filled FIRST.

Keep the two statements in mind, "Let the CHILDREN FIRST BE FILLED." "The CHILDREN shall be cast out into outer darkness." But let us also remember, as we leave the Four Gospels and the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus, we leave the Israelites as "SERPENTS" and "vipers" and the Gentiles as "DOGS." Which do you think should come FIRST, a "SERPENT" or a "DOG?" Most people prefer "DOGS" to "SERPENTS." But the Jews came FIRST with GOD. (Acts 3:26). In answering this question we quote Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; TO THE JEW FIRST, and ALSO TO THE GREEK." Here we have our answer. "TO THE JEW FIRST." "And also to the Greek." That Gentile woman was a Greek, and Christ called her a "DOG." We can understand why God's order was "TO THE JEWS FIRST" when the Jews were "CHILDREN"; but not when they were "SERPENTS." The "CHILDREN" should be filled before "DOGS" received anything.

Why were the Jews FIRST in Acts 3:26? Because they were "CHILDREN" again, in Acts 3:25. Something had changed the "SERPENTS" back to "CHILDREN." We quote these two verses: "Unto you FIRST God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you (Israel), in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." (Acts 3:26). "Ye are THE CHILDREN of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers." (Acts 3:25).

Can you explain the changes? In Matthew 8:12 and Mark 7:27 the Jews are CHILDREN." In Matthew 23:33 the same Jews are "SERPENTS" and "vipers." In Acts 3:25 the same Jews are "CHILDREN" again. And between the time of Matthew 23:33 and Acts 3:25 they had killed the Prince of Life (Acts 3:14 and 15). They had been the betrayers and murderers of Christ. (Acts 7:51 to 54). It seems that between Matthew 23:33 and Acts 3:14 and 15 they had become worse than "SERPENTS."

As we behold the Son of God on the cross, we hear Him pray for Israel, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34). This prayer changed the “SERPENTS” to “CHILDREN.” Christ’s death had to be. (Acts 3:18 - Acts 4:25 to 29 - Acts 2:22 and 23.) So the sin of the “SERPENTS” in stoning and killing their prophets and in crucifying the Lord of glory (I Corinthians 2:8) was pardonable. God was willing to attribute it to ignorance (Acts 3:17), and blot it out, if Israel would repent. (Acts 3:19 to 26). So the Jews were tenderly and graciously addressed as “CHILDREN” and they were offered the FIRST blessing. But they stoned Stephen. They continued to blaspheme (Acts 13:45 - Acts 18:5), and then they committed their fourth great sin; for they forbade the apostles to preach to the Gentiles. That filled up their sins and the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost. (I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16).

Paul presented to Israel the sure mercies of David, by the resurrection of Christ, forgiveness and justification through Him (Acts 13:30 to 39). Then He warned them. (Acts 13:40 to 42). When they continued to blaspheme and reject the resurrected Christ, Paul said to the Jews . . . “It was necessary that the Word of God should FIRST have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES.” Acts 13:46.

Then THE CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM (Matthew 8:12) were cast away into blindness and darkness (Romans 11:7 to 9 - Romans 11:15); and the Gentiles received mercy because of the unbelief of “THE CHILDREN,” the Jews. (Romans 11:30).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIX

READ EXODUS 20:14 - EXODUS 31:18 - LEVITICUS 20:10 - JOHN 8:1 TO 11
JOHN 3:17 AND 18

THE HANDWRITING AND THE SAND WRITING

Only as we understand the statement, “where sin abounded grace did much more abound,” and how grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 5:20 and 21), can we really appreciate the truth concerning the children of God in Romans 6:14, “ye are not under the law, but under grace,” and Romans 3:24, “being justified freely by God’s grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

Under the law, God’s people received the spirit of bondage unto fear. But it is so different under grace. (Romans 8:15). “Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son; and if a son then an heir of God through Christ.”

How did God get His people from under the law? Note Colossians 2:13 and 14: “Blotting out the HANDWRITING of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.” (Colossians 2:14.)

It require the unspeakable suffering of the eternal Christ, the Lord of glory, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and all the shame and tragedy of Calvary to get that HANDWRITING out of the way. Read Ephesians 2:13 to 19.

Under the law, the transgressor of the HANDWRITING of God, died without mercy under two or more witnesses. (Hebrews 10:28). The Lord Himself wrote the commandments on

two tables of stone; “Thou shalt” - “thou shalt not.” God gave Israel a yoke of bondage which no one was ever able to bear, (Galatians 5:1 to 3 - Acts 15:10). (Hebrews 12:18 to 21). God gave unto Moses upon Mount Sinai two tables of stone, WRITTEN WITH THE FINGER OF GOD.” (Exodus 31:18).

The Lord Jesus Christ was made under the law. (Galatians 4:4). He asked the question “which one of you convinceth Me of sin?” (John 8:46). Christ truthfully said, “I do always those things that please God.” (John 8:29). Christ never had to apologize to one human being for doing wrong. He never had to confess one sin to His holy Father; for Christ was without sin. On the cross of Calvary the sinless Christ died with law-breakers and was made a curse to deliver law-breakers from the curse of the law. (Galatians 3:13 - Luke 23:32).

Before Christ went to Calvary some self-righteous men, who were sure they were real respectable, religious law-keepers, and expert judges of others, found a woman transgressing the seventh commandment, “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” They said, “Moses in the law commanded us that such should be stoned. What sayest Thou?” (John 8:5). Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground. This was the SANDWRITING. Just what He wrote, perhaps we will learn in heaven. But Christ said to the would-be stone-throwers, “He that is without sin, let him first cast a stone at her.” (John 8:7). Christ did some more SANDWRITING, (John 8:8). The religious men all disappeared. Christ, Who was without sin, was left alone with the sinful woman. (John 8:9 to 11). Christ could have cast the stones. Christ came to save sinners, not to stone them. (I Timothy 1:15).

The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. (John 1:17). Moses did say that that woman should surely be put to death. (Leviticus 20:10). The law was, the ministration of death. (II Corinthians 3:7). But Christ was not Moses. Christ came to do, by grace, for the human race, what Moses and the law could not do. (Romans 8:3 - Hebrews 7:19 - Romans 10:4). The law was the ministration of condemnation, THE HANDWRITING of II Corinthians 3:9 and 3:7.

With the SANDWRITING Christ said to the condemned woman, “neither do I condemn thee, go in peace and sin no more.” (John 8:11). Christ was not minimizing the woman’s sin. He was magnifying His grace and proving John 3:17: “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.”

The hands that wrote the law at Sinai were nailed to the tree at Calvary. (Galatians 3:13).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVEN

READ LUKE 12:32 AND 33 - ACTS 2:44 AND 45 - ACTS 4:34 TO 37.

IS THE PENTECOST COMMUNISM FOR THE CHURCH?

In writing to Timothy some twenty-five years or more after Christ died, the Holy Spirit, by Paul, said; “But if any provide not for his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” (I Timothy 5:8), This is indeed strong language.

In Luke 3:11, the Holy Spirit, by John the Baptist, said; “He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none, and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.” In this order we have the principle of communism.

Then note the words of the Lord Jesus, spoken to His disciples; “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.” (Luke 12:32 and 33). Could Christians today sell or give away what they possess and provide well for their families? Christ’s language in Luke 12 is plain. Then in harmony with this we observe the events of Pentecost some months later: “Then they that gladly received his Word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” “And all that believed were together and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.” (Acts 2:41 and 44 and 45). This is almost complete communism.

The little flock became a larger flock; for three thousand more were added. If the Pentecost Church is our pattern Church, where is our communism?

Then note Acts 4:4, 34 and 35: “Howbeit many of them which heard the Word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.” “Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of land or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold. And laid them down at the apostles’ feet and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.”

The little flock continued to increase and even multiply. (Acts 5:14 - Acts 6:7). Is it not as inconsistent to preach Acts 2:38 with the cry, “back to Pentecost” and not demand the sale of property and the surrender of the proceeds as it is to preach Mark 16:14 to 16 and wink at Mark 16:17 and 18?

In the Gospel of Luke surely the Lord Jesus Christ was Israel’s “Shepherd-King.” And from the messages proclaimed by Christ and the kingdom program He announced, Israel should surely have lived by the twenty-third Psalm, saying, “the Lord is my Shepherd.”

Remember that Christ was born in the city of David, and this was announced to shepherds. (Luke 2:8 to 14). Christ was born in the house of David, to deliver Israel from their Gentile oppressors (Luke 1:67 to 77).

Christ was born the Seed of David to be Israel’s Saviour, and to take the throne of David. (Acts 13:23 - Luke 1:27 to 33). These Scriptures state these facts most clearly and definitely. Christ’s disciples were thus instructed; “seek not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink” - “Take nothing for your journey, neither money, nor, its equivalent, no bread and just one garment.” (Luke 12:29 - Luke 9:3 - and Luke 10:3).

How could a Christian obey these instructions and at the same time obey I Timothy 5:8 providing well for his family?

In Luke 12:27 Christ said: “Consider the lilies that toil not.” In Proverbs Israel was instructed to consider the toiling ants, in a different dispensation.

Christians in this age of grace should consider both. Christians should toil but obey Philippians 4:6 and 7.

Again we ask if the Church of Pentecost was the ideal Church, why is not the communism of Acts 2:41 to 44 and 34 to 37 God’s program today? The whole Pentecost program was a Kingdom program.

Not long after those Christians gave up their property they were driven out of Jerusalem, and thus all their earthly possessions were gone. (Acts 8:1 and Acts 11:19).

Moreover later on Paul was asking Christians out of Jerusalem, including Gentiles, to send money by him for the support of the poor. (Romans 15:27). Our communism program is Romans 12:13.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-EIGHT

READ ROMANS 8:1 TO 4 - GALATIANS 3:21 - ROMANS 7:13 TO 25

THE THREE GREAT LAWS

The three laws of Romans 8:1 to 4 occupy a very large place in the Bible:

1. The law of sin and death - by Adam. 2. The law given at Sinai - by Moses. 3. The law of the Spirit of life - By Christ.

Some of the most interesting and significant truth in all the Bible is found in Romans 5:20 and 21: "Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

1. The offence entered by Adam. 2. The law entered by Moses. 3. Grace reigns unto eternal life by Christ.

The law of sin and death is universal. Death is spiritual, physical and the second death. (John 5:23 to 29) (Ephesians 2:1 to 6) (Romans 6:23) (Revelation 20:12 to 15). Sin and death entered by Adam. (Romans 5:12). The law was given by Moses. (John 1:17). By the law is the knowledge of sin, and by it let every mouth be closed. (Romans 3:19 and 20). "Wherefore the law worketh wrath." (Romans 4:15). The law is "the ministration of death." (II Corinthians 3:7), The law made nothing perfect; but the work of Christ on the cross did (Hebrews 7:19). This is the truth of Romans 8:2 to 4.

A very religious, sincere man tried to be righteous by the law and failed, because "the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin." Christ did what the law could not do. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Romans 7:14 - Romans 8:3 - Romans 10:4). Note Paul's confession and conclusion in Philippians 3:4 to 10 - Galatians 3:21 - Romans 3:28.

There is wonderful news for sinful humanity, in Romans 8:1 to 4, in the law of life in Christ Jesus.

All are condemned in Adam. (Romans 5:17 and 18). Moses' law is the ministration of condemnation. (II Corinthians 3:9). But there is no condemnation to believers in Christ. (Romans 8:1). "By Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Read this good news in Acts 13:39 and give thanks unto the Lord for the truth of Romans 5:20 and 21.

Thus we see that By Adam is the entrance of sin. (Romans 5:12). By Moses is the knowledge of sin. (Romans 3:20). By Christ is the forgiveness of sins. (Acts 13:38) (Romans 8:3).

The sum total of man's spiritual duty and responsibility is To APPROPRIATE the law of the Spirit of life. To DEMONSTRATE the law of the Spirit of life. To PROPAGATE the law of the Spirit of life.

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the fact that the omnipotent, eternal perfect Christ had power to lay down His life in death, take it up in resurrection, and abolish death and give life and incorruptibility to believing sinners. (John 10:17 and 18 - II Timothy 1:10). Surely

the very heart of the gospel is in II Timothy 1:9 and 10, confirming John 11:25 and showing how Christ established the law of life.

To APPROPRIATE this law of life is to be saved, is to pass out of death into life. Then God declares the believer to be alive from the dead. (Romans 6:13 - John 11:25 and 26 - Galatians 2:20 - Colossians 2:13). This is the truth of Romans 8:2, “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

To DEMONSTRATE this law, means to demonstrate Galatians 2:20 - II Corinthians 4:6 - by walking in the Spirit, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit and fulfilling the righteousness of the law. (Romans 8:4). When the sinner by faith appropriates the law of life, he receives the Holy Spirit.

To PROPAGATE this law of life is to preach this life, giving the message to others. “We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake; for God. Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (II Corinthians 4:5 and 6). As we thus demonstrate and propagate, let us remember I Corinthians 1:21.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-NINE

READ MARK 6:11 - GENESIS 9:24 AND 25 - II PETER 2:6 - HEBREWS 10:28 TO 33
MATTHEW 24:21 AND 22 - II THESSALONIANS 2:6 TO 12

LESS TOLERABLE FOR THE UNITED STATES

Let us read in Mark 6:11 the solemn words of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is going to be revealed in flaming fire for vengeance upon them who will not have Him as Saviour, (II Thessalonians 1:7 to 10), being assured that this awful judgment is rapidly approaching:

“And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.” (Mark 6:11).

Compare with this His awful pronouncement upon Capernaum in very much the same language. The Lord referred to the mighty works that He had done in their midst. According to historians, terrible destruction fell upon Capernaum; but the words meant more terrible judgment than the destruction of that Christ-rejecting city. (Hebrews 9:27). (Luke 10:13 to 15).

Let us compare Genesis 19:24 and 25 and II Peter 2:6: “Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord of heaven: And He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.”

A more terrible judgment than God’s upon Sodom and Gomorrah was pronounced upon the people, who would not hear and heed the messages which Christ proclaimed by His messengers. That fire and brimstone destruction of Gomorrah was an example of the “fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Christ died to deliver us from God’s wrath to come. Read Hebrews 10:29 to 32 - I Thessalonians 1:9 and 10. Then read II Peter 2:6 with II Thessalonians 1:7 to 10.

Why more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah? Sodom and Gomorrah did not have a visit from the incarnate God, the Lord Jesus Christ. They did not see the mighty works of the Son of God and hear Him speak as never man spake. Think of it; the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed about 1900 B.C. That was more than 500 years before Moses was directed to write Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, the first five Books of the Bible. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah did not have God's written revelation. They had the revelation of God in Creation (Romans 1:18 to 30). They had the law written in their hearts. (Romans 2:15). Just imagine the people of the United States without a line of the Bible and never having heard of Christ, His teaching, death and resurrection.

Surely Lot's testimony was about worthless. What other prophets did they have? Compare our spiritual privileges and spiritual opportunities with those of Sodom.

If they were without excuse (Romans 1:20), think of the inhabitants of Capernaum and Jerusalem after 4000 years of God's dealings with man. They had the thirty-nine inspired Books, the Holy Scriptures, and then a visit of their own Divine, eternal Jehovah, Who proved by fulfilling the Scriptures and by miracles, signs and wonders, and by speaking as never man spake, His unity and equality with God. He proved to His friends that He was Israel's promised Messiah. Sodom and Gomorrah had little Divine light compared with Israel in the days of Christ.

Note what Christ declared by Paul some years later: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." Acts 17:30. Compare this with Hebrews 10:28 to 33.

This age will end in the most terrible judgment this earth has ever known (Matthew 24:21 to 24).

Now the United States has all that Capernaum had and also the complete revelation of God in the Bible, 1900 years of Christianity, and in this country think of the gospel by radio, the Bill of Rights. No nation has ever been blessed with such spiritual privileges and opportunities as has this country.

It will be less tolerable for the people who live in the United States in the day of God's wrath than for the inhabitants of Sodom or Capernaum. Wake up! stupid sinner and sleeping saints.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY

READ HEBREWS 3:14 - HEBREWS 3:1 - HEBREWS 6:4 - HEBREWS 12:8 TO 10
I PETER 4:13 - II PETER 1:4 - I TIMOTHY 6:2 - COLOSSIANS 1:12 - EPHESIANS 3:6
I CORINTHIANS 9:12 - I CORINTHIANS 10:17 - ROMANS 15:27 - I PETER 5:1
II JOHN 1:1 - II TIMOTHY 1:8 - II TIMOTHY 2:6 - I TIMOTHY 2:22
I CORINTHIANS 9:10 - II CORINTHIANS 1:7

PARTAKERS OF CHRIST

In Hebrews 3:14 we read that we are made PARTAKERS OF CHRIST. Then let us see how this chapter begins: "Wherefore, holy brethren, PARTAKERS of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." (Hebrews 3:1).

We are PARTAKERS of the heavenly calling. We are PARTAKERS of Christ. So we want to consider just how we PARTAKE. Something of this is told by Christ in John 6:51; 53 to 58.

There are several different Greek words translated “PARTAKERS” or “PARTAKE.” The word used in Hebrews 3:14 and 3:1 is “METOCHOS.” This word is used in Luke 5:7 where the word is translated “PARTNERS.”

Note again in Luke 5:10, concerning James and John in the fishing business, “which were ‘PARTNERS’ with Simon.” This word translated ‘PARTNERS’ is the Greek “KOINONOS.” This is the word translated “PARTAKERS” in II Peter 1:4: “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be PARTAKERS of the Divine nature.”

Here we learn that Christians are PARTAKERS of Christ’s nature; by promises. Then note Ephesians 3:6 “That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same Body, and PARTAKERS of His promise in Christ by the gospel.”

Here we learn that the once-alienated Gentiles are joint-heirs of the Joint-Body and JOINT-SHARERS of His promise. The Greek word here is “SUMMETOCHOS”, meaning COPARTNERS. Paul, in Romans 15:27, and Romans 11:17, tells the Gentile Christians that they were PARTAKERS of Israel’s spiritual BLESSING.

But in Titus 1:1 and II Timothy 1:9 we learn that before Israel was created for God’s glory, long before Adam was created in God’s image, Gentile members of the Body of Christ were promised eternal life. Read also Romans 8:28 to 32 - Ephesians 1:6 and 11.

Let us note Philippians 3:10: “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the FELLOWSHIP of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death.” FELLOWSHIP.” This word “FELLOWSHIP” is the Greek “KOINONIA”, which is translated “PARTAKER” in Romans 15:27 quoted above. Also in I Peter 4:13, where the same thought as Philippians 3:10 is expressed; Christians are to be PARTAKERS of the sufferings of Christ.

Note how this is expressed in II Timothy 1:8: “Be thou a PARTAKER (SUSKAKOPATHEO) of the afflictions of the gospel.” This means to really suffer. It has special reference to the ministry and message for which Paul was in the Roman prison. He wrote from that prison and called Philemon his PARTNER. (Philemon 17). This is the same Greek word as used in Luke 5:10.

We are told in Hebrews 2:14 and 15, that Christ was a PARTAKER of flesh and blood, to destroy Satan’s death power, and to deliver saints. In addition to Christ’s Divine nature He was a Partaker of human nature for the purpose of suffering death, (Hebrews 2:9), that we might, in addition to our human natures, be partakers of His Divine nature. (II Peter 1:4).

This blessing comes to believers who are PARTAKERS of Paul’s grace. (Philippians 1:7). This make them PARTAKERS of Christ’s holiness. (Hebrews 12:10). We are PARTAKERS of the Holy Spirit. (Hebrews 6:4). If we are PARTAKERS of Christ and PARTAKERS of His sufferings, we shall be PARTAKERS of His glory. (I Peter 5:1). Therefore we are PARTAKERS of hope. (I Corinthians 9:10).

We are warned against being PARTAKERS of other men’s sins. (I Timothy 2:22 - Ephesians 5:7 and 11). And a very special warning is given to Christians to have no fellowship in the support of any preacher who denies the Deity of Christ and salvation by His blood. Lest we be “PARTAKERS” of his evil deeds. (II John 5 to 9).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-ONE

READ EXODUS 31:18 - EXODUS 32:15 TO 24 - EXODUS 34:1 - EXODUS 25:21
EXODUS 40:20 - ACTS 2:10 - LUKE 22:19 - I CORINTHIANS 11:24
I CORINTHIANS 10:16 - MATTHEW 21:44 - PSALMS 51:17

THE BROKEN THINGS OF THE BIBLE

First let us consider the two broken stones on which God Himself wrote the ten commandments. Israel's law: "And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." (Exodus 31:18). "And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon tables." (Exodus 32:16). "And it came to pass as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and BRAKE them beneath the mount." Exodus 32:19.

This was very significant. The BROKEN STONES meant not only that Israel had broken God's law, but the best that the best of the human race could do would be to break God's law. "And I took the two tables and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes." Deuteronomy 9:17. But note Exodus 34:1: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou BRAKEST." And 25:21: "And thou shalt put the mercyseat upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee."

Here we see both the terror of the law and the mercy of God under the law. In Hebrews 2:1 to 3 and in Romans 3:25 to 27 we learn that surely every disobedience and transgression must receive a just recompense of reward and that God must first be just and then merciful. The law of the Lord is just and demands justice and perfection. The mercyseat spoke of Christ on the cross being the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. (I John 2:2).

The law worketh wrath. (Romans 4:15). (Read John 7:19). Christ made peace through the blood of His cross. (Colossians 1:20).

Christ lived a sinless life under the law, then died with lawbreakers, for all lawbreakers, to deliver them from the curse of the law, (Galatians 3:13). Thus Christ became the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Romans 10:4).

Because of Christ's perfection in life, death and resurrection, God can be just and the Justifier of all who believe on Christ and accept His perfect propitiation. God freely justifies all such believers. (Romans 3:24 to 28 - Acts 13:39). Of this the blood-sprinkled mercyseat, above the unbroken stones spoke.

When God gave the law at Sinai no one could endure it. (Hebrews 12:20). It was contrary to them. (Colossians 2:13 to 16). It was a yoke no one but Christ was able to bear. (Acts 15:10).

Thus we have the BROKEN STONES and the BROKEN COMMANDMENTS. "The House of Israel and the House of Judah have BROKEN My Covenant." (Jeremiah 30:10 - Psalms 89:31 and 34). Later Israel and Judah fell on the Stone of Matthew 21:44 and were BROKEN. (Romans 11:11).

Now note the words of Christ in Luke 22:19 and the words of Paul in I Corinthians 10:16 and I Corinthians 11:24: "And He took bread and gave thanks and BRAKE it, and gave unto them, saying, This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me." "The

bread which we BRAKE, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" "And when He had given thanks, He BRAKE it, and said, Take, eat; this is My body, which is BROKEN for you: this do in remembrance of Me."

Thus we have the BROKEN STONES - The BROKEN COVENANT (law) - The BROKEN BODY of Christ - The BROKEN BREAD.

We BREAK bread at the Lord's Table because His body was BROKEN, because the descendants of Adam BROKE the law.

Then after we accept the broken body of Christ for redemption and think of Calvary, when taking the broken bread at the Table, let us remember another broken thing: "The sacrifices of God are a BROKEN spirit: a BROKEN and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Psalms 51:17.

In Jeremiah 30:8 we read that the Lord will come to BREAK the Gentiles' yoke off Israel.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-TWO

READ GENESIS 1:26 AND 27 - GENESIS 5:1 TO 3 - HEBREWS 1:1 TO 3
ROMANS 8:28 TO 32 - ROMANS 8:3 - I CORINTHIANS 15:49 TO 53
II CORINTHIANS 5:17 - II CORINTHIANS 3:18 - PHILIPPIANS 3:20 AND 21

ADAM AND EVE—CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

In God's message and program of grace revealed to the apostle Paul, we read: "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature," "he has put off the old man and has put on the new man, who is created in the image of Him Who created him." The new creature has died and has been buried and resurrected with Christ (spiritually); and he is a member of that Church Which is one flesh with Christ. Christ will present that Church unto Himself as a glorious, spotless Church, holy and without blemish. (II Corinthians 5:17 - Colossians 3:10 - Romans 6:3 to 6 - Ephesians 5:31 and 32 - Ephesians 5:26 and 27).

In Genesis 1:26 and 27 and 5:1 and 2, we have a two-fold story of the creation of Adam. Adam was created, without Eve, in the image and likeness of God. Then in Genesis 5:1 and 2 we read that God created them (Adam and Eve) . . . "God called THEIR name ADAM." We read in Genesis 2:23 that Adam and Eve were one flesh. Adam and Eve, one flesh, called "ADAM", typified the Lord Jesus Christ and the Church, one flesh, called "Christ", in Ephesians 5:31 and 32 and I Corinthians 12:12.

Christ was the one Perfect Man. Christ and the Church will be one Perfect Man. (Ephesians 4:13). God will complete that which He is making according to Ephesians 2:15, "One New Man". Adam, the first man, was a figure of Christ the Second Man, the last Adam. (Romans 5:14 - I Corinthians 15:45 to 48). Then note the contrast, between Adam created in God's image and likeness and Adam's children born in his sinful likeness. (Genesis 5:3).

This sinful image and likeness of Adam has been passed on to every member of the human race. (Psalm 51:5 - Romans 5:12).

Jesus Christ was the express image of God's Person, and the effulgence of God's glory. In Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (Hebrews 1:1 and 2 - Colossians 2:9 -

Colossians 1:15 to 19). Christ was God in human form. The Word became flesh, the Man Jesus of Nazareth, in the form of flesh and blood; in the likeness of sinful flesh. (John 1:14 - Hebrews 2:14 - Romans 8:3). Open your Bible and read Philippians 2:5 to 10.

Before Adam sinned God foreknew and predestinated that, for the glory of His Son, He would have a race of sons conformed to the image of Christ, God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus. Whom God foreknew He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. (Romans 8:28 to 32 - Ephesians 2:10). In Romans 8:20 and 31 we learn that man's glorification is included in this eternal purpose of God. (II Timothy 1:9 - Ephesians 3:11). So the believer can say "Christ liveth in me, the hope of glory." (Galatians 2:20 - Colossians 1:27).

Yes, the believer is a new creature in Christ Jesus. Note his experience, told in II Corinthians 3:18 - II Corinthians 4:16 and in Romans 8:23.

"Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." This means that the man, whose soul is redeemed, is longing for and groaning for a glorified body.

The Holy Spirit is the earnest of something better than the condition of the believer described in II Corinthians 4:16. Read Ephesians 1:13 and 14. In Philippians 3:20 and 21 we learn that the glorified state of believers means bodies like unto the glorious body of the glorified Christ. Then the spotless glorious Church will be presented unto Christ.

Christ, in addition to His Divine nature, took upon Himself human nature; that believing children of Adam, in addition to their human natures, might receive Divine natures. (Hebrews 2:14 - II Peter 1:3 and 4 and John 1:11 to 13).

The Lord Jesus Christ will appear in a moment in the twinkling of an eye for the redemption of the bodies of members of His Body. (I Corinthians 15:51 to 55). Then for the redemption of Israel. (Luke 21:27 to 33). Then for the redemption of the earth.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THREE

READ EPHESIANS 6:11 TO 20 - EPHESIANS 3:10 - ROMANS 8:38

COLOSSIANS 1:16 - COLOSSIANS 2:15 - TITUS 3:1

EPHESIANS 1:21 - I CORINTHIANS 15:24

PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS

Most important instructions are given to members of the Body of Christ in Ephesians 6:11 and 12 - "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against PRINCIPALITIES, AGAINST POWERS, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (the heavenlies)." Think of the paradox; The angel of light is the head ruler of darkness.

These great unseen heavenly forces are real and only the blood-redeemed saint of God, in the panoply of Ephesians 6:11 to 18, can stand against spiritual wickedness and Satan's PRINCIPALITIES and POWERS in the heavenlies. Let us not think of Satan as being in the lake of fire. But while he is at the head of evil forces in heaven, we know that Satan also is the god of this age and the prince of this world. (John 12:30 to 32 - Luke 4:1 to 10 - II Corinthians 4:3 and 4). As we read Satan's offer to Christ in Luke 4, we know something of his power.

Yes, Satan is at the head of all world systems, societies and brotherhoods, whether they be political or religious, if Christ is not the center. He is transformed into an angel of light. (II Corinthians 11:14). He is subtle, wise, powerful and clever. He is the great deceiver not only deceiving the sinners but he uses his devices on Christians. (II Corinthians 11:1 to 3 - II Corinthians 2:12 to 14 - Ephesians 6:11 and 12). Even though Satan is the prince of the world, Christ Himself said, “render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s.” (Matthew 22:21). So we read in Titus 3:1, “be subject to PRINCIPALITIES and POWERS, to obey magistrates.” Satan is a usurper, and is doomed.

How wonderful for the Christian to know that PRINCIPALITIES and POWERS, whether under Satan as a political leader or under him as a religious leader, can never separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:38 and 39).

We learn, in Colossians 1:16, that the Lord Jesus Christ created thrones, dominions, PRINCIPALITIES and POWERS. When they were created before the fall of Lucifer, the anointed cherub, they were not antagonistic, ungodly PRINCIPALITIES and POWERS. Christ created all things but nothing evil. The fourteenth chapter of Isaiah, the twenty-eighth of Ezekiel, together with Luke 10:18, Revelation 12:7 to 11 and Revelation 20:1 to 10 tell us how the prince of this world’s course is down, down, down, down and down. Out of the mountain of God into other heavenlies; next to the earth as the dragon; then to the bottomless pit and finally to the lake of fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

Satan, as a roaring lion, does go about seeking whom he may devour. (I Peter 5:8 and 9). But we read of the prince of the power of the air in Ephesians 2:1 to 3, the spirit now working in the children of disobedience. Yes the devil is the ruler of world darkness at the head of PRINCIPALITIES and POWERS. (Ephesians 6:11 to 13).

In Ephesians 1:19 to 23, we read of the mighty power of God which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him far above the heavenly PRINCIPALITIES and POWERS. Christ, thereby, spoiled PRINCIPALITIES and POWERS and made a show of them triumphing over them in His resurrection and His ascension. (Colossians 2:15).

Christ will come back to this earth, as the last Adam, to put down all rule (PRINCIPALITY), and all AUTHORITY and POWER. (I Corinthians 15:24). Then He will deliver the kingdom up to God that He may be all in all. (I Corinthians 15:28).

The reason why every Christian should make others see the dispensation of the mystery, that the Church might make known to PRINCIPALITIES and POWERS the manifold wisdom of God, which has to do with the Body of Christ, seated in the heavenlies, and perhaps headed for the high place once occupied by Satan. (Ephesians 2:6 and Ephesians 3:8 to 11).

Satan hates this truth with a vicious hatred but very few Christians are causing him much concern by propagating it or even knowing it.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOUR

READ MATTHEW 15:24 - MATTHEW 10:5 AND 6 - EPHESIANS 2:11 TO 13
ACTS 13:46 - ROMANS 11:11 AND 30

CHRIST - ISRAEL - AND THE GENTILES

In very clear, simple language we read in Matthew 10:5, the command which the Lord Jesus Christ gave to His twelve apostles, “go not into the way of the Gentiles.” Christ meant what He said.

In Romans 10:13 to 15 we learn that faith cometh by hearing the Word of God. How can they believe unless they hear and how can they hear unless a preacher be sent? Christ on earth and his apostles and disciples were not sent to Gentiles. Gentiles could not hear, for the preacher was not sent to the Gentiles while Christ was here on earth. His statement concerning His own ministry is very positive and clear: “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matthew 15:24). He spoke of the Jews as “children”, the Gentiles as “dogs.” The rulers of Israel had to tolerate the Gentiles politically, but religiously they held them in contempt. Israel in “the times of the Gentiles”, politically had to render unto Caesar the things that were Caesar’s.

Read what the Jews did to Christ when He mentioned in their synagogue how two Gentiles had received the Lord’s blessing: “And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath. And rose up and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong.” (Luke 4:28 and 29). Think of it - the religious Jews angry unto murder because Gentiles had been blessed by God.

Note what the twelve apostles said when they had a splendid opportunity to preach to a poor needy Gentile: “But He (Christ) answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.” (Read Mark 7:24 to 30).

This poor needy Gentile woman was of great faith and she took her place as a Gentile “dog,” receiving the leavings from the Jews’ table. (Matthew 15:25 to 27 - Mark 7:28).

At the time the Lord Jesus Christ was on earth, made under the law (Galatians 4:4), born to be Israel’s Saviour (Acts 13:23), He was the Minister of the Jews, sent only to Israel. (Romans 15:8 and Matthew 15:24). At that time the Gentiles were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, far-off atheists. (Ephesians 2:11 to 13).

For some months after the death and resurrection of Christ, the apostles and disciples preached to Jews only. (Acts 11:18). It was not permissible for the Jewish Christians to go to unsaved Gentiles. (Acts 10:28). When the Jewish Christians refused to sit at the same table with Gentile Christians, after the commission of Acts 13:2, that was going too far. (Galatians 2:11 to 14).

When Paul told the Jews at Jerusalem that he saw Jesus in a trance in their temple and Jesus said to Paul, “get thee out of Jerusalem; I will send you far hence to the Gentiles”, those Jews wanted to tear Paul into pieces. (Acts 22:17 to 21). But when they forbade Paul and others to preach Christ to the Gentiles, they got into very, very serious trouble. (I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16).

But Israel’s serious trouble and disgrace brought great blessing and grace for the Gentiles. (Romans 11:11, Romans 11:15 and Romans 11:30). God then ushered in a new period and gave Paul a new dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles. (Ephesians 3:1 to 11). Then God revealed His eternal purpose, His long-kept secret. (Colossians 1:24 to 28). A part of that secret was, “Christ in the Gentile believer”, “the hope of glory.” (Colossians 1:27).

Then there was no difference between the Jews and the Gentiles. They that were nigh (Israel) and they that were afar-off (the Gentiles) were made one in Christ, in the JointBody of Ephesians 3:6.

In 1945 A.D. we are living in “the times of the Gentiles,” politically, and spiritually.

In the Four Gospels, as well as in much of the Book of Acts, we find much grace mixed with God's religious program, but not God's unmixed, all grace program that we find in Paul's Epistles.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIVE

READ MATTHEW 28:2 - JOHN 10:9 - ACTS 14:27 - COLOSSIANS 4:3 AND 4
REVELATION 4:8 AND 20 - LUKE 13:25

THE DOORS OF THE BIBLE

In this lesson we are studying some of the DOORS of the New Testament Scriptures.

First let us read Matthew 28:2; "And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from THE DOOR, and sat upon it."

Paul in I Corinthians 15:17 wrote: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins."

The very crux of Christianity is the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. If Christ had not made good His claim of John 10:17 and 18, concerning His power to lay down and take up again His life, Christianity would have perished in a very short while. But God by His mighty power raised Christ far above all principality, even far above all heavens. (Ephesians 1:19 to 23 - Ephesians 4:9 to 11). The DOOR of Christ's sepulchre was opened and He came out and showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs. (Acts 1:3 - Revelation 1:18).

Because of the perfect redemptive work of the perfect Christ we may accept at full face value, and with absolute assurance, His words in John 10:9 - "I AM THE DOOR: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." The Lord Jesus Christ is the one and only DOOR to salvation.

If you and I knew the day of the month that God did what is recorded in Acts 14:27, we should celebrate it with greater joy than we celebrate the Fourth of July. What a day for us Gentiles! Read it - "God opened THE DOOR OF FAITH UNTO THE GENTILES." This was not while Christ was on earth. It was some years after He went back to heaven. At that time the Gentiles were alienated from the life of God. (Ephesians 4:18).

There is a sense in which every member of the Body of Christ is a DOORKEEPER in the House of the Lord. (I Timothy 3:15 and 16). And you know what the Psalmist said in Psalm 84:10. We are not to put religious timber in front of the door, but point sinners to the open door.

In I Corinthians 16:9 Paul said, "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." There are still many open doors and even more adversaries under the chief Adversary.

Note the message of Revelation 3:8, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door." Never before were there so many open doors of opportunity for Christians.

Then Paul said, in II Corinthians 2:12, "A door was opened unto me of the Lord." It is wonderful to know when the Lord opens the doors for us. We repeat that there were never as many open doors for the gospel as there are today. God is calling Christians everywhere to enter in. What a privilege, and what a challenge, and what a wonderful opportunity under our Bill of Rights! Public meetings, street meetings, printed tracts, radio and posters.

Remember these solemn words. “When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut the door.” (Luke 13:25). God will close the door of grace, the door of opportunity for Christians, the door of salvation for sinners.

Yes, we read in James 5:9, “Behold, the Judge standeth before the door.” Why not enter in by Christ, the door, have Him as Saviour rather than Judge?

Perhaps you could count within a few minutes all of the Christians who are today praying the prayer of Colossians 4:3, that a door of utterance for the mystery of Christ, the most wonderful message for saints in all the Bible, might be opened. Begin praying now. And sinner, remember Christ stands at your door (your heart) and wants to come in. (Revelation 3:20).

It is interesting to read Acts 13:45 and 46, Acts 14:1 to 7 and Acts 14:27 and learn that the door of faith was opened unto the Gentiles when and because Israel would not believe that Christ was raised from the dead to give to them the sure mercies of David and remission of sins and justification by and through the Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 13:30 to 39). Do not have the DOOR of Acts 14:27 open before God opened it.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIX

READ I PETER 2:4 TO 9 - I PETER 1:7 AND 18 TO 20 - II PETER 1:4

SOME PRECIOUS THINGS IN THE BIBLE

This is the study of some precious things. First, let us prayerfully consider II Peter 1:4 and I Peter 1:19 and 20: “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and PRECIOUS PROMISES; that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” “Redeemed with the PRECIOUS BLOOD of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”

The first PRECIOUS PROMISE in the Bible is the promise that the Seed of the woman would bruise the serpent’s head. (Genesis 3:14 and 15). That meant the death and the resurrection of the Seed of the woman. He is now alive in heaven and will come to earth again.

So many events have already taken place, in fulfillment of this PRECIOUS PROMISE, and many more are yet to be fulfilled.

When Christ was in the shadow of the cross He said, “Now is the prince of this world cast out.” (John 12:30 to 32). What did Paul mean when he wrote, “And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly”? (Romans 16:20). Satan is having a good time now, but we read in I John 3:8 that the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil. We certainly see the works of the devil all over this earth and he is also active as the head of spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies (Ephesians 6:11 to 14). Read Christ’s victory over Satan in Luke 4:1 to 9. Then read of Satan in the bottomless pit (Revelation 20:1 to 3).

The lake of fire has been prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matthew 25:41 - Revelation 20:10). The devil, now like a roaring lion, is walking about, seeking whom he may devour (I Peter 5:8 and 9). But he has a very special deadly work to do on this earth after the Church goes to glory. (Revelation 12:10 to 12). Then, after one thousand years in the bottomless pit, he will reach his final abode (Revelation 20:1 to 10).

We see what Christ had to do in order to destroy Satan's "death" power: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood. He also Himself took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Hebrews 2:14).

That meant that Christ had to shed His PRECIOUS BLOOD. (I Peter 1:18 to 20).

Christ was God's own ELECT PRECIOUS CHIEF CORNERSTONE. (I Peter 2:6). Chosen of God and PRECIOUS." (I Peter 2:4).

In addition to His Divine nature Christ took upon Himself human nature (John 1:14 - Philippians 2:5 to 8 - Hebrews 2:14) that believers might be partakers of His Divine nature in addition to their human nature and be delivered from the fear of death, and ultimately from death of any kind.

This faith in God's PRECIOUS PROMISES and HIS PRECIOUS STONE and the PRECIOUS SHED BLOOD OF CHRIST is called "PRECIOUS FAITH." (I Peter 1:7).

Is it any wonder that God says "PRECIOUS in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints?" (Psalms 116:15).

The Lord Jesus Christ, Who is God's Elect, PRECIOUS STONE, and Who is PRECIOUS to believers, is the STONE of stumbling and ROCK of offence to the unbeliever. Note in the last five verses of the ninth chapter of Romans how Christ was the STUMBLING STONE for blind Israelites. With these five verses read I Peter 2:2 to 11.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVEN

READ HEBREWS 7:19 - I PETER 1:3 TO 12 - TITUS 2:13

THE BETTER HOPE THE BLESSED HOPE

In these Scriptures we read of Christ as the BETTER HOPE, the LIVING HOPE, and the BLESSED HOPE.

In I Timothy 1:1 we learn that Paul wrote to Timothy that Christ is OUR HOPE.

In Ephesians 2:12 we learn that people who are without Christ are atheists, without God (atheos), and that they have no hope.

So the human race is divided into two groups or classes; those who have a hope because they have Christ, and those who have no hope, because they are without Christ.

Read what the coming of Christ will mean to those who have a hope in I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18. Then read in II Thessalonians 1:7 to 9 what the coming of Christ will mean to those who have no hope.

In I Corinthians 15:12 to 27 we find many "ifs" concerning the resurrection of Christ and His saints. Note the conclusion in I Corinthians 15:18 to 20: "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished, If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept."

So we read in I Peter 1:3 to 12 that believers have been begotten into a LIVING HOPE by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But there it is stated that the realization of that hope is reserved in heaven until Christ shall come for His saints. This, of course, does not mean that the souls or spirits of the

redeemed will be unconscious between death and resurrection. Surely the believer does not depart to be in an unconscious state when he, like Peter, puts off his tabernacle. (II Peter 1:14 to 18).

Paul wrote to the Colossians these words: “For the HOPE which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the Word of the truth of the gospel.” (Colossians 1:5).

In Hebrews 6:18 to 30 we read that believers have a strong consolation because they have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them. That is a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, because of the resurrection, ascension and intercessory work of the living Christ in heaven. He is our Forerunner - our “Runner-Ahead.” Read these verses with Hebrews 2:14 and 15, Hebrews 9:12 and 24 and Hebrews 7:25.

Now note Romans 8:20 - Romans 8:24 and 25: “For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who hath subjected the same in hope.” “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? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”

Now note Hebrews 7:19 and Titus 2:13: “For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a BETTER HOPE did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.” Hebrews 7:19. The Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, on the cross is that HOPE.

“Looking for that BLESSED HOPE, and the glorious appearing of the great God our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Titus 2:13. This is the purifying HOPE of I John 3:1 to 3.

Now abideth faith, hope, and love. (I Corinthians 13:13).

There is no hope in religion, no hope in Moses and the law. The holy law made nothing perfect. But by Christ and Calvary, the BETTER HOPE, believers are sanctified and perfected. This is the good news in Hebrews 10:10 to 14.

Christ may appear at any moment for His saints. This is their BLESSED HOPE. Then all that is hoped for will be realized.

The Greek word “ELPIS”, translated “HOPE,” has no element of doubt in it. We often say, “I hope so.” But the Greek “HOPE” is different. When we tell the reason of our “HOPE,” in obedience to I Peter 3:15, it is. not to be a religious “HOPE-SO” reason but a Scriptural, spiritual “know-so” reason.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHT

READ ROMANS 9:33 - I PETER 2:3 TO 9 - I CORINTHIANS 10:4
MATTHEW 21:42 AND 44 - DANIEL 2:34 - 35 AND 45

THE DIVINE STONE OR ROCK

Solemn words were spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 21:44: “Whosoever shall fall on this STONE shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind Him to powder.”

With this truth read these statements in Romans 9:33 and Daniel 2:34 and 35 and 45. “Behold, I lay in Sion a STUMBLING STONE and ROCK OF OFFENCE.” “A STONE was cut out without hands, and brake them (governments) to pieces.” “The STONE became a great

mountain and filled the whole earth.” “Then shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.” (Daniel 2:44).

In the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy, Jehovah is called “The Rock” 5 times. In the Psalms He is called the Rock 19 times. Note this question in I Samuel 2:2, “is there any rock like our ROCK?” “The ROCK of my salvation.” (II Samuel 22:47).

Now this interesting statement in I Corinthians 10:4: “That ROCK WAS CHRIST.” Christ was Israel’s ROCK in their wilderness journey. (Psalms 78:16 and 20) - (Exodus 17:6) and (Numbers 20:8). He “brought thee forth water out of the ROCK of flint.” (Deuteronomy 8:15). That Rock that followed the eating of spiritual meat, (not that followed them), was Christ. (I Corinthians 10:3 and 4). Christ is the true Manna from heaven and the true Drink.

Christ is God’s elect and precious CHIEF CORNER STONE. (I Peter 2:1 to 8). But note I Peter 2:7 - “Unto you therefore which believe He is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the STONE which the builders disallowed (rejected), the Same is made the Head of the corner.” When men build their religious towers, from earth to heaven, their very best is brick. (Genesis 11:1 to 12). Christ is the DIVINE STONE from heaven.

Who is the engrave Stone of Zechariah 3:9?

Christ was indeed the STUMBLING STONE and the ROCK OF OFFENCE. There is some hidden meaning to Christ’s words in Luke 17:1 and 2. But Christ came into this world the first time to be a STUMBLING STONE, the SMITTEN STONE. (Matthew 26:24 - Acts 2:23 - Acts 3:18 - Acts 4:26 to 29 - John 12:27 to 33). Therefore, those striking words of Christ, in Matthew 21:42 - “Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The STONE which the builders rejected, the same is become the Head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?” The builders stumbled at that STUMBLING STONE. And then after His crucifixion the message of Christ and Calvary was to Israel a STUMBLING STONE. (I Corinthians 1:21 to 24). They stumbled again. (Romans 9:30 to 10:4).

Note Romans 11:11 - “I say then, Have they (the Jews) stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.” Israel fell on the Stone and was broken. Some of the branches broken off. (Romans 11:19). Note Romans 11:7 - “What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” Israel fell on the STONE and Israel truly was broken. (Matthew 21:44.)

Israel’s fall on the STONE brought grace and mercy and salvation to the whole world. (Romans 11:30 and Romans 11:15).

In Israel’s coming tribulation and revelation of the wrath of the Lord Jesus in flaming fire the STONE will fall and grind civilization to powder. (Matthew 21:44) (II Thessalonians 1:7 to 10). The other rocks will not save those who will be hiding from the SMITING ROCK. (Revelation 6:15 to 17). They will ask for rocks and mountains to smite them. But the STONE out of heaven will do the smiting. Then that STONE will become a Mountain and fill the whole earth, in answer to the prayer “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” It is far better to be on the Rock than under the Rock. Read Daniel 2:31 to 45 and Revelation 6:14 to 17.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINE

READ COLOSSIANS 4:3 AND 4 - EPHESIANS 6:19 AND 20
EPHESIANS 1:16 TO 18 - EPHESIANS 3:12 TO 19 - II TIMOTHY 2:8 AND 9

OPEN DOORS - OPEN MOUTHS - ENLIGHTENED UNDERSTANDINGS

The apostle Paul was in the jail at Rome when he wrote Ephesians, Colossians and II Timothy. He was the prisoner of Jesus Christ for the Gentiles. (Ephesians 3:1 and 4:1). "According to my gospel, wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the Word of God is not bound." (II Timothy 2:9).

For a message which Paul called "my gospel," he suffered as an imprisoned criminal. Note Paul's testimony in Romans 16:25: "Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began."

So we learn that Paul was in jail for telling God's secret, which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God. (Ephesians 3:9). Because it had been hid in God, and was God's unprophesied, eternal purpose, Paul called the truth "the unsearchable riches of Christ." (Ephesians 3:8 and 11). This word "unsearchable" is translated, in Romans 11:33. "past finding out." The Greek root is "step" or "track." It could not be traced through Israel's Scriptures. Because Paul could not prove the Mystery by an appeal to Prophecy he got into plenty of trouble.

Now note Paul's earnest request for prayer in Colossians 4:3 and 4 and Ephesians 6:19 and 20: "Withal praying also for us, that God would OPEN UNTO US A DOOR of utterance, to speak 'THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST' for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak." "And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may OPEN MY MOUTH boldly, to make known 'THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL,' For which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."

Here we have the Lord's servant behind a prison door, yearning for open doors for the proclamation of the very message that landed him in jail. Did Paul want to get his fellow Christians in trouble? Well, he told Timothy not to be ashamed of him in jail and his Lord; but to tell others what Paul had taught him; to endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ, to be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel and be assured that he would suffer persecutions. (II Timothy 1:8 - II Timothy 2:2 and 3 - II Timothy 3:12).

Paul knew that Satan hated "THE MYSTERY" as he hated no other message, because it had to do with Satan's principalities in the heavenlies. (Ephesians 3:10 - Ephesians 6:11 to 14 - Ephesians 1:19 to 23).

Now after 1900 years you might write on one sheet of paper all of the doors that have been prayed open for this glorious truth. No one is doing more to close the doors to this truth than are the so-called Fundamentalists, who claim to be "grace" Premillenarians. Because of their boycotts and persecutions some mouths have also been closed, but none opened. So far as they are concerned. Paul suffered, (Colossians 1:24 to 26 and Colossians 4:3 and 4), in vain.

How few Christians are praying for open doors and open mouths for this ministry, which is truly the answer to every "ism" and "ill" with which the Church of Christ is afflicted?

How few Christians are praying the prayers of Ephesians 1:16 to 18 and Ephesians 3:12 to 19 for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to have the eyes of their understanding enlightened to comprehend "the dispensation of the mystery," to know the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of Ephesians 3:18, to know the hope of God's calling and the riches of the glory of

His inheritance in the saints? “In Whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.” (Ephesians 1:11). Let every Christian make up for lost time by diligently and continuously obeying Ephesians 3:9: “And to make all men see what is THE DISPENSATION OF THE MYSTERY.”

This is the Divine method. Let’s all fall in, with it. This glorious truth has been lost and covered up for centuries in the ecclesiastical, religious rubbish. Let’s uncover or recover it. What do you say?

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY

READ I JOHN 5:13 - ROMANS 8:28 TO 39 - I JOHN 5:20 - JOHN 10:28 TO 30
I JOHN 3:1 TO 3 - ROMANS 8:16

KNOW-SO SALVATION

The apostle John testifies for all Christians in I John 5:19: “And we know we are of God and the whole world lieth in wickedness.”

We know that we are of God. In II Timothy 2:19 we read that the Lord knoweth them that are His.

In I Corinthians 6:19 and 20 we read Christians are not their own, but are bought with a price, and that their bodies and spirits belong to God.

We read in I Corinthians 11:32 that Christians will not be condemned with the world.

In II Corinthians 5:1 “we know;” in II Corinthians 5:6 “we are always confident, knowing.” God wants every believer to be a “know-so” believer and “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” (I Peter 3:15). This does not mean with doubt, but giving all the glory to the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

All Christians should know what Paul knew in Romans 7:19 and Galatians 2:16, “That in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing,” “knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.” Note the real Christian in Philippians 3:3 “no confidence in the flesh-rejoice in Christ Jesus-worship God in the Spirit.”

When we realize and appreciate the fact that we are saved, because we are the recipients of God’s grace and because of God-given faith in the perfect redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ, we will not depend upon our feelings or religious activities or worthiness for our eternal security: “The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God: For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear.” (Romans 8:16 and 17). Then many Christians quote Philippians 2:12, “work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” They fail to understand this in the light of the next verse and wonder whether they have worked enough or have done enough fearing and trembling to assure them of salvation.

Satan is very clever. He gives to his unsaved religious victims a feeling of security, and to many really saved, but not established Christians, a feeling of insecurity. What a shame to be a hope-so Christian. Because of the wiles of Satan, Christians are to put on the whole armour of God, which includes the helmet of salvation. (Ephesians 6:13 to 17). This means that the one

who is really and truly trusting and resting in the perfect redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ should have a “know-so” salvation.

In Romans 8:28 to 39, we learn that God foreknew the Christians’ salvation. God foreordained or predestinated. God calls. God justifies. God will glorify. “If God be for us, who can be against us?” No one can lay anything to the charge of God’s elect. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ (Romans 8:1). Read Romans 8:28 to 39 and know what part the omnipotent God has in our salvation. “Who is he that condemneth?” (Romans 8:34). No one and no thing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:38 and 39). Satan is the accuser of the brethren. He condemns and accuses God’s people continuously. (Revelation 12:10).

Christ Jesus said. “He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.” (John 6:47). These are the words of the Eternal Christ, who also said: “I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish: neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.” (John 10:28). If Christ gives a believer life and that believer loses it after some time, it is not eternal life.

It is true that some believers will be saved “so as by fire.” (I Corinthians 3:15). God’s Spirit within assures them of their eternal “sonship” (I John 3:1 - Romans 8:16). Some Christians will have an abundant entrance and rewards because they add to their faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love; (II Peter 1:4).

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life.” (I John 5:13).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-ONE

READ ACTS 1:16 TO 26 - ACTS 12:1 TO 5 - I CORINTHIANS 15:7 TO 10
I CORINTHIANS 3:10 - GALATIANS 1:11 TO 20 - GALATIANS 2:1 TO 9

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

In Acts 1:16 to 26 we read that when Judas, the son of perdition, committed suicide, in fulfillment of the Scriptures, (John 17:12), it was necessary also in fulfillment of the Scriptures (Psalms 41:9 and Psalms 69:25 and 26) that a successor be selected to take the place of Judas. “That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.” Acts 1:25 and 26. Then there were again twelve apostles.

Then in the next chapter we read that, in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, ‘PETER WITH THE ELEVEN’ stood up and addressed devout Jews from every nation under heaven, ALL THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL. (Acts 2:14 - Acts 2:5 - Acts 2:36). All of the house of Israel means TWELVE TRIBES (Acts 26:7). So on the day of Pentecost, in Israel’s city, TWELVE APOSTLES addressed TWELVE TRIBES. From many Scriptures in the Bible we know that “TWELVE” is the number of Israel.

But “one” seems to be the number of the Church of the mystery, “Christ and the Church, one flesh.” (Ephesians 5:31 and 32). “One New Man.” (Ephesians 2:15). “One Body.” (Ephesians 4:4). The Body is One - even Christ, and the members baptized by One Spirit into

One Body. (Romans 12:4 and 5 - I Corinthians 12:12 and 13). Note the seven “Ones” in Ephesians 4:3 to 7.

The revelation concerning the One Body, the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6, was given first to one apostle, “the apostle of the Gentiles.” (Romans 11:13). Paul called himself the masterbuilder who laid the foundation. (I Corinthians 3:10). In conference he received no authority from Peter and the Eleven. (Galatians 2:1 to 9).

The historic beginning of the One Body was surely before Paul wrote I Corinthians or Romans. “The dispensation of the grace of God,” “the dispensation of the mystery” (Ephesians 3:1 to 5 - Ephesians 3:9) began when and because of the fall of Israel. Surely Israel had not fallen when the Lord, by Paul, warned them, in Acts 13:40 to 42.

To any spiritual intelligent student of the Scriptures the selection of a twelfth apostle after Christ’s death and prayer on the cross (Luke 23:34) proves that God was still dealing with Israel. Christ would not have needed the twelfth apostle, if the dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles (Ephesians 3:1 to 3) began on the day of Pentecost.

But when another one of the twelve died, according to Acts 12:1 and 2 (James), no successor was chosen to maintain the number “TWELVE.” The keys of the kingdom had been used. (Matthew 16:16 to 19 - Acts 3:19 to 21). During the years covered by the last sixteen chapters of Acts, there is no record of the missionary activities, words or doings of Peter and the Ten, except as they had dealings with one man, Paul, who is mentioned more than 130 times in those chapters where four or five of his missionary journeys are recorded.

Now be a Berean and remember as you read Acts 17:11 and I John 2:26 to 28, that God will not wink at your ignorance, if you follow blind leaders. Answer these questions: Why was a successor chosen to take the place of Judas? Why were TWELVE men required to represent Christ on Israel’s religious feast day Pentecost? Why did the representatives of those Twelve Tribes sell their Jerusalem real estate and give the money to the twelve apostles? What is the significance of Matthew 19:28 that those Twelve apostles are going to sit on twelve thrones and judge the Twelve Tribes of Israel? Why after Peter had used the Key of the Kingdom with Israel and the household of Cornelius and the apostle James died, was no successor to James chosen to keep the number Twelve? Why are no missionary journeys of the TWELVE outside of the land of the Jews recorded in the Book of Acts? What is the meaning of Galatians 2:1 to 9?

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-TWO

READ JOHN 12:12 TO 15 - JOHN 12:27 TO 31

REVELATION 19:11 TO 21

THE ASS AND THE WHITE HORSE

Let us compare John 12:15 with Revelation 19:11. “Fear not daughter of Sion: behold thy King cometh, sitting on an ASS’S COLT.” “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a WHITE HORSE; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war.” Let us remember that Jehovah is “a man of war” (Exodus 15:3); and He will be “the Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6 and 7).

Surely we know that the ass is the symbol of meekness and humility; whereas the white horse is the symbol of a victorious warrior, conqueror or ruler. These two animals speak of Christ's two visits to this earth, as recorded in Isaiah 53, the suffering Lamb, and in Isaiah 9:6 and 7, the exalted King.

Let us behold the eternal Lord of glory, in Matthew 27:29 to 35, where we read that they put a crown of thorns on His head, a reed in His right hand, and in derision and mockery, worshipped Him as King. Then they spat on Him and smote Him with the reed they had given Him. They reached the place called Calvary, and crucified Him and gambled for His raiment. Why all of this? The answer is Acts 2:23: Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

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

Then what? "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: And before Him shall be gathered all nations." (Matthew 25:31 and 32). What a difference between being a curse on a cross (Galatians 3:13) and the reigning King of Glory! (Psalms 24:9). "The King will come in power and great glory" (Luke 21:27). When He came the first time it was for great suffering. He had power to lay down His life and to take it up again. (John 10:17 and 18). God did not suffer His Holy One to see corruption, He is alive in heaven. His glory, according to all the prophets, was to follow His sufferings. (I Peter 1:11 to 13 - Luke 24:21 to 28). Believe God's Sure Word of Prophecy. The hope of humanity is not "a great democracy," but "a great Theocracy." Read concerning Christ's "rod of iron" rule in Revelation 2:27 - Revelation 12:5 - Revelation 19:15.

God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world by Jesus Christ. (Acts 17:31). The Father hath committed all judgment into the hands of His Son. (John 5:22).

Christ came the first time to be judged by men, according to God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge. (Acts 4:26 to 29 - Acts 2:23). He was crowned with thorns. He came riding on the ass. (John 12:27 to 31). He was lowly Jesus, meek and mild. He said the Son of man must be lifted up on the cross. (John 3:13 to 15 - John 12:31 to 33 - Matthew 26:24).

Christ is coming the second time on the white horse, to judge men. He will be crowned with many diadems. (Revelation 19:12). His eyes will be as a flame of fire. There will be no reed in His hand; but "Out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations; and He shall rule them with a rod of iron; and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." (Revelation 19:15). This world belongs to the Man Who died on the cross, by right of creation and redemption.

"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment." (Jude 14 and 15). Admiral Halsey wanted to ride Hirohito's white horse; but note the Horseman in Revelation 20:14.

But remember God's saving message for now - "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." (John 3:17).

If you meet Christ here as Saviour, His gracious invitation is "Come unto Me." (Matthew 11:27 and 28). If you meet Christ hereafter, as Judge, (John 5:22), His awful words will be, "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matthew 25:41). Which for you?

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-THREE

READ MARK 1:14 AND 15 - LUKE 21:27 TO 33 - I CORINTHIANS 6:9 TO 11

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

In Romans 14:17 we read - "For THE KINGDOM OF GOD is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." This is God's definition of the KINGDOM OF GOD in this age of grace.

During the years and centuries covered by the Old Testament, or under the reign of law, Israel was surely God's "KINGDOM" nation. During those fifteen hundred years Israel had a God-given system of religion, including meats and drinks: "Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." (Hebrews 9:10). Israel was surely a religious nation, by God's command.

So under the reign of law God demanded both righteousness and religion. Israel was God's KINGDOM of priests. Note what Christ said to that religious nation, in Matthew 21:43 - "Therefore say I unto you, THE KINGDOM OF GOD shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." In Matthew 8:12 Christ called the unsaved Jews, "the children of the KINGDOM."

On the day of Pentecost and for some time thereafter, God, through Christ's apostles, presented a new KINGDOM proposition to Israel; and therefore God demanded righteousness and permitted religion. Then, after Israel's fall (Romans 11:11), after that religious nation was set aside, God demanded righteousness and forbade religion. (Titus 3:5 to 8 - Philippians 3:1 to 4 - Galatians 6:15 - Romans 6:14 - Philippians 3:3). Remember it was the same Paul, who circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3), who wrote Philippians 3:3, Colossians 2:11 and Galatians 6:15.

In I Corinthians 6:9 to 11 we learn how believing sinners inherit THE KINGDOM OF GOD, by being washed, sanctified and justified by Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Read also Galatians 5:21. In Colossians 4:11 we read of Paul's fellow-labourers "unto the kingdom of God." And in Ephesians 5:5 we have God's partial list of those who shall have no inheritance in THE KINGDOM OF GOD. (Revelation 21:8).

Thus we learn that the term "THE KINGDOM OF GOD" may be used in connection with Israel under the law before Christ came; also during the years of Christ's incarnation as Jesus of Nazareth; and for some time thereafter. It is also used to describe God's spiritual program in this age of grace when members of the Body of Christ are in Christ's kingdom. (Colossians 1:13 - Ephesians 5:5).

We learn in Mark 1:14 and 15 and Matthew 4:17 and 10:7 that THE KINGDOM OF GOD and THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN are sometimes identical and have no reference to the Body of Christ. But Christians should explain when they say the Church is not the KINGDOM.

Note in Mark 1:14 and 15 that the prophesied KINGDOM OF GOD was at hand because the King had come down from heaven. Note in Luke 21:27 to 33 that the prophesied KINGDOM OF GOD will be at hand again when the King comes from heaven to earth again. Note Luke 21:31: "Know ye that THE KINGDOM OF GOD is nigh at hand."

With very little thinking, we see how unscriptural it would be to substitute THE BODY OF CHRIST for the KINGDOM OF GOD either in Mark 1:14 and 15 or Luke 21:31 or in

Matthew 21:43. THE KINGDOM OF GOD will be at hand when the King comes back. (Luke 21:27 to 31). When the King returns with power and great glory to redeem Israel, in fulfillment of Luke 21:27 to 33, the members of the Body of Christ will be in glory, having been raptured. The Body of Christ had not begun historically when Christ declared THE KINGDOM OF GOD at hand. Thus we see that THE KINGDOM OF GOD is not necessarily the Church, which is Christ's Body, although the Church is included in the over-all KINGDOM OF GOD, as is the Messianic Kingdom which will be established on this earth when Christ shall return to build again the tabernacle of David and take the throne of David to bring about the restitution of all things, "peace on earth" and the overthrow of Satan. (Amos 9:11 to 15 - Isaiah 9:6 and 7 - Acts 3:19 to 21 - Revelation 20:1 to 7).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR

READ GENESIS 11:9 AND 17 - I CHRONICLES 1:19 - ROMANS 1:24 TO 28
GENESIS 12:2 - ISAIAH 43:1 TO 7 - ISAIAH 43:15 AND 21 - ISAIAH 44:8
ROMANS 9:4 TO 6 - ROMANS 11:15, 25 AND 26

ONE NATION—MANY NATIONS

In Genesis 11:9 to 17 is recorded the story of the destruction of man's city and religious tower—the scattering abroad. In Genesis 11:17 we read of Peleg. "Peleg" means "division." So we read in I Chronicles 1:19, "in the days of Peleg the earth was divided." What happened to the nations, or heathen, or Gentiles? Because of their awful sin, God gave them up. (Romans 1:21 to 31).

So we have pressed into the first eleven chapters of Genesis the Bible history of the human race for a period of about 2100 years. Although only eleven chapters are devoted to this history from Adam to Abraham, there is more historical truth in these eleven chapters than in all of man's histories covering the same period. If not based on Bible history, man's histories of this period are speculations and fables. Eleven chapters for this history, from Adam to Abram. Then 40 chapters of Genesis and all the chapters in the 38 Books from Exodus to Malachi deal with ONE NATION. Only such other nations and individuals are mentioned as had dealings with that ONE NATION, Israel.

About 1900 B.C. God called an uncircumcised heathen by the name of "Abram." Abram was 75 years old. He had a barren wife by the name of "Sarah." Concerning them we read, "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." (Hebrews 11:12). "As good as dead" is not very good.

A most radical change in God's dealings with the human race is recorded in Genesis 12:1 to 4. There was a new beginning when God chose Abraham and Israel, as there was likewise a new beginning about 1900 years ago when God set aside Israel and established the Church composed now largely of Gentiles. Read the four important verses: Genesis 12:1 to 4. In Genesis 12:2—God said to Abram (as good as dead): "I will make of thee A GREAT NATION." The Gentiles have made many valuable contributions to man's physical comfort and convenience, and many faithful Gentile missionaries have carried the gospel of Christ and the Word of God all

over the world. But as Christ was an Israelite and said “salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22), Israel gave us the eternal spiritual blessings which we cherish. (Romans 9:4 to 6). Read God’s own words in Isaiah 43:15—“I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.” In Romans 9:4 to 6 we learn that the Written Word and the Incarnate Living Word (Christ) were by Israel. The twelve apostles and Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, were of Israel.

To Israel God said, “ye are My witnesses.” Isaiah 43:10). “I have created you for My glory.” Isaiah 43:7). So about 1700 B. C. 70 descendants of Jacob Israel) went down to Egypt. (Exodus 1:5). Some years later more than 600,000 came out of Egypt. (Exodus 12:37). God led them out of Egypt and established them in Canaan.

Thus we see that God set aside man nations and established ONE NATION. God create HIS GREAT NATION from ONE AS GOOD AS DEAD. “God hath not dealt so with any nation.” (Psalms 147:20). Many of the leaders of that great nation were great sinners. Every Christian and every Jew should read the Parable of the Vineyard, in the twenty-first chapter of Matthew. Then followed the Lord’s awful judgment upon that chosen nation for their great sins as recorded in Matthew 23:25 to 39 and in I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16. Read these Scriptures.

Christ called Israel, “the Builders,” when He said the “Stone is rejected by the Builders.” (Matthew 21:42). They killed the prophets. Then they killed the Prince of life. (Acts 7:51 to 55; Acts 3:14 and 15; Acts 2:23; Matthew 21:34 to 42; I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16). Christ came unto His own and His own received Him not. On the cross He prayed for God to pardon their great sins mentioned. Luke 23:34). God was willing: if Israel would receive His pardon. (Acts 3:17 to 26). God raised Christ from the dead to be Israel’s Saviour and sent the Holy Spirit to witness this fact. (Acts 5:29 to 32). Israel refused and added to their other sins two sins which proved unpardonable and their undoing—Blasphemy and resisting the Holy Spirit. And forbidding the apostles to preach to Gentiles. (Acts 18:5; Acts 13:45 - I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16). The children were cast into darkness. (Matthew 8:12; Romans 11:7 to 11; Romans 11:25). Later on Matthew 22:7 was fulfilled, as was Luke 21:24, and Deuteronomy 28:52 to 55, but before that fulfillment, the ONE NATION was set aside in disgrace. Then and there God turned to the MANY NATIONS in grace. (Romans 11:15; Acts 28:25 to 28; Acts 18:6; Acts 13:46). There is a sense in which the Jew is the key to the Bible.

Because of the unbelief of the ONE NATION, the MANY NATIONS obtained mercy. (Romans 11:30). At the end of this present age of grace God will not spare those of the MANY NATIONS who believe not. But He will turn from the MANY NATIONS and save the ONE NATION. (Romans 11:26; Romans 11:17 to 24).

Peace will come to this world when the ONE NATION has been redeemed and established in their own land. (Amos 9:11 to 15; Isaiah 9:6 and 7, and Isaiah 11:1 to 11).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIVE

READ LURE 7:19 TO 23 - LUKE 24:25 TO 27 - HEBREWS 10:37

HE THAT SHOULD COME—SHALL COME

In Luke 7:19 we read this question concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, "Art Thou HE THAT SHOULD COME? or look we for another?" In Hebrews 10:37 we read this statement concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, "HE THAT SHALL COME, will come."

Therefore there is a sense in which the Bible is the story of "HE THAT SHOULD COME" and "HE THAT SHALL COME." In this connection let us read Hebrews 9:28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The great events of time and eternity are centered in two great events, the two advents of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now let us compare the words of Christ in John 6:38 with the words of the messenger of God in Acts 1:11: "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Christ came down from heaven once. Christ will come down from heaven again.

When John the Baptist's disciples asked Christ "ART THOU HE THAT SHOULD COME, or look we for another?" Christ, in their presence did the miracles (Luke 7:21) which God said He would do when He decided to come down to Israel from heaven. (Isaiah 35:3 to 6). Why did Christ do these wonderful supernatural works? God did them by His Son "to approve Jesus of Nazareth unto Israel." (Acts 2:22 - John 5:36). These signs are recorded that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name. (John 20:21).

In the 39 Books, from Genesis to Malachi, SOME ONE is coming. He is to be Israel's God, King and Messiah. (Isaiah 35:4 - Zechariah 9:9 - Daniel 9:26). In the third chapter of the first of the 39 Books THE COMING ONE is to be "the Seed of the woman." (Genesis 3:14 and 15). In the third chapter of the last of the 39 Books He is to be "the LORD Whom ye seek." (Malachi 3:1). "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one." (Zechariah 14:9).

The Seed of the woman was to be also the Lord. He was to be Job's Daysman betwixt God and man. (Job 9:33 - I Timothy 2:4 to 6 - II Corinthians 5:19 to 21). He was Abraham's Seed and a Prophet like unto Moses, a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. He was to be the Governor of Israel, born in Bethlehem. (Micah 5:2). The Seed of the woman, the Lord, the Incarnate Word. (John 1:14). In Isaiah 7:14, the Seed of the woman, the virgin's Son, is to be called "IMMANUEL." Read Jeremiah 31:22. And remember Christ's words "Lo, I come to do Thy will O God," (Hebrews 10:7 to 10). Christ knew that that meant the bloody sweat of Gethsemane and the agony and disgrace of Calvary. (I Peter 1:18 to 20).

Christ came to earth and went back to heaven, and some day He is coming back to earth. Yes, the world's great events are truly centered in two great events, the two advents of the Lord of glory, the King of glory. (I Corinthians 2:6 to 8 - Psalms 24:7 to 10). Christ said "IF I GO, I WILL COME AGAIN." He went. He will come again. First He will come for the Church, which is His Body; "then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." "So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." (Luke 21:27 and 31).

Before the Sinless Man comes to earth to redeem Israel, the Man of Sin will be on earth to deceive both Israel and religious Christless Gentiles. He will be the "ANOTHER" of John 5:43.

The SINLESS MAN will destroy the Man of Sin. (II Thessalonians 2:1 to 12).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIX

READ II TIMOTHY 2:15 - HEBREWS 1:1 AND 2 - II TIMOTHY 3:16
HEBREWS 5:11 TO 6:3

DIVINE TRUTH AND THE DIVINE TEACHER

Every servant of the Lord should be a spiritual, intelligent, obedient and fruitful Christian. Every minister of Christ should be a faithful steward of the mysteries of God. (I Corinthians 4:1 to 4). Every such minister recognizes the infallible Holy Spirit as the one infallible Teacher, apart from Whom no person can understand or impart spiritual truths. (I John 2:26 to 28 - I Corinthians 2:11 to 16).

But most of the Lord's servants apparently have failed to appreciate the necessity of the special prayer of Ephesians 1:16 to 19 for the understanding of the profound "strong-meat" truth of Ephesians and Colossians, designated "the mystery." (Colossians 1:26 - Ephesians 3:3 and 9). "Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age." (Hebrews 5:14).

Of course, there are other mysteries in the Bible; but for this special truth concerning the hope, calling and inheritance of saints in "the Church of the Mystery," the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6, and to understand the riches of God's inheritance in the saints, the revelation from Christ to and through the apostle Paul, which is the capstone of Divine truth (Colossians 1:24 to 26), the believer needs the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to have the eyes of his understanding enlightened. For no other truth in the Bible is such a prayer offered as the prayer of Ephesians 1:16 to 18 and Ephesians 3:12 to 19.

Of course, the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit, leads into all truth. (John 16:7 to 13). But for the special truth of "the mystery of Christ," special wisdom and revelation are required. The sectarian Christians of Corinth could not receive this truth. (I Corinthians 3:1 to 4). Paul could only hint at this profound truth in I Corinthians 2:6 to 8. The Corinthian carnal saints could only receive the milk of the Word which belongeth to babes and those unskilful in the Word or righteousness. (I Peter 2:1 and 2 - I Corinthians 3:1 to 5 and I Corinthians 13:8 to 12 and Hebrews 5:13).

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; that is, all Scripture is "God-breathed." God spake unto the fathers by the prophets and then by His Son. (II Timothy 3:16 - Hebrews 1:1 and 2). All of this was in divers manners and at sundry times. And then Christ chose twelve apostles and His special apostle, Paul, who declared that Christ spoke in him and revealed many new truths to him that were not made known before. (Galatians 1:11 and 12 - II Corinthians 12:1 to 12 - II Corinthians 13:3 and Ephesians 3:1 to 3 - Colossians 1:24 to 26).

Christ also confirmed to Paul truths that had already been revealed to others. (Acts 26:21 to 23). Paul had a "confirmation" (prophesied) message and Paul had a "revelation" (unprophesied) message.

Thus revelation was given on the installment plan. Note the period designated, "from Adam to Moses," when there was no law. (Romans 5:13 and 14). It was during that 2500 year period that the nation Israel came into existence, a little more than 200 years before the law entered. (Romans 5:20). During those 2500 years the Holy Spirit did not move upon holy men to write holy Scriptures. Then to Israel, about 1500 B.C., the law was added till Christ came. (Galatians 3:19). By Christ's death and resurrection the law was taken out of the way.

(Colossians 2:12 to 16). The Scriptures from Sinai until the resurrection of Christ are called the Old Testament Scriptures.

Then grace began to reign through Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:21). Saved Jews and Gentiles were put into something new and different, the Body of Christ. (I Corinthians 12:13 - Ephesians 2:15 to 19). These Body-members were not under the law but under grace. (Romans 6:14 - Colossians 2:13 to 16 - Acts 15:10).

The dispensation of grace began with Israel's fall. (Romans 11:11 and 30). This new dispensation, meant something very special and wonderful for Gentiles. (Ephesians 3:1 to 3 - Romans 11:30).

When the Church is completed and the special favor for Gentiles has ended, Israel will rise again and the prophesied kingdom of Christ will be established on earth. (Romans 11:25 and 26 - Acts 15:15 to 18).

There is a difference between the postponed kingdom and the Body of Christ.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVEN

READ ISAIAH 1:18 - ROMANS 5:20 AND 21 - LURE 7:41 TO 50 - JOHN 8:3 TO 11
HEBREWS 10:26 - HEBREWS 6:2 TO 6 - EPHESIANS 2:4 TO 10

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN AND

THE UNPARDONED SINNER

First let us read Acts 2:23 - Acts 3:17 and Acts 3:26: "Him (Christ) being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." "And now, brethren, I know that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." "Unto you FIRST God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you FROM HIS INIQUITIES."

Here we read of the greatest crime ever committed by sinners on this earth. "You killed the Prince of Life." (Acts 3:14 and 15). "The Jews who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets." (I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16). But was that worst of all crimes an unpardonable sin? The answer is Acts 2:41 and 4:4, where we learn that first 3000, and then 2000 more, of those murderers were pardoned. The prayer of Christ on the cross was for this pardon: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34). They crucified the Lord of glory; because they knew not. (I Corinthians 2:6 to 8). They were ignorant. (Acts 3:17). Paul gave his testimony in I Timothy 1:12 to 16. Read it. He called himself the chief of sinners. He was fully pardoned.

If the murder of Christ was not unpardonable, surely there is no such thing as an unpardonable sin during this age of grace. But some Christians ask how about Hebrews 10:26: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth NO MORE SACRIFICE for sins." Do not change the word "SACRIFICE" in this verse to read "PARDON," as so many religious people have done.

Read the condition of the sinner in Ephesians 2:1 to 3 - Ephesians 2:5 - Ephesians 4:18 - Ephesians 2:11 and 12. In these verses we learn that the sinner is dead in trespasses and sins, alienated from the life of God, by nature the child of wrath. He is an atheist. He is without hope.

(Ephesians 2:12). Surely all the sins of all such sinners were unpardoned unless and until they experienced Ephesians 2:8 and 9: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast.” This confirms Isaiah 1:18 and Romans 5:20: “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” “Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” Is not God’s abounding grace and the blood of Christ adequate for any sinner’s case?

There is a great difference between THE UNPARDONABLE SIN and THE UNPARDONED SINNER. The very moment the vilest, or the most respectable sinner, by faith, becomes the recipient of God’s grace, the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is applied to his guilty soul. Thereby all of his sins are pardoned; even forever put away. Therefore none of his sins were unpardonable, although they were all unpardoned until God pardoned them.

Little does the average church-member appreciate the efficacy, value and power of the precious shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. That blood cleanses the believing sinner from all sin, and by Christ that believer is justified from all things. Christ died for Barabbas. Very few sinners are worse than Barabbas.

But how about blaspheming against the Holy Spirit? (Matthew 12:30 to 32). Israel committed that UNPARDONABLE SIN. (Acts 13:45 - Acts 18:5 - Acts 7:51 to 55). First Israel sinned against the Son of man. That sin was pardonable. Read Acts 5:29 to 32. Christ was raised up in resurrection to be Israel’s Saviour. (Acts 5:31 and Acts 13:30 to 40). By rejecting the witness of the Holy Spirit Israel committed THE UNPARDONABLE SIN. Then God did something awful to Israel and something wonderful for Gentiles. (Romans 11:5 to 15 - Romans 11:25 and 30). Note Israel’s four great sins in Acts 7:51 to 56 and I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16. The first two were pardonable. The last two were unpardonable. Then note John 16:7 to 10; where we learn that the first sin question is the Son question.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHT

READ ROMANS 8:32 - II PETER 2:4 TO 9 - ROMANS 11:21

HEBREWS 10:26 TO 33

THE UNSPARING GOD

In the Scriptures listed above we certainly learn that God is the GOD WHO SPARED NOT. Note these profound statements, these warnings from God Who is a holy and just and righteous Judge, as well as a longsuffering Saviour:

“For if GOD SPARED NOT the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And SPARED NOT the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them AN ENSAMPLE unto those that after should live ungodly.” (II Peter 2:4 to 6).

“For if GOD SPARED NOT the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee.” (Romans 11:21).

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

The angels have already received a terrible judgment, but a more terrible judgment awaits them. They are reserved in chains of darkness awaiting God’s wrath. God’s Word is, that “HE SPARED NOT” the angels.

Sinners do not like to hear of God’s anger and wrath. But it is difficult to understand how these same sinners refuse to respond to God’s offer of salvation by grace, and are so utterly indifferent as to the wonderful love of God and the offer of eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ. Comparatively few of them are either scared into salvation by the preaching of God’s wrath or persuaded to Calvary by preaching the wonderful love of God.

The Lord Jesus Christ told His hearers that when He returns to earth, as the Son of man, sinners will be like they were in the days of Noah. (Luke 17:26 - Matthew 24:37). The world was in an awful sinful condition when Noah preached to those antediluvian sinners. They refused to repent at Noah’s preaching, so God did something about it: “God SPARED NOT the old world, but brought in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.” The sinners refused to repent when the Son of God preached to them; but He cried out “Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.” (Luke 13:3). “How think ye shall escape the damnation of hell?” (Matthew 23:33). This message was proclaimed to His own nation. Christ came unto His own and His own received him not. (John 1:11 - Romans 11:7 to 11). God blinded and cast away his own chosen nation, Israel. Read Christ’s denunciation and judgment in Matthew 22:7 - 23:23 to 39 - Luke 21:20 to 24. God will not spare Gentiles. In spite of these Divine warnings, the great majority of God’s religious nation (Israel) rejected Christ. And hear God’s warning in Romans 11:21: “For if God SPARED NOT the natural branches (Israel), take heed lest He also spare not thee.” Why do not the Gentiles wake up, and know that if God SPARED NOT Israel, His peculiar treasure, He will not spare the Gentiles, the great majority of whom after 1900 years still despise God’s grace and reject His Son?

Think of the UNSPARING GOD in the language of Romans 8:32: “He that SPARED NOT His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

Have you answered the questions in Hebrews 2:1 to 3 and in I Peter 4:18, where shall the ungodly and the sinner, who neglects God’s Son and His cross, appear?

If law-breakers, before Christ came and died to set sinners free, died without mercy, then what about those who reject or neglect the redemption accomplished by God’s UNSPARED SON on the cross? Read the answer in Hebrews 10:28 to 32.

Note carefully II Peter 2:6: “And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.”

Such an awful destruction by fire and brimstone is not to be winked at. God tells us that it is a “sample” or “foreshadowing” of the awful fate of the sinners who stand before the holy God at the White Throne.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-NINE

READ I CORINTHIANS 15:1 TO 4 - ROMANS 1:16 - MATTHEW 4:23

MATTHEW 24:13 AND 14 I TIMOTHY 1:11 - GALATIANS 2:7
ACTS 20:24 - EPHESIANS 6:19 AND 20

HOW MANY GOSPELS IN THE BIBLE?

The Gospel of Christ is God's power unto salvation to every one that believeth. (Romans 1:16). This saving gospel is thus described in I Corinthians 15:1 to 4, "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; He was buried and He was raised again, the third day, according to the Scriptures." There we are told that this is the gospel, by which ye are saved. Christ delivered the message to Paul and Paul delivered it to the people.

Now note Luke 9:6 concerning the twelve apostles when Christ on earth first sent them out to preach THE GOSPEL: "And they departed and went through the towns, preaching THE GOSPEL, and healing every where."

In Matthew 4:23 we read that Christ preached THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM and healed many diseased people.

Some months after the twelve apostles preached the gospel (Luke 9:6), they understood absolutely nothing of the truth of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. (Luke 18:31 to 34). Carefully compare Luke 9:6 with Luke 18:31 to 34 and then compare Luke 18:31 to 34 and John 20:9 with Romans 10:5 to 15, and learn that the Twelve were not preaching the gospel of Romans 10:9 and 10 or I Corinthians 15:1 to 4, during the years Christ was on earth. They were preaching THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM. This will again be preached. (Matthew 24:13 and 14). The GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM suggests the King and a Kingdom rather than the Church and the Head.

Christ gave to Paul THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD. (Acts 20:24). Paul's testimony was that Christ gave him the "grace" gospel by revelation. (Galatians 1:11 and 12). It was not after man or from the twelve apostles; but from Christ in heaven.

Now note Galatians 2:7: "But contrariwise, when they saw that THE GOSPEL OF THE UNCIRCUMCISION was committed unto me, (Paul), as THE GOSPEL OF THE CIRCUMCISION was unto Peter." All Christians are agreed that there is only one way to be saved, by faith in the shed blood of Christ, but the apostles at Jerusalem were undoubtedly surprised, if not startled, when they learned from the lips of Paul, who was sent by revelation to Jerusalem, the difference between THE GOSPEL OF THE UNCIRCUMCISION and THE GOSPEL OF THE CIRCUMCISION. This was about fourteen years after Paul was saved. (Galatians 2:1 to 7). If the Twelve did not know the "uncircumcision" gospel, they certainly knew nothing of "the mystery of the gospel." (Ephesians 6:19 and 20).

The twelve apostles knew the message for Jews and Gentiles based on the covenant of circumcision. (Acts 7:8 - Genesis 17:9 to 14). This covenant was made at the time Abram was circumcised and became Abraham, at the age of ninety-nine. But Christ called to Paul's attention the truth that Abram, the heathen, was justified in uncircumcision twenty-four years before he was circumcised. (Romans 4:7 to 12 - Genesis 12:1 to 4 - Genesis 15:6 to 8). Have you learned the significance of Romans 4:7 to 10 and the truth that at the time God declared Abram, the uncircumcised heathen, righteous by faith, the Scriptures saw Paul's GOSPEL OF THE UNCIRCUMCISION? (Galatians 3:8 and 14 - Romans 4:21 to 25).

Some of the Twelve perhaps did not receive the new revelation very graciously. (Galatians 2:10 to 14). Paul wrote of THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF THE BLESSED GOD. (I

Timothy 1:11). Then later Paul wrote of “MY GOSPEL” according to the revelation of the mystery. (Romans 16:25). Then he was in jail for “THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL.” Yes, for this message Paul became the prisoner of the Lord for Gentiles (Ephesians 6:19 and 20 - Ephesians 3:1 to 6 - II Timothy 2:8 and 9 - Colossians 4:3 and 4).

Peter in I Peter 3:18 did write clearly of the gospel by which we are saved. BUT SURELY we see that there is a difference between the gospel, in fulfillment of the Scriptures, and THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL, not in fulfillment of prophecy, but according to the eternal purpose of God which no prophet foretold. Read Colossians 1:24 to 26.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY

READ GENESIS 2:19 TO 24 - GENESIS 5:2 - EPHESIANS 5:31 AND 32
I CORINTHIANS 12:12 - I CORINTHIANS 15:45 - EPHESIANS 5:26 TO 28
I PETER 1:18 TO 20

THREE ADAMS AND TWO SPOTLESS CHRISTS

Our study in this letter is concerning THREE ADAMS and TWO SPOTLESS CHRISTS. Of course, for many years they have been in the Bible, but perhaps they have escaped our attention. Read all of the Scriptures listed above. Then note in Romans 5:14, that Adam was a figure of Christ. In Genesis 2:19 and 20 we read of Adam, without a wife. Adam was created in the image and likeness of God. (Genesis 1:26 and 27), Adam was a figure of Christ before Eve was created. In I Corinthians 15:45 Adam, the first man, is called “THE FIRST ADAM,” and Christ is called “THE LAST ADAM.” So here we have two of our “ADAMS.” Well, who is the in-between Adam? In I Corinthians 11:8 we learn that the woman was of the man.

After God created Eve, as a part of Adam, God called Adam and Eve, “ADAM.” (Genesis 5:2). So we have THREE ADAMS. Note how God made Eve: God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and out of Adam’s rib God made woman, (Genesis 2:21 and 22). Then Adam called Eve “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.” (Genesis 2:23). Out of the wounded side of the first man came the first woman. Then Adam in (Genesis 2:24) said, what Paul said concerning Christ and His Church, the great mystery of Ephesians 5:31 and 32: “A man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife as one flesh.” Concerning Christ and the Church, this is still a great mystery to many.

Adam had no mother. Christ did. God was Adam’s Creator. God was Christ’s Father. Christ left His Father and His mother and went to Calvary where a deep sleep fell upon Him. The Roman spear pierced perhaps right about the same spot where God took out Adam’s rib to create Eve. There on Calvary the Lord Jesus Christ was the SPOTLESS LAMB OF GOD foreordained before the foundation of the world, (I Peter 1:18 to 20). We will never forget His cry, “My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27:46).

There on the cross of Calvary Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for the Church that He might present the Church unto Himself without blemish and WITHOUT SPOT: (Ephesians 5:26 and 27). This SPOTLESS CHURCH too was foreordained before the foundation of the world. (Ephesians 5:26 to 28 - Ephesians 1:4 and 5).

Yes, THE SPOTLESS CHRIST and THE SPOTLESS CHURCH were foreordained before the world was.

In Genesis 5:2, we read, “Male and female created He them, and blessed them, and called their name ‘ADAM’, in the day they were created.”

Thus far we see the THREE ADAMS, for Adam was “ADAM” without Eve; and together they were “ADAM.” Every Christian knows that Christ was SPOTLESS. In spite of all ITS imperfections, the Church is yet to be SPOTLESS. Read I Corinthians 12:12 “For as the Body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one Body, being many, are one Body: SO ALSO IS CHRIST.” We emphasize this important explanatory verse of this lesson. Christ and His Body-members are “CHRIST.” God called Adam and Eve “ADAM.” God calls Christ and His Church “CHRIST.” The Church, in Ephesians 1:22 and 23, is called “THE FILLING-UP OF CHRIST.” Read also Ephesians 4:13, and learn what the finished work of God’s grace will be. Yes “ADAM”, with Eve, one flesh. Christ is called “THE LAST ADAM.” Christ and His Church will be one flesh, “CHRIST.” (Ephesians 5:31 and 32).

Christ and the Church are called “the One New Man.” (Ephesians 2:15). Christ was, and is, THE PERFECT MAN, Jesus Christ the Righteous, the sinless Man (I John 2:1 - Hebrews 7:26). But in Ephesians 4:13 we learn that when the Body of Christ is completed, it will be THE PERFECT MAN, the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ.

Christ was truly the foreordained “SPOTLESS CHRIST,” the SPOTLESS Lamb of God. (I Peter 1:8 to 20). The Church has been called “THE MYSTICAL CHRIST.”

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-ONE

READ HEBREWS 13:20 - ROMANS 15:13 - II CORINTHIANS 1:3 - I PETER 5:10
EPHESIANS 1:3 AND 1:17 - HEBREWS 12:9 - I PETER 1:3 - JAMES 1:17

THE TITLES OF GOD

We couldn’t have a better beginning than we have in the Bible. “In the beginning God (ELOHIYM) created the heaven and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1). With this verse read John 1:1 to 3: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.”

Then read John 17:3, “And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent.” In I Timothy 3:15 God is called “THE LIVING GOD.” God is the true and the living God.

Now we quote John 4:24 - I John 4:8 - I John 1:5 and Hebrews 12:29: “GOD IS A SPIRIT; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” “He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for GOD IS LOVE.” “This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that GOD IS LIGHT and in Him is no darkness at all.” “GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE.”

Let us not conclude from these definitions that God is an impersonal force or a divine principle as is taught by the religious rationalists and metaphysical cult leaders today, who propagate their agnosticism and satanic vagaries in the name of Christianity.

In the Old Scriptures we have several Hebrew words translated “God” or “The Lord.” The short word “EL” has the meaning of “strength.” The longer word is “ELOAHH.” The plural is “ELOHIYM”, which is the word in Genesis 1:1. In Genesis 1:26 ELOHIM said, “Let US make man in OUR image and likeness.” Then the word “ADONAY” suggests a reigning master. And the word translated “JEHOVAH” is used so many times in the Old Testament Scriptures.

In Philippians 4:9 and Hebrews 13:20 God is called “THE GOD OF PEACE.” He brought Christ from the dead. “THE GOD OF PEACE shall bruise Satan under your feet.” (Romans 16:20). In Romans 15:13 God is “THE GOD OF HOPE” Who can fill the believer with all joy and peace in believing. In James 1:17 God is “THE FATHER OF LIGHTS” in heaven from Whom all good and perfect gifts come. In Hebrews 12:9 is “THE FATHER OF SPIRITS” Who chastens and corrects His children. In II Corinthians 1:3 God, “THE GOD AND FATHER OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST,” is “THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT” and “THE FATHER OF MERCIES.” In I Peter 1:3 and in Ephesians 1:3 God is “THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.” In I Peter 5:10 is “THE GOD OF ALL GRACE.”

All of these wonderful titles are more than significant in God’s dealings with the human race, proving Romans 5:20, “where sin abounded grace doth much more abound.” The wonderful spiritual, eternal blessings, which believers receive because they are in Christ, are according to the riches of God’s grace. (Ephesians 1:6 and 7).

“The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” (Titus 2:11). Remember that God is “THE GOD OF ALL GRACE.” With this in mind, let us think of II Corinthians 9:8 - “And God (THE GOD OF ALL GRACE) is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.”

The titles of God suggest that for His children, accepted in the Beloved, there is peace, hope, comfort, mercy, every good and perfect gift,” “all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies,” and “all grace.”

There is a title for God in Ephesians 1:18 for a special blessing for God’s people, which is not heard frequently in Christian circles, because very, very few Christians pray the prayer of Ephesians 1:16 to 18, to receive from the Father of glory the Spirit of wisdom and revelation for the most wonderful truth for saints in all the Bible, which was “the mystery of God’s will,” God’s Secret for members of the Church, until it was made known to and through the apostle Paul. Do you obey Ephesians 3:9?

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-TWO

READ EZEKIEL 1:10 - REVELATION 4:7 - REVELATION 5:5 - MATTHEW 2:2
MATTHEW 27:37 - MARK 1:14 AND 15 - LUKE 1:26 TO 35
JOHN 1:1 TO 10 - JOHN 8:24 - JOHN 10:28 TO 33 - JOHN 20:28

CHRIST IN THE FOUR GOSPELS

Many Christians have wondered why the Holy Spirit has given us only Four Records of the sayings and the doings of the Lord Jesus Christ; that is, what Christ did and said as Jesus of

Nazareth. (Acts 2:22). We read in John that the world might not contain the books that should be written concerning Christ and His works. But we have only Four.

Many years ago some servant of the Lord thought he knew why Four Gospels were written. He thought that the four-faced creature of Ezekiel 1:10 and Revelation 4:7 was the fourfold portrait of the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Ezekiel beheld four faces on the one creature: the face of a lion, the face of an ox, the face of a man, and the face of an eagle.

Many have accepted that servant's interpretation; and they have agreed with him that Christ in Matthew is the LION, or the Great King, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. (Revelation 5:5). They see Christ in Mark as the faithful SERVANT, typified by the OX. (Isaiah, 42:1). They say in Luke we have the genealogy of the Second Man from heaven back to the first man. (I Corinthians 15:47 - Luke 3:38). Here we have the two men; the one who lost the image and likeness of God, the other One Who is the express image of God. We learn that in Luke Christ is called "The Son of man" 25 times. So they see in Luke the man Christ symbolized by the face of the MAN. All the way through John's Gospel we find the eternal Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ set forth. John surely sets Christ forth as God in human form, the Word made flesh, Who came down from heaven, and as the eagles soar in the heaven, they say, that Christ, in John, was typified or symbolized by the EAGLE.

We read in the Bible: "Behold thy KING." (Matthew 21:5 - John 19:14). "Behold My SERVANT." (Isaiah 42:1). "Behold the MAN." (John 19:5). "Behold your God." (Isaiah 35:4).

Matthew, Mark and Luke are called "The Synoptic Gospels." "Synoptic" means giving the same general view of the whole. John is indeed the unique Record, as there are in John 14 whole chapters of facts not mentioned in the Synoptic Records.

Christ is called "The Son of man" in John's Gospel at least ten times. And in John 4:29 the woman said, concerning Christ, "Come, see a MAN which told me all things that ever I did." Christ knew all things (John 4:25 - John 2:25 - John 21:17). Christ was in Samaria, in the Gospel of John. (Chapter four). The Samaritans were not Gentiles. Every other scene in John is set on a Jewish stage. In John 1:49 Christ is the King of Israel. It is in John that we read, "Behold, the MAN." (John 19:5). We find the word "Jew" more than 65 times in John, but the word "Christian" is not found once. In John's Gospel we have no record of the interviews of Christ with the two Gentiles mentioned in Matthew 8:1 to 12 - Matthew 15:22 to 27 - Mark 7:24 to 30 - Luke 7:1 to 12. So we should be Bereans and be careful about following the fanciful teaching of others, remembering I John 2:26 to 28.

In another message we wrote that Christ, in the Gospel of Luke, is "Israel's Shepherd King" and that, in the light of Luke 7:1 to 12 - Luke 19:9 and Luke 13:16, no Bereans will call the Gospel of Luke the Gentile Gospel. In John's Gospel there is no record of the "kingdom" parables of Christ; no record of the "kingdom" "Our-Father" prayer or of the Sermon on the Mount or of the Golden Rule, recorded in the Synoptics. The so-called "great commission" is missing. In the Synoptics we do not have the Lord's Prayer, which is in John 17:1 to 25.

In Matthew, Christ is the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. But in all Four Gospels He is King, Servant, the Perfect Man, and the eternal God. Moreover Luke 3:23 to 38 and Matthew 1:1 to 17 compared with the first chapter of John, prove that Christ had legal right, birth right, and Divine right to take David's throne, which He will yet occupy. (Luke 1:27 to 33). We should be careful about accepting at full face value that Matthew was written to the Jews; Mark, to the Romans; Luke, to the Greeks; and John to Christians.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THREE

READ I CORINTHIANS 12:8 TO 11 - I CORINTHIANS 12:28
I CORINTHIANS 14:34, 18 AND 39 - MARK 15:14 TO 18 - EPHESIANS 4:7 TO 13
II TIMOTHY 4:20 - JAMES 5:14 TO 16 - MATTHEW 8:16 AND 17

THE SIGN GIFTS OF I CORINTHIANS 12:8 TO 11

The Holy Spirit led the apostle Paul to write his first Epistle to the Corinthians, about 58 A. D. This was about 25 years after Christ, in resurrection, said to His eleven apostles, that miraculous signs would follow believers. (Mark 16:16 to 18).

As we carefully study the Book of Acts, we learn that the Lord performed miracles by Stephen and Phillip. (Acts 6:8 - Acts 8:6 to 8). Then by Peter and Paul, God performed miracles. (Acts 5:14 to 17 - Acts 19:10 to 13). It seems that the Lord permitted Paul to duplicate every miracle which Peter performed. About the same number is accredited to each of them. Then note concerning all the apostles. (Acts 5:12).

Later on Paul wrote of his mighty signs and miracles. (Romans 15:17 to 20). Paul stated that they were the signs of an apostle (II Corinthians 12:12). Note concerning the signs of the Twelve in Hebrews 2:2 to 4.

But we must reckon with I Corinthians 12:28: "And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

God set these sign-gifts in the Church. No mention is made of these sign-gifts or the miracles and signs of Mark 16:17 and 18 in the Epistles which Paul wrote after the close of "The Book of Acts" period. In Paul's farewell message he mentioned that a fellow-saint was left sick at Miletum. (II Timothy 4:20). Another faithful saint was told to take a remedy for his oft sicknesses. (I Timothy 5:23). It is rather difficult to reconcile these cases with Acts 19:10 to 13 unless we see that God changed his spiritual program after His pronouncement by Paul in Acts 28:25 to 28. Undoubtedly the Holy Spirit had in mind this radical change when He led Paul to write I Corinthians 13:8 to 13, where we read that certain things would be done away and other things would abide: Paul's progress from childhood to manhood. Compare the Corinthian sign-gifts with the gifts in Ephesians.

Yes, there is a great difference in the gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4:7 to 13.

For some Divine reason the sign-gifts are mentioned in an Epistle addressed to saints, who were not exactly "super-spiritual" or of extraordinary faith. Many of them were carnal. Read I Corinthians 3:1 to 4 - I Corinthians 6:5 to 9 - I Corinthians 11:25 to 32 and other verses in this Epistle and you will learn that the wonderful signs of I Corinthians 12:8 to 11 were not exercised by first century saints who were more spiritual and faithful than saints of 1945 A. D. Lack of faith or spiritual power does not explain the absence of these gifts today.

In another lesson we referred to a printed message by Mr. A. E. Bishop, published and distributed for the past 25 years by the Moody Bible Institute. This message is endorsed without reservation by Dr. C. I. Scofield. In this message the writer comments on the sign-gifts in this language: "Is it the Spirit of God or Satan who attempts to revive the sign-gifts that were Divinely retired after having fulfilled their purpose? Every widespread attempt to revive them has, without exception, resulted in confusion, divisions, injury and disgrace."

“In the latest Epistles of Paul, not only is it noticeable that the sign-gifts are nowhere in manifestation, but a different order is brought forth for the correction of prevailing hobbies and fanaticisms.”

“The sign-gifts of I Corinthians 12 were operative during the period of Acts. They were for the short period of time until the written Word should be completed.” “They vanished away.”

“After repeated study of the Epistles written after Paul’s arrival at Rome, I am convinced that in them is found a curative teaching for all of the present-day delusions and fanaticisms found among many of the most sincere saints in the Church.”

This is the only sane, Scriptural explanation why spiritual saints do not exercise the miraculous gifts performed by carnal Christians during the “Acts” “Transition” period.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOUR

READ DANIEL 2:28 TO 45 - COLOSSIANS 1:24 TO 27

EPHESIANS 3:1 TO 11 - REVELATION 1:11 TO 19

THE LORD’S REVELATIONS TO DANIEL, PAUL AND JOHN

Daniel is from “Dan,” a judge; and “El” is God: “the judge of God.” Daniel was a Jew in captivity under the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar. The apostle Paul was “the apostle of the Gentiles.” (Romans 11:13). Paul was in jail at Rome, suffering as an evildoer even unto chains. (II Timothy 2:8 and 9). Daniel interpreted the king’s “image” dream; and told the king that Rome would be the fourth Gentile world power. Paul was in jail, as Caesar’s prisoner. But Paul called himself “the prisoner of Jesus Christ for Gentiles.” (Ephesians 3:1 to 4). Paul said he was in jail for “the mystery of Christ.” (Colossians 4:3 and 4). Hear the testimony of the apostle John, that apostle whom Jesus loved (John 21:20), in Revelation 1:9: “I John was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Note Daniel’s testimony in Daniel 2:28: “But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.”

“THEN WAS THE SECRET REVEALED unto Daniel in a night vision.” “Blessed be the name of God forever.” “He revealeth the deep and secret things.” (Daniel 22:19 to 23). Then Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar: “Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.” (Daniel 2:37).

According to God’s SECRET revealed to Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar with his Babylonian Empire, was the head of gold. There were to be three other Gentile world powers—“Media-Persia”—“Greece”—“Rome.” Thus God revealed to Daniel that “the times of the Gentiles,” politically, began about 600 B.C. with Babylon. After revealing the course of “the times of the Gentiles” the Lord told Daniel what Christ told the Jews in Luke 21:24 to 33: that the Son of man - Daniel’s Smiting Stone (Daniel 2:44 and 45), would come to earth and crush what will be left of the toes of the great image.

Study Daniel and the Gospel of Luke together. In Luke 1:26 to 33 and Luke 2:6 to 16, Christ was born in the city of David, as the Seed of David to take the throne of David, to reign over Israel and bring peace on earth. But in Luke 19:42 to 44, we learn that Israel did not know the time of their peace and God’s visitation. In Luke 1:67 to 77 Christ was born to deliver the

Jews from Gentile political control. But the Jews' decision was: "We will not have this man to reign over us." (Luke 19:14). "Away with Jesus, crucify Him;" "We have no king but Caesar." (John 19:15).

Christ told the Jews they would continue to be captives under Gentile political control "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24). "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." (Matthew 22:21). Caesar's awful judgment fell on Jerusalem and the Jews, about 70 A.D., in fulfillment of Matthew 22:7 and Luke 21:20 to 23.

But for some years after Christ's words in Luke 21:20 to 24 Israel continued to be God's nation for the spiritual blessing of other nations. (John 4:22 - Romans 9:4 to 6 - Matthew 23:1 to 3 - Romans 15:27). The twelve apostles were Jews. Paul and Barnabas and Silas were Jews. The Holy Spirit continued to move upon Jews to give us the Holy Scriptures. Christ was Israel's Saviour in incarnation. (Acts 13:23 - Acts 5:29 and 30 - Romans 15:8 - Acts 2:22 - Matthew 15:24 - Matthew 10:5 to 8). Christ was Israel's Saviour in resurrection. (Acts 5:31 and 32 - Acts 13:30 to 41). He was Israel's twice-rejected Saviour. Then God rejected Israel and sent salvation to Gentiles. (Romans 11:5 to 15 - Romans 11:30). Paul wrote that the fulness of the Gentiles would come in, and Israel's temporary blindness would be taken away. (Romans 11:25 and 26 - Romans 11:5 to 15). So Paul said, "We turn to the Gentiles." Thus "the times of the Gentiles," spiritually, began more than 600 years after "the times of the Gentiles," politically, began. The culmination, spiritually, is told in Ephesians 4:13 and Titus 2:13. This will come before the culmination, politically. (Luke 21:27 to 33).

The risen Lord revealed God's SECRET to Paul concerning this special "grace" dispensation and age for Gentiles. "The dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles" is called "the mystery of God's will," "the dispensation of the Mystery hid in God from before the beginning of the world." (Ephesians 1:9 and Ephesians 3:1 to 4 - Ephesians 3:9 - Colossians 1:24 to 27).

Now read Revelation 1:1 and 1:19, concerning John's Revelation. Daniel knew nothing of "the times of the Gentiles," spiritually. This Divine Secret was not revealed by Christ on earth, but some years after He went back to heaven. This was God's Secret during Daniel's days and during Christ's days on earth.

Surely John's Revelation was not concerning "The Church of the Mystery" or "the Dispensation of the Mystery." Certainly the meaning of the seven churches of Revelation is more than a secret with most Christians.

As we compare Daniel's Secret with John's Revelation we certainly learn that, in finding the fulfillment of Daniel's Prophecy in John's Revelation, we pass over the parenthetical "Dispensation of the Mystery."

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIVE

READ MATTHEW 1:1 - HEBREWS 2:16 AND 17 - ACTS 13:23

LUKE 13:16 - LUKE 19:19 - LUKE 7:1 TO 12.

JESUS OF NAZARETH IN ISRAEL'S LAND

Note the first verse of the first chapter of Matthew and the second verse of the second chapter of Matthew: "The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the son of Abraham." Saying, "Where is He that is born King of Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him."

Jesus Christ was the Son of David. He was born as the Seed of David to be Israel's Saviour (Acts 13:23). Christ was born to sit on David's throne and reign over the house of Israel. (Luke 1:27 to 33).

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David." (Luke 1:68 and 69). Christ was raised from the dead to sit on the throne of David and to give to Israel the sure mercies of David (Acts 2:27 to 33 and 13:30 to 37).

Christ will come back to build again the tabernacle of David (Acts 15:13 to 18 - Amos 9:11 to 14 - Ezekiel 37:24 and 25).

Jesus Christ was saluted "King of Israel" (John 1:49); for He was born "King of the Jews" and died "King of the Jews."

Jesus Christ was born to fulfill prophecy (I Peter 1:12 - Acts 13:29 - Isaiah 9:6 and 7). He was born for Calvary's cross and He was born for David's throne (Hebrews 2:8 and 9 and Luke 1:32).

Christ was raised from the dead and is now far above all heavens, to be Head of the Church, which is His Body. This is not in fulfillment of prophecy. (Ephesians 1:19 to 23 - Colossians 1:24 to 27).

Jesus Christ was born as the Seed of Abraham, the Seed in Whom all the earth will be blessed (Genesis 12:3 and Genesis 22:18), but He was thus born to die for Israel's sins (Hebrews 2:16 and 17 - Isaiah 53:5 to 8 - John 11:47 to 52).

On earth Christ was sent unto the children of Abraham whom He called, "the children of the Kingdom." (Matthew 8:12).

Why did He heal that diseased woman on the sabbath? Because she was a daughter of Abraham. (Luke 13:16).

Why did he save that despised publican Zacchaeus? Because he was a son of Abraham. (Luke 19:9).

Why did He bless that one Gentile man in Luke 7:1 to 12? Because he loved the sons of Abraham, built them a synagogue, and went to Christ through the sons of Abraham. (A most interesting story in Luke 7:1 to 12).

Why did Peter preach Acts 3:18 to 26 after the death of Christ, "to Israel first?" The answer is Acts 3:25: "Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed."

But where were the Gentiles at the time? Ephesians 2:11 and 12.

Now let us read one of the most interesting and significant stories in the Bible, Matthew 15:21 to 28: "Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord Thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me. But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto

her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.” (After reading this strange Message, compare it with Romans 11:11 and the changed program for Israel and Gentiles in Romans 11:30 to 32).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIX

READ I CORINTHIANS 15:45 TO 49 - HEBREWS 10:1 TO 14 - HEBREWS 9:28
PHILIPPIANS 3:20 AND 21 - REVELATION 20:6
REVELATION 20:13 TO 15 - MATTHEW 25:41

THE SECOND THINGS OF THE BIBLE

The New Testament Scriptures give us the record of - 1. The Second Man - 2. The Second Covenant - 3. The Second Coming of The Second Man - 4. The Second Death.

First let us read I Corinthians 15:47 and 45: “The First Man is of the earth, earthy: the Second Man is the Lord from heaven.” “And so it is written, the First man Adam was made a living soul; the Last Adam was made a quickening Spirit.”

Here we learn that the first Adam, made in the image and likeness of God, is called “the First Man.” The Lord Jesus Christ, Who is to be the last Adam, is called the Second Man from heaven.

There is to be a third man, the man of sin. (II Thessalonians 2:2 to 9).

Everything that is wrong with this earth and the human race came because the First man was disobedient unto death and brought the universal law of sin and death. (Romans 8:2). This means “ruin” for all who are in Adam. But righteousness, reconciliation, redemption and resurrection have come to all of Adam’s descendants, who are new creatures in the Second Man (Christ Jesus), by faith. Spiritual resurrection now, with the guarantee of incorruptibility. (II Timothy 1:10). This is because the Second Man was obedient unto death. (Romans 5:14 to 21). Christ wore the thorns and bore the curse that came by the First man. Then Christ abolished death and destroyed him that had the power of death, Satan. (Hebrews 2:14 and 15).

After the descendants of the First man had struggled with sin for 2500 years, God, through Moses, added the law, that the sin that entered by Adam might abound. God wanted to leave the human race without excuse, as to their guilt before Him. (Romans 5:20 - Romans 3:19 and 20). That “law” covenant is called the First Covenant (Hebrews 8:7 - Hebrews 9:1 - Hebrews 8:13 and 8 - Hebrews 10:9).

Because of a universal heart disease, known as indwelling sin, no members of Adam’s race could obey the First Covenant. Because they all had the sinful nature of the First man. So the Lord, who became the Second Man, then in the bosom of His Father said, that He would come down to earth and do His Father’s will (John 6:38) (Hebrews 10:6 to 10).

So we have the good news of Hebrews 10:9 and 10: “Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will O God. He taketh away the FIRST that He may establish the SECOND. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

So the SECOND MAN established the SECOND COVENANT whereby God makes “living saints” out of “dead sinners.” The Second Covenant is the ministration of life. The First Covenant is the ministration of death. (II Corinthians 3:7 - Galatians 3:21 - Romans 8:2 to 4).

When sinners, in Adam, accept the Second Covenant, established by the Second Man, they receive the Second Birth. (John 1:12 and 13). Then they are “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven, even Jesus, Who delivered us from the wrath to come.” (I Thessalonians 1:9 and 10). They are to wait for the Second Coming of the Second Man.

The SECOND MAN is coming the SECOND TIME. (Hebrews 9:28 - Acts 1:8 to 12 - I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18). Those who have accepted the Second Covenant established by the Second Man will be raptured when the Second Man comes the Second Time. They will have no part in the SECOND DEATH, which is everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41) “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the FIRST RESURRECTION: on such the SECOND DEATH hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” (Revelation 20:6) “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 and 15.

The SECOND THINGS are the things that count for eternity.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SEVEN

READ II SAMUEL 9:1 TO 13 - II SAMUEL 3:1 - II SAMUEL 19:24 TO 30
I SAMUEL 18:11 - I SAMUEL 18:29 - I SAMUEL 19:1

THE LAME MAN AT THE KING’S TABLE

Note David’s question in II Samuel 9:1: “Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may skew him kindness for Jonathan’s sake?”

As we think of this question let us think of II Samuel 3:1- I Samuel 18:11 - I Samuel 18:29 and I Samuel 19:1: “Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.” “And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice.” “And Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David’s enemy continually.” “And Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and said to all his servants, that they should kill David.” So Saul was David’s enemy. But Saul’s son, Jonathan, loved David and David loved Jonathan. Note David’s statement concerning their mutual love: “I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful.” (II Samuel 1:26). Here let us think of Romans 5:10 and Titus 3:4: “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.” “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared.” When we, like the house of Saul were weak, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:6).

David means “LOVE”. Jonathan means “JEHOVAH’S GIFT.” We read in I John 4:8, “God is Love.” We read in John 3:16 that God so loved the world that His LOVE GIFT to sinners was His only begotten Son. We read in Ephesians 4:32 that the believing sinner’s sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake. “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” (I John 4:10).

Ziba, Saul's son, answered king David's question. "Jonathan hath yet a son which is lame on his feet. Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lodebar." (II Samuel 9:3 and 4).

Think of this unattractive, deformed man. Machir means "sold" or "bondage." Lodebar means "the place of no pasture." We think of Isaiah 53:6, "all we like sheep have gone astray." Certainly "astray" means to the place of "no pasture," sheep without a shepherd. Paul said, "I am carnal, sold under sin." (Romans 7:14). Surely every sinner is spiritually deformed, lame on both feet, all in the strong man's house (Matthew 12:29, the house of bondage, and living in Lodebar - far from the true King. (Ephesians 2:13 - Ephesians 4:18). Let us note carefully II Samuel 9:6 to 8: "Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth, And he answered, Behold thy servant! And David said unto him. Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually. And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?"

Of course, we have read Titus 3:4 and Ephesians 2:4 concerning the kindness and love, the rich mercy and great love of God toward deformed sinners, "afar-off," even dead in sins. (Ephesians 2:13 - Titus 3:3 - Ephesians 2:1 to 3 - Ephesians 2:5). Every sinner should know what Mephibosheth knew. Mephibosheth knew that he deserved the king's wrath and judgment. But in David's dealings with Mephibosheth and the lame man's response, we are reminded of the statement in Romans 2:4, "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." Note what the king said, "Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, shall alway eat at my table." (II Samuel 9:10). "So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both feet." (II Samuel 9:13).

From Lodebar to Jerusalem. From the house of bondage to the king's house and the king's table. What a change! We, as Christians, have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. "in Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." (Colossians 1:13 and 14). We are already seated with Christ in the heavenlies (Ephesians 2:6, and we shall be at His table forever and ever an ever. "That in the ages to come He might skew the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:7). We are not only in God's House, but there we are jointheirs with His Son.

Mephibosheth did not deserve the king's favor, but rather the very opposite. But he received the king's favor for Jonathan's sake: Jonathan, "God's Gift." Read Romans 5:20 and Romans 3:24.

So grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:21). Certainly, no one word in the English language can define "grace."

Between II Samuel 9 and II Samuel 18, King David was rejected and went away, "UNTIL THE DAY HE CAME IN PEACE." (II Samuel 19:24). But during the time the true king was away Mephibosheth lost interest in all about him. He loved the king and longed for him. His thoughts and affections were upon the absent rejected king. (Compare II Samuel 19:24 to 30 with Colossians 3:1 to 4, with I Thessalonians 1:9 and 10 - Titus 2:13 - I Corinthians 1:10).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-EIGHT

READ EPHESIANS 4:7 TO 13 - EPHESIANS 2:13 TO 22

I CORINTHIANS 12:12 TO 14 - EPHESIANS 1:19 TO 23

ACTS 15:13 TO 18 - AMOS 9:11 TO 15

THE BODY OF CHRIST - THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are building a BUILDING.

“He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. And He gave some apostles and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the EDIFYING (BUILDING UP) OF THE BODY OF CHRIST: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

Perhaps there are no more important verses in the Bible than Ephesians 4:10 to 13, which we have quoted, to give to Christians definite information as to what God’s program is for this age. In I Corinthians 3:9 and 10 we read: “For we are laborers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me (Paul), as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon, But let every man take heed how he buildeth (together) thereupon.” Surely Christians should desire to build intelligently with God, the Great BUILDER.

We are laborers together with God. We are to take heed how we build together with Paul on the foundation which he, the wise masterbuilder, laid. It seems from this that Paul was chosen to be the Lord’s foreman and that unto Paul were committed the blueprints and specifications for the building described in Ephesians 2:21 and 22: “In Whom all the BUILDING fitly framed together groweth unto a holy TEMPLE in the Lord; In Whom ye also are builded together for a HABITATION of God through the Spirit.”

Paul, the Christ-appointed wise masterbuilder, wrote that Christians should be workmen who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth. (II Timothy 2:15). We must go to Paul’s Writings for clear instructions how to build with God. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are building a spiritual TEMPLE, EDIFYING THE BODY OF CHRIST, building up the CHURCH. (Ephesians 4:11). In the beginning God selected some men with special gifts, “apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:9 to 11).

Those first co-laborers with God knew what they were doing, and they knew what God was doing. But today the situation is somewhat confused. Religious sectarian groups seem to be building a number of different churches in competition with God, even though they read in the Bible that Christ died to reconcile all believing sinners in ONE BODY; that there is ONE BODY; that believers are baptized by one Spirit into that ONE BODY. (Ephesians 2:15 to 18 - Ephesians 4:4 - I Corinthians 12:13).

They read in the Bible that Christ and the Church will be one flesh: not Christ and the churches. (Ephesians 5:31 and 32). They read that Christ loved the Church and will present that one Church unto Himself as a glorious, spotless Church. (Ephesians 5:26 to 28). Christ is not going to present two hundred different churches, or two churches, unto Himself.

All members of the Body of Christ should be evangelistic, preaching the evangel to the unsaved. Then all Church-members should join together for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of that Body, until we all come into that wonderful unity and the glorious perfection described in Ephesians 4:13. This will be the filling-up of Christ (Ephesians 1:21 to 23). The Mystical Christ, Head and Body, is described in I Corinthians 12:12.

We have many Postmillenarians in the churches, some of whom are members of the Body of Christ, who are trying to build up the TABERNACLE OF DAVID, or at least repair this building, which is fallen down. But they are not receiving any help from God.

Concerning the TABERNACLE OF DAVID, this "BUILDING" program is described in Acts 15:13 to 18, quoted from Amos 9:11 to 15. This "BUILDING" will begin when the Lord Jesus returns to earth. (Acts 15:15).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-NINE

READ GENESIS 3:6 AND 7 - GENESIS 3:21 - EXODUS 28:2 - LEVITICUS 6:10
DEUTERONOMY 22:11 - PSALM 69:11 - PSALM 93:1 - PSALM 132:9 AND 16
ISAIAH 64:6 - ISAIAH 61:3 - DANIEL 7:9 - GENESIS 37:3 - MARK 1:6 - LUKE 15:22
MATTHEW 22:11 - REVELATION 1:13 - REVELATION 3:5
REVELATION 19:3 AND 14

THE GARMENTS OF THE BIBLE

Nearly every one of the garments of the Bible, listed above, has a religious, if not a spiritual, significance. We read in Genesis 37:3 that Jacob made for the son that he loved so dearly (Joseph), a coat of many colors. Of course, Joseph was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ who was crowned with glory and honour. (Hebrews 2:9).

Note Exodus 28:2 and Deuteronomy 22:11: "And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and for beauty." "Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woolen and linen together."

Here we have the high priest and his garment as the type of Christ and His holiness and majesty, and the garment to instruct God's people against unholy mixtures in their doctrine and practice.

In Leviticus 6:10 we see that God's servants were to be clothed in linen; and we read the explanation of linen in Revelation 19:14 and 8: "clothed in fine linen, white and clean", "the fine linen is the righteousnesses of saints." Read also in Revelation 3:5 of the white raiment of the saints. The saints have these white robes because of the sinlessness, eternal glory and garments of Christ. See Christ in Revelation 1:13 and 19:13: "Clothed with a garment down to the foot, with a golden girdle." "And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God."

Our blessed Lord, in Psalm 93:1, is clothed with majesty and with strength. God's priests and servants and saints were to be clothed with righteousness, salvation, and sackcloth, in the Psalms. (Psalm 132:9 and 16 - Psalm 69:11).

Note the great contrast between the garments of Isaiah 64:6 and 10: “We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation. He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.”

So the Divine King is to ask the question of Matthew 22:12: “And He saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?” “And he was speechless.”

What will the sinner say when he stands clothed in his own unrighteous righteousness before God? We all love Luke 15:22: “The father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.” We would emphasize “BEST ROBE.” The holy God gives to the penitent sinner His own perfect, unimpeachable Divine righteousness, on the ground of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Read this offer in II Corinthians 5:21 - Romans 4:5 - Galatians 3:14 - Romans 4:21 to 25.

How did universal unrighteousness come into the world? Through the sin of Adam and Eve. Note Genesis 3:7: “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.”

Many Christians have thought that Adam and Eve were clothed with Divine Light, when they were created in the image and likeness of God, God is Light. (Genesis 1:3 to 4). When they sinned they knew that they were unclothed. So they tried to cover their nakedness. But they knew that they were not covered in God’s sight with their aprons of fig leaves. Men and women from that day to this have futilely used every scheme, religious and other schemes, to cover themselves.

Now note Genesis 3:21: “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make COATS OF SKINS, and CLOTHED THEM.”

If we, by faith, will accept God’s garment of salvation, we shall also be clothed with our house from heaven when our Saviour returns for us. (II Corinthians 5:1 to 5).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY

READ JEREMIAH 18:1 TO 6 - ROMANS 9:20 AND 21 - ROMANS 8:28 TO 32
II TIMOTHY 2:19 TO 21 - EPHESIANS 2:7 - MATTHEW 27:3 TO 10

A VISIT TO THE POTTER’S HOUSE

The modern Pottery Factory is quite different from the Potter’s House in the days of Jeremiah or from many of the primitive workshops in Mexico. Generally you will find the display room with the finished product in front and the workshop in the rear where the workman sits with his foot turning the wheel as he molds the clay with his hands. Sometimes the workman has a printed design before him. Sometimes it is in his mind. Often you find a little hall between the display room and the workshop with a window at either end. As you look out through the window you see the Potter’s Field, filled with broken pottery, worse than worthless. We can imagine some such primitive place of business in Jeremiah’s day: “The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause

thee to hear My words. Then I went down to the potter's house and behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine hand, O House of Israel."

This story is almost self-explanatory. God was the Great Potter and He still is. Israel needed to be made over. So does every sinner today, whether Jew or Gentile. According to II Corinthians 11:1 to 3 and Romans 5:12 and the story of Adam's sin in Genesis 3, can we say that humanity was marred in the Potter's hand? Satan did the marring. Many believe, whatever has happened to the human race has been either according to God's direct will or His permissive will. It does seem that God permitted the Serpent to present his proposition to Eve. Sin is universal. All have been conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. Sin has marred the whole human race.

But in Romans 8:28 to 32 we learn that before Adam sinned God had an eternal purpose. (II Timothy 1:9 - Ephesians 3:11 - Ephesians 1:4 and 5 - Ephesians 1:11). God foreknew that He would have a race of sons conformed to the image of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. So when God, the Great Potter, puts a sinner on the Gospel Wheel He has His Son in His mind and wants the finished product of II Corinthians 3:18 and Philippians 3:21. The Gospel of Christ is God's power unto salvation. (Romans 1:16). Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead after He was buried. On the cross of Calvary His visage was marred more than any other man. (Isaiah 52:14). What a strange but wonderful story! The sinless Christ. Who had never been marred by sin, had to be marred and be made sin, wearing the cursed thorns, that marred vessels might become new creatures in Christ. (II Corinthians 5:21 - Galatians 3:13 - I Peter 3:18 - II Corinthians 5:17). Only the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit can take the child of Adam out of the wreck and ruin, and put him in Christ. Christ became a partaker of flesh and blood, even in the likeness of sinful flesh (Hebrews 2:14 and 15 - Romans 8:3), that the Great Potter might make the marred vessels into what is described in II Timothy 2:21: "a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use."

Note God's eternal "show-room": "That in the ages to come, He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus." For ever and ever God, in heaven, will have on display the trophies of His grace, to the glory of His Beloved Son. Are you going to be there? You will either be there or in the Potter's Field. Poor Judas! Our contempt for him is mixed with pity. He brought back the thirty pieces of silver and gave them to the betrayers and murderers of the Lord of Glory. (I Corinthians 2:6 to 8 - Acts 7:51 to 56 - Acts 3:14 and 15 - I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16). Read carefully Matthew 27:3 to 10.

Are you headed for the Great Display Room in Heaven with Christ or for the Potter's Field with Judas and Satan?

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-ONE

READ ACTS 3:19 TO 26 - ACTS 5:29 TO 32 - ACTS 2:5 AND 6
I THESSALONIANS 4:13 TO 1

THE RESTITUTION AND THE RAPTURE

In Matthew 21:42 Christ told Israel that He was to be the rejected Stone in fulfillment of the Scriptures. "It was the Lord's doing," (Matthew 21:42 - Acts 4:25 to 29 - Acts 2:22 and Acts 3:18).

In Acts 3:19 to 21 we learn that Christ is coming back to earth for the restitution of all things, in fulfillment of the Scriptures. Samuel and all of the prophets spoke of "these days." (Acts 3:24).

Christ came unto His own and His own received Him not. (John 1:11). At the time Christ was dying, He prayed for Israel in Luke 23:34, "Father, forgive them, for they KNOW NOT what they do." How did that prayer change God's attitude toward Israel? Note the Lord's message of mercy and forgiveness after He accused Israel of "killing the Prince of Life." (Acts 3:14 and 15). "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath fulfilled." (Act 3:17 and 18). Then what? The "therefore" and the RESTITUTION message of Acts 3:19 to 21.

Christ was delivered according to God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge. He had to die when He died and as He died. (I Peter 1:18 to 20) - (Matthew 26:24). Therefore, on the ground of the "KNOW NOT," in Christ's prayer, and the "IGNORANCE" of Acts 3:17, if Israel's rulers, with Israel, would repent they would receive all the kingdom blessings of Joel Two, of which Acts was but a sample (Acts 2:16 to 20). Call this a second Kingdom chance, or what you will, but there was a new PROPOSITION from God to Israel. But this differed from God's new dispensation for Gentiles by Paul. (Ephesians 3:1 to 4 - Romans 11:30 and Romans 11:11).

Repent and God will send Christ back to earth for the prophesied kingdom RESTITUTION. Christ will return to build again the tabernacle of David. (Acts 15:15 to 18).

Israel did not repent and the RESTITUTION was postponed. The Kingdom was not restored to Israel. (Acts 1:6). God introduced a new program by a new apostle, concerning the new creation and the One New Man. (II Corinthians 5:16 and 17 - Ephesians 2:15). Christ was no longer known after the flesh. These new creatures could then say with the apostle of the Gentiles; "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." (Philippians 3:20 and 21). When Christ appears to do this, it will not be for the RESTITUTION of Acts 3:21.

Paul did not say in his "grace" gospel, "repent, and God will send Christ back for the prophesied RESTITUTION," which will come when Christ returns to build the tabernacle of David (Amos 9:11 to 15). No, Paul said, "believe and God will raise you up and make you sit with Christ in the heavenlies." Note Ephesians 2:5 and 6: "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved); And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." There is a great difference between Christ coming down here and our being raised up in the heavenlies.

These new creatures will all be present when the RAPTURE of I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18 takes place. The blessed hope of Titus 2:13 will be realized when Christ comes for His Church.

Between the RAPTURE and the RESTITUTION there will come trouble on the earth. Read Luke 21:24 to 33. It is the time of Jacob's trouble—Jacob shall be saved. (Jeremiah 30:7 to 11).

The Church will be with Christ in glory before Christ's return for the prophesied RESTITUTION. So you and I are Pretribulation Premillenarians.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-TWO

READ EPHESIANS 4:3 TO 7 - I CORINTHIANS 12:8 TO 14

EPHESIANS 2:13 TO 18 - ROMANS 12:4 AND 5

EPHESIANS 5:31 AND 32 - EPHESIANS 4:13

ENDEAVORING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT

In Galatians 3:28 we read concerning believing Jews and believing Gentiles: "Ye are all ONE in Christ Jesus." In Corinthians 6:17 we read, "he that is joined unto the Lord is ONE SPIRIT"; and in Ephesians 5:31 and 32, "Christ and the Church shall be ONE FLESH."

In Ephesians 2:14 to 18 we learn by Christ's death on the cross what God hath done with believing Jews and believing Gentiles: "Hath made BOTH ONE" - "For to make in Himself of the twain ONE NEW man" - "That He might reconcile both unto God in ONE BODY, by the cross." "Through Him we both have access by ONE SPIRIT unto God."

In John 11:52 the Jewish priest, with little understanding of his own statement, prophesied that by Christ's death on the cross the children of God, scattered abroad, should be GATHERED TOGETHER IN ONE. Then note Ephesians 1:10: "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him."

But as we read the ONE'S of Romans 5:12 and 5:18 we will not teach that all are the children of God. In Hebrews 9:12 we learn that Christ by His blood ENTERED HEAVEN ONE TIME, thereby obtaining eternal redemption, and by HIS ONE OFFERING He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Hebrews 10:14). "For in that Christ died, HE DIED UNTO SIN ONE TIME." (Romans 6:10). "We thus judge that if ONE DIED FOR ALL; then all (saints) have died." (II Corinthians 5:14). Certainly all sinners were dead. (Romans 5:12).

Now note in I Timothy 2:4 to 6 concerning the ONE GOD and the ONE MEDIATOR between God and men; Christ Jesus.

Well, of course all Christians believe the statements in Ephesians 4:4 to 7 that there is ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL. ONE LORD and ONE SPIRIT. It is interesting to note the truth of I Corinthians 8:6: "But to us there is but ONE GOD, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; and ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST, by Whom are all things, and we by Him."

It is interesting to read concerning the Same Father, the Same Lord and the Same Spirit in I Corinthians 12:1 to 14. We quote I Corinthians 12:11 to 14: "But all these worketh that ONE AND THE SELFSAME SPIRIT, dividing to every man severally as He will. For as THE BODY IS ONE, and hath many members, and all the members of that ONE BODY, being many, are ONE BODY: so also is Christ. For by ONE SPIRIT were we all baptized into ONE BODY,

whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into ONE SPIRIT. For the Body is not ONE member, but many.”

Surely we have the proof of the Trinity, the three in ONE, in the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians. And surely every Christian knows, from I Corinthians 12:13, how to become a member of God’s true Bible Church in this age of grace, the Body of Christ. A believer could be alone in some isolated spot and become a member of the Bible Church without any other person being present. This “joining the Church” cannot be witnessed by people on earth. It is a Divine Transaction.

Then note how Christians in the Body of Christ are joined together: “For as we have MANY MEMBERS IN ONE BODY, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are ONE BODY IN CHRIST, and EVERY ONE MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER.” (Romans 12:4 and 5).

In this connection let us believe I Corinthians 12:25 and 26: “That there should be no schism in the Body; but that the members should have the SAME CARE ONE FOR ANOTHER. And whether ONE member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or ONE member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.”

The Holy Spirit, by the pen of Paul, rebuked the Corinthians for their divisions and sectarianism. (I Corinthians 1:10 to 17 - I Corinthians 3:1 to 5). He was distressed because the Corinthian saints were divided into several sects. They were not endeavoring to keep the ONENESS of the Spirit. They were not dwelling together in unity. (Psalm 133:1). The Schism was there. There was Divided Unity. They seemed to think that Christ was divided. (I Corinthians 1:13). The visible church was divided. The invisible Church is called “CHRIST” in I Corinthians 12:12. God recognizes none of men’s sectarian churches. God has ONE and only ONE Church.

Note carefully Ephesians 4:4 and 5: “There is ONE Body, and ONE Spirit, even as ye are called in ONE hope of your calling; ONE Lord, ONE Faith, ONE baptism.” These are certainly plain statements of Divine truth. In the true Bible Church there is “no Catholic” faith and “no Presbyterian” faith. There is ONE FAITH. There is ONE HOPE. ONE BAPTISM makes those of the ONE FAITH members of the ONE BODY and begets them into the ONE HOPE. Surely ONE is the number of the Church.

As we behold the divisions and sub-divisions we cannot see how Ephesians 4:13 will be accomplished; but it will: “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a Perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

All through the Bible we learn that “Twelve” is the number of Israel. In this lesson we surely can say that “ONE” is the number of the Church; Which is Christ’s Body.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THREE

READ HEBREWS 2:6 TO 10 - PSALMS 8:3 TO 9 - MATTHEW 27:29
I CORINTHIANS 9:24 TO 27 - JAMES 1:12 - I THESSALONIANS 2:19
I PETER 5:2 TO 4 - II TIMOTHY 4:8 AND 10
REVELATION 2:10 - REVELATION 19:11 TO 15

THE CROWNS OF THE BIBLE

First we read in Hebrews 2:6 to 9: “But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that Thou are mindful of him: or the Son of man, that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; THOU CROWNEDST HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet. For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him. But now we see not yet all things put under Him. But we see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOR; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

This is the truth revealed in Psalm 8:3 to 9.

Adam was made in the image and likeness of God. (Genesis 1:26). The Lord Jesus was the express image of God’s Person and the effulgence of His glory. (Hebrews 1:1 and 2). The first man, the first Adam, and the Second Man, the last Adam, were crowned with glory and honor. The first man lost his glory and honor when he sinned; and then his crown of glory and honor fell from his head into the dust and brought forth thorns. The Second Man on the cross exchanged His crown of glory and honor for a crown of thorns: “And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!” (Matthew 27:29). “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written; Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” (Galatians 3:13).

The Lord Jesus was crowned with glory and honor, though made lower than the angels for the suffering of death. This was in fulfillment of Genesis 3:14 and 15. The first man was disobedient unto death. Because the Second Man was obedient unto death and was inherently Divine and omnipotent, He destroyed Satan’s death power. (Hebrews 2:14). Because the Lord Jesus Christ wore the thorns and bore the curse and was made sin, believing children of Adam are made righteous in Christ (II Corinthians 5:21); and then they can earn a crown of righteousness and a crown of glory.

“Henceforth there is laid up for me A CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.” (II Timothy 4:8). “Feed the flock of God”; “And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive A CROWN OF GLORY that fadeth not away.” (I Peter 5:4).

He that doeth the will of God abideth forever, (I John 2:17), “If any man’s work abide which he hath build thereupon, he shall receive a reward.” (I Corinthians 3:14). “Our labor is not in vain in the Lord” (I Corinthians 15:58). “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 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.” (I Corinthians 9:24 and 25).

The poet did not speak the whole truth when he said, “the path of glory leads but to the grave.” The path of glory here will be for the unsaved one, the “after-death” judgment of Hebrews 9:27. The path of suffering for the saved one will mean an eternity of glory. Colossians 3:3 and 4 - Ephesians 2:7).

And if the believer is faithful unto death he shall receive A CROWN OF LIFE. (Revelation 2:10). This is called the martyr’s crown. It is also the overcomer’s crown. (James 1:12).

The soul-winner's crown is called "THE CROWN OF JOY" or "REJOICING." (I Thessalonians 2:19 - Philippians 4:1).

Then see the conquering King, the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, descending in glory on His white horse in Revelation 19:11 to 15. He is wearing many crowns (diadems). There is a great contrast between a crown of thorns and cursed on a tree, and many diadems, in triumph on the white horses, ready to put all things under His feet.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FOUR

READ HEBREWS 8:2 - HEBREWS 9:1 TO 16 - EXODUS 25:8 AND 9
EXODUS 35:10 TO 18 - EXODUS 39:35 TO 40 - EXODUS 40:24
EXODUS 25:22 - LEVITICUS 16:1 TO 34 - JOHN 1:14 - LUKE 1:35

CHRIST THE TABERNACLE AND SANCTUARY

In Exodus 25:8 and 9 we read concerning the sanctuary and the tabernacle: "And let them make Me a SANCTUARY; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the TABERNACLE, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it."

Then we learn in Hebrews 8:1 and 2 that the SANCTUARY and TABERNACLE foreshadowed the true SANCTUARY and TABERNACLE: "Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such a High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A Minister of the SANCTUARY, and of the true TABERNACLE, Which the Lord pitched, and not man."

Of course, the student of the Scriptures, who would receive the richest blessing from this study, should read the last sixteen chapters of Exodus and the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus. But let every one at least read the Scriptures which we have listed above.

In Hebrews 10:1 and Hebrews 9:8 and 9 and Colossians 2:16 and 17, we learn that what Israel's priests and ministers did in and out of the sanctuary and tabernacle, according to God's directions, foreshadowed and prefigured the abiding work of God's true, eternal Priest, Who offered Himself without spot unto God, when He appeared once in the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. (Hebrews 9:14 and 26).

"Make Me a SANCTUARY that I may dwell among them" according to the pattern of the TABERNACLE.

Now note carefully: "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt (TABERNACLED) among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). "And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that HOLY THING (SANCTUARY or SAINT) Which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35).

Now note II Corinthians 5:19 and 17: "GOD WAS IN CHRIST reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." "If ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST he is a new creature." God and man met in Christ and they must meet in Christ for any genuine spiritual blessing.

God TABERNACLED on earth as the true SANCTUARY, in Christ Jesus.
Study Exodus 35:12 to 16 and Exodus 25:1 to 22.

What all of this foreshadowed and prefigured is told in the ninth chapter of Hebrews, which chapter every Christian should not only read a hundred times or more but should diligently study under the infallible Holy Spirit. We quote Hebrews 9:2 and 3: "For there was a TABERNACLE made; the first, wherein was the CANDLESTICK, and the table, and the SHOWBREAD; which is called the SANCTUARY."

Then the verses that follow tell the meaning of the Sixteenth chapter of Leviticus when the high priest sprinkled the mercy-seat.

In addition to the furniture and vessels we have mentioned we read, in Exodus 30:18 and Exodus 40:30, of the laver for the water. We quoted John 1:14, that Christ, the true SANCTUARY, TABERNACLED, on earth. That word "dwelt" is translated "TABERNACLED" several times.

In the Gospel of John we begin with the Lamb of God to be offered for the sins of the world. (John 1:29). Of this the offering on the brazen altar outside the SANCTUARY spoke. Then note in John 6:37 to 53 Christ is the true SHOWBREAD. Then in John 8 and 9 Christ is the true LAMPSTAND and LIGHT, even THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. He is the true LAVER, as He uses water and speaks of water in John 3:5 - John 4:14 - John 7:38 and 39 - John 9:1 to 9 - John 13:1 to 12. Then He is the ALTAR OF INCENSE, in His intercessory ministry in John Seventeen.

Then when the ANTITYPE of all the TABERNACLE types went to Calvary, and took our sins away, the veil in the temple was rent. (Hebrews 6:19 - Hebrews 10:20 - Luke 23:45).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIVE

READ ACTS 10:1 TO 11:19 - ACTS 15:7

COMPARE ACTS 10:38 TO 40 WITH ACTS 2:22 TO 24

COMPARE ACTS 10:34 AND 35 WITH ROMANS 4:4 AND 5

THE CASE OF CORNELIUS THE CENTURION

After 1900 years this case has not been thrown out of the theological and sectarian church courts. Only as we carefully and prayerfully study the Scriptures above listed can we understand this strange and unusual case.

About seven years after Peter preached to DEVOUT JEWS from every nation under heaven on the day of Pentecost, concerning what Jesus of Nazareth did in the land of the Jews, how Israel put Him to death and God raised Him from the dead, Peter preached to Cornelius and his household, concerning what Jesus of Nazareth did in the land of the Jews, how Israel put Him to death and God raised Him from the dead (Compare Acts 2:22 to 24 and Acts 10:38 to 40).

Cornelius was in Caesarea, in the land of the Jews: "A DEVOUT MAN, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." ". . . a just man and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews; was warned from God by a holy angel to send for thee unto his house, and to hear words of thee." (Acts 10:2 and 22).

Certainly God gave Cornelius very special attention and Cornelius had given God very special attention; and Cornelius had also given special attention to the Jews, whom he loved and to whom he gave money.

If a man in 1945 were devout and feared God and prayed to God always and gave much alms to God's people, just, and of good report among God's people, we would not judge that he needed salvation. But the Lord told Cornelius that Peter would tell him words "whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." (Acts 11:14).

Many Christians have thought of Cornelius as an uncircumcised proselyte; and they have certainly wondered why the other eleven apostles were not only amazed but displeased with Peter when he preached to Cornelius. Why did Peter say, some seven years after the Lord Jesus gave the Twelve the commission of Matthew 28:19 and 20 and Mark 16:14 to 18, that it was not lawful for the apostles to go to Gentiles? (Acts 10:28 - Acts 11:1 to 5). The reason is far deeper than Jewish prejudice.

After Peter explained the "sheet" vision and the unclean creatures of Acts 10:11 to 13, (Romans 1:23), and how the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and his loved ones, as Peter began to speak, even before they were baptized with water (Acts 10:44 to 48 Acts 11:14 and 15) ". . . they held their peace and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts 11:18). They did not say what was said several years later. (Acts 14:27).

Moreover Christians have tried to understand the statement of Peter in Acts 15:7, about fifteen years after Cornelius was saved, that it was by "my mouth" (Peter's mouth), that the Gentiles should hear God's message and believe. At the time Peter declared this truth he and his fellow-apostles agreed with Paul to confine their ministry to the Jews (Galatians 2:9). But why just the one mouth? There were 12 mouths.

In the light of Matthew 28:19 and 20 how are we to explain why in all of the Book of Acts there is no record of any missionary journeys by Peter and his fellow-apostles, outside of the land of the Jews, or why there is no Scriptural proof that any of the Twelve, except Peter, preached to Gentiles? Surely we ask why Paul's statement in Acts 13:46, as to why salvation was sent to Gentiles, if the Matthew commission authorized all of the Lord's apostles to preach the "grace" gospel to Gentiles. (Galatians 1:11 and 12).

Paul preached to Gentiles, to provoke Israel to jealousy. (Romans 11:11). The Lord sent Paul to Gentiles, because Israel was cast away in blindness; because of Israel's unbelief and fall. (Romans 11:7 to 15 and Romans 11:30). Israel had not been cast away at the time Peter preached to Cornelius. Peter did not preach to Cornelius, to provoke Israel to jealousy, or because of Israel's fall, unbelief or blindness. Peter worked with the keys of the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 16:18 and 19). Paul worked "under the dispensation of the grace of God" for Gentiles. (Ephesians 3:1 to 3).

There surely was a great difference in Peter's message in Acts 10:34 and 35 and Paul's message in Romans 4:4 and 5 and II Timothy 1:9.

Those who believe that water baptism regeneration is taught in Acts 2:38 and Mark 16:16 are perplexed when they read that Cornelius received the Holy Spirit as the evidence of salvation before he received water baptism. He needed not the water as a witness. Tongues were for a sign.

After Peter used his key with Cornelius, one of the Twelve died. (Acts 12:1 and 2). Then the Holy Spirit sent out a new apostle for a new work, as the Lord postponed the kingdom of heaven until the culmination of Ephesians 4:13 and Titus 2:13.

Read Acts 13:2 - II Corinthians 5:16 - Acts 22:17 to 21 - Romans 15:16 - Ephesians 3:8.

It seems that the Lord's program, as outlined in Acts 2:1 to 12:1, is a kingdom program, a pattern of the program that will follow this present age of grace, after the rapture of the Church (Body) of Christ.

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY SIX

READ ACTS 1:21 TO 26 - ACTS 3:12 TO 26 - ACTS 5:29 TO 32
ACTS 8:1 - ACTS 15:1 TO 7 - ACTS 13:45 AND 48 - ACTS 23:1 TO 5

SOME "WHY'S" IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

Why is not the name of Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus, mentioned in Acts or in the Bible after the Holy Spirit descended from heaven on the day of Pentecost?

Why did Peter say, some years after Christ told Peter and his fellow-apostles to disciple all nations (Matthew 28:19 and 20), that it was unlawful to come unto the Gentiles? (Acts 10:28).

Why was it necessary, after the death of Christ, to choose Matthias to take the place of Judas, so that there would continue to be twelve apostles? (Acts 1:21 to 26).

Why did twelve apostles stand up on the day of Pentecost with God's message concerning all the house of Israel? (Acts 2:14 and 2:36).

Why was it necessary for the twelve apostles to wait several years for Holy Spirit baptism, whereas three thousand, on the day of Pentecost, waited only a few moments? (Acts 1:5 and Acts 2:41).

Why did the Holy Spirit lead the disciples of the Lord Jesus, in Acts 2:44 and 45 and 4:34 and 35, to sell their real estate and earthly possessions and give the money to the apostles?

Why did the Jews, on the day of Pentecost, and the Jews of Samaria receive Holy Spirit baptism after water baptism, and Cornelius and his household received Holy Spirit baptism before water baptism? (Acts 2:38 - Acts 8:5 to 15 - Acts 10:44 to 48).

Why did the other eleven apostles condemn Peter for preaching to Cornelius some seven years after Christ said "go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"? (Acts 11:1 to 5 - Mark 16:14 to 16).

Why did the Holy Spirit lead Peter to address the murderers of Christ as "children" in Acts 3:25 (Acts 3:12 to 15) when Christ called them "serpents and vipers" in Matthew 23:33?

Why did Peter say that God raised Christ from the dead to be Israel's Saviour (Acts 5:31 and 32) after Christ said to Israel "your house is left unto you desolate"? (Matthew 23:38). Also why did Peter say to Israel "unto you first"? (Acts 3:26).

Why was no apostle chosen to succeed James when he died, to keep the number "twelve," as in the case of Judas and Matthias? (Acts 12:1 to 3 - Acts 1:26).

Why is there no mention of the activities of the eleven apostles in the Book of Acts after the death of James, except as they had dealings with the apostle Paul?

Why, if the twelve apostles were told, in Matthew 28:19 and 20 and Mark 16:14 to 18, to go all over the world and preach the gospel of grace to Gentiles, were they still in Jerusalem in Acts 15:1 to 19?

Why did Paul call himself “the apostle of the Gentiles” (Romans 11:13) when Peter said that the Lord chose that by his (Peter’s) mouth the Gentiles should hear the gospel? (Acts 15:7).

If James and Peter, in Acts 15:13 to 18, said that God’s program in this age of grace is to visit Gentiles, why did they say they would go to the Jews? (Galatians 2:9).

Why did Paul, 25 years after Christ died on the cross to abolish the old testament (Hebrews 8:9 to 13), call Israel’s high priest the servant of God and apologize to him? (Acts 23:1 to 5).

Why did Paul, outside of Israel’s land, wait until Israel had the first chance at the gospel, before he said, “Lo, we turn to the Gentiles?” (Acts 13:45 and 46 - Acts 8:5 and 6 - Romans 11:11 - Romans 11:30).

Why did Paul contend for no circumcision in Acts 15:1 to 19 and then circumcise Timothy in Acts 16:3?

Why did the Book of Acts, written by Luke, close suddenly several years before Paul and Luke died (II Timothy 4:6 to 11); before Paul ceased to act?

Why did Paul cure many people with handkerchiefs and aprons in Acts 19:11 to 13 and then later on write a faithful saint to take wine for his sickness? (I Timothy 5:23).

Why did Paul say in Acts 28:20 that he was a prisoner for “the hope of Israel” and then in Ephesians 3:1 to 6 and Colossians 4:3 and 4 that he was the prisoner for the dispensation of grace, the mystery of Christ for Gentiles?

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SEVEN

READ JOB 1:6 TO 12 - JOB 25:4 TO 6 - JOB 14:10 - JOB 14:14 - JOB 19:25 TO 27

JOB’S GREAT QUESTIONS

The Book of Job is filled with questions. I have just counted 311 questions in this strange and interesting Book. Surely Job is one of the Bible messages which is neglected so far as most Christians are concerned. In Job we have questions from God, from Job, from Satan, and a number of questions from Job’s counselors. In chapters 38 and 39 we find 59 questions which God asked of Job. He asked Job, “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?” (Job 38:4).

Satan asked God a very interesting question concerning Job in Job 1:9, “Doth Job fear God for nought?” This was asked after God had asked Satan, “Hast thou considered My servant Job?” Every Christian should know the answers to these questions. Satan has considered every servant of the Lord. (I Peter 5:8 - II Corinthians 2:11). And no servant of the Lord fears God for nought. God gives eternal life to any believing sinner who will receive the Lord Jesus Christ and His shed blood, and then pays well for all who, by the Holy Spirit, serve the Father and His Son. (I Corinthians 3:14 - Hebrews 6:10 - Luke 14:14).

Now, some other questions in Job: “HOW THEN CAN MAN BE JUSTIFIED WITH GOD? OR HOW CAN HE BE CLEAN THAT IS BORN OF A WOMAN? (Job 25:4).

“BUT MAN DIETH, AND casteth AWAY: YEA, MAN GIVETH UP THE GHOST, AND WHERE IS HE?” (Job 14:10).

“IF A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN? (Job 14:14).

No more important questions have ever been considered by any man on this earth unless it was the question of Judge Pilate, in Matthew 27:22, "What shall I do then with Jesus Which is called Christ?" HOW CAN A MAN BE JUST WITH GOD? God created man in His own image and likeness. (Genesis 1:26). God established the law of sin and death. God's Word is, that no unrighteous man can inherit the kingdom of God. (I Corinthians 6:9). God's Word also is, there is none righteous, no, not one. (Romans 3:10). Can an unrighteous man become righteous? Can a sinner get back in the spiritual and moral condition that Adam was in before he sinned? By the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight. (Romans 3:20).

"BUT NOW" - Hear the good news: "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested" - "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Romans 3:24).

No one ever heard better news than this which is confirmed by Acts 13:39: "And by Him (Christ) all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." By grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His shed blood, a guilty sinner is not only forgiven all of his sins, but he stands in God's presence as though he had never sinned.

Until the Lord Jesus returns to receive His own unto Himself both sinners and saints will continue to die. And every intelligent human being should be interested in Job's question, "MAN WASTETH AWAY AND GIVETH UP THE GHOST AND WHERE IS HE?" "Where are the dead?"

The answer to this question is Ecclesiastes 12:7 - Luke 23:42 and 43 - Luke 16:23 to 31 - II Corinthians 5:6 to 10 - Philippians 1:21 to 23 - II Peter 1:13 and 14 and Revelation 20:13 and 14.

Then the all-important question; IF A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN? Christ's answer to this question is John 11:25 and 11:43: "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth." For saints, the answer is Colossians 3:3 and 4: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." For sinners, the answer is Revelation 21:8: "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." (I Peter 3:18).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-EIGHT

READ GENESIS 1:26 TO 28 - GENESIS 3:14 AND 15 - GENESIS 9:1 TO 6

GENESIS 11:1 TO 9 - DEUTERONOMY 28:13 - DEUTERONOMY 28:44

DANIEL 2:36 TO 45 - LUKE 2:1 TO 3 - REVELATION 13:1 TO 18

I CORINTHIANS 15:20 TO 26

THE HEADS IN THE BIBLE

It is most interesting to compare Genesis 1:27 and 28, and Genesis 9:1 and 2, which we quote: "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." "Be fruitful and multiply, replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish, the fowl and every living thing." "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air."

Let us read and compare Psalm 8:4 to 8 with the wonderful truth of Hebrews 2:6 to 9. Note the last sentence in Hebrews 2:8 and 9: "But now we see not yet all things put under Him. But we see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

We shall learn that what was lost in the first Adam shall be restored in the last Adam. Read I Corinthians 15:20 to 26.

God said in so many words, to Adam; "I want you to be My head on earth." But Satan came on the scene and put God's first man under his feet. Then God promised the Redeemer, the Second Man, Who would put Satan under His feet. Christ will surely do this. (Genesis 3:14 and 15).

Satan became the prince of the world. Note Luke 4:5 to 7: "And the devil, taking Him (Christ) up into a high mountain, shewed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee."

The people on earth from Adam to Noah continued to grow worse and worse until God said, "the end of all flesh is come," and He had Noah prepare the ark in which his righteous family was saved.

Over the renovated earth God placed Noah, establishing human government. (Genesis 9:1 to 7). But Noah sinned and Ham sinned (Genesis 9:20 to 22); And then all of the human race sinned at the tower of Babel, and God destroyed their buildings and their religion and scattered them abroad on the face of all the earth. (Genesis 11:9). Then God gave them up; and they went in to universal idolatry, adultery and unmentionable sins. (Romans 1:21 to 32).

Out of the wreck God chose a man as good as dead - Abram. Note Hebrews 11:12: "Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude." God promised a great nation out of Abraham. (Genesis 12:2). Israel came from Abraham. Jehovah said to the nation that came from Abraham: "The Lord shall make thee THE HEAD, and not the tail; and thou shalt BE ABOVE ONLY, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them." If not, what? "He shall be THE HEAD, and thou shalt be THE TAIL." (Deuteronomy 28:13 and 28:44).

It was certainly "Heads" and "Tails" with Israel. Up and down. "The Lord removed Israel out of His sight. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day." "And the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of My sight, as I have removed Israel." (II Kings 17:23 and II Kings 23:27).

Away to Babylon went Judah, and "the times of the Gentiles" politically, began. Then God's message to Nebuchadnezzar was delivered by Daniel. "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art THIS HEAD of gold. (Daniel 2:37 to 40).

According to Daniel 2:34 to 45, a Stone will be let down from the heaven and fill the whole earth.

That Stone is Christ, now in heaven Head over all things to the Church. (Ephesians 1:23). He is the coming Prince of Peace and will be the only Ideal Head. (Revelation 19:11 to 21 - II Thessalonians 2:1 to 12 - Isaiah 9:6 and 7 - Matthew 25:31 to 41 - I Corinthians 15).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-NINE

READ ACTS 2:5 - ACTS 2:16 AND 36 - ACTS 7:55 TO 8:2 - ACTS 5:29 TO 32

ACTS 10:28 - ACTS 11:1 TO 5 - ACTS 15:16 TO 24

ACTS 22:17 TO 21 - ACTS 13:5 TO 15, 46

GLEANINGS FROM THE BOOK OF ACTS

The Book of Acts covers a period of about 30 years, beginning with the acts of Peter and the Eleven at Jerusalem and closing with the acts of Paul in Rome some 1500 miles from Jerusalem. About the time Paul left Ephesus to go to Jerusalem, and from there to Rome, he wrote: "So that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ" ("not where Christ was named") - (Romans 15:19 and 20).

Peter and the Eleven could not have said this; for in the Book of Acts we find no mention of their spiritual activities or missionary journeys outside of Israel's land. Several of Paul's missionary journeys are recorded. Peter and the Eleven had their headquarters at Jerusalem. (Acts 8:1 - Acts 15:1 to 10 - Galatians 1:19 and 2:1 to 9).

Paul's headquarters for some years were at Antioch of Syria, outside of Israel's land. Then Paul spent 18 months at Corinth (Acts 18:11). Then Paul held meetings in the school of Tyrannus in Ephesus: "And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." (Acts 19:10). Paul was in Ephesus more than two years: "Therefore, watch and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one day and night with tears." (Acts 20:31).

In Acts 2:1 we read "when the day of Pentecost was fully come." Then some 20 years later Paul hasted "if it were possible for him to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost." (Acts 20:16). So during the 'Acts' period there were about 30 Pentecosts; one each year. There can be no Pentecost without Jerusalem or the nation Israel. Pentecost was one of Jehovah's feasts for Israel, fifty days after Passover and Firstfruits. (Leviticus 23:15 and 16). Christ is our Passover; and on the third day He became the Firstfruits of them that slept. (I Corinthians 5:7 and I Corinthians 15:29).

In the Book of Acts the word "Israel" is used 21 times, the word "Jew" (Jews) 81 times, whereas the word "Christian" is used twice. (Acts 11:26 and 26:28). One other time the word "Christian" is found in the Bible. (I Peter 4:16).

In Acts "Jerusalem" is mentioned 60 times. The one hundred and twenty tarried at Jerusalem for the advent of the Holy Spirit, in obedience to Luke 24:49 - Acts 1:5 and 8. Read Acts 1:12 to 15.

Peter, with the Eleven, first used the keys of the kingdom of heaven in Jerusalem, addressing "devout Jews out of every nation under heaven"; "all the house of Israel." (Acts 2:5 - Acts

2:36 - Matthew 16:18 to 20). The Twelve filled Jerusalem with their doctrine (Christ). (Acts 5:28). The apostles were put in the common prison in Jerusalem for preaching Christ. (Acts 5:18). The angry Jews, including Saul of Tarsus, stoned Stephen to death in Jerusalem. (Acts 7:59 to Acts 8:3).

Shortly after this, Saul met the risen Christ near Damascus, where he was born out of due time, to be a pattern, being the only unsaved person on earth who saw Christ after His resurrection. (Acts 9:1 to 15 - I Corinthians 15:6 to 10 - I Timothy 1:12 and I Timothy 1:16). Paul was in the temple in Jerusalem in a trance when Christ appeared to him to order him out of Jerusalem; "far hence unto the Gentiles." (Acts 22:17 to 21). The all-important council as to whether Christian Gentiles were to be circumcised and put under the law was held at Jerusalem. (Acts 15:1 to 19). The decision was, one order for believing Jews - another order for believing Gentiles. (Acts 21:23 to 25 - Acts 15:16 to 24 - I Corinthians 9:20 to 25).

The first miracle of Peter in Acts was to heal a Jew and send him into the Jerusalem temple, leaping and praising God. (Acts 3:1 to 11). Then Peter said to Israel: "to you first." (Acts 3:26).

The Lord, by Peter, presented a new kingdom proposition to Israel, because of Christ's prayer on the cross. (Luke 23:34 - Acts 3).

The first miracle of Paul, in Acts, was to pronounce a judgment on a Jew and send him out in darkness. (Acts 13:11). Then Paul said to Israel, "it was first to you," but now "we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:46 - Acts 28:28).

LESSON ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY

READ EPHESIANS 4:21 TO 32 - EPHESIANS 5:1 TO 16 - COLOSSIANS 3:1 TO 17.

THE CHRISTIAN'S MOUTH

Let us first emphasize Ephesians 4:28 and 29 and Colossians 3:8 and 9:

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another." "Let him that stole steal no more."

Why did the Holy Spirit instruct saints, not to lie, not to steal, not to blaspheme, not to be angry unto wrath? Because saints were doing those things in Paul's day, as they are to-day. Demas was for some time a faithful saint of the Lord and the fellow-labourer of Paul. But the hour came when, so to speak, Demas turned his back on Paul and the Lord and went to a wicked city, because he loved the things of the world. (2 Timothy 4:10). Who could count the great multitude of Christians, who have ceased to be spiritual shining lights for the Lord Jesus, because of the love of the world? They are not obeying Ephesians 5:3 and 4: "Fornication, and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient."

God's instructions to the saints in this age of grace are very clear; "let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." (Ephesians 4:29). The word "corrupt" is the Greek, meaning "rotten." Think of "rotten" words coming from the mouth of a Christian. Some Christians are very careless as to their speech. God declares that "it is a shame even to speak of

those things which are done of them (sinners) in secret.” This means that saints should be very careful about repeating the filthy, rotten, profane words uttered by sinners, “who are corrupt and speak wickedly.” “They set their mouth against the heavens.” (Psalm 73: 8 and 9).

Every child of God would do well to pray with the Psalmist, “set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.” (Psalm 141:3). And that child should obey Colossians 4:6: “let your speech be always with grace.” “Grace” Christians are to have “grace” speech. I am sure that almost every honest Christian will say, “my mouth has said many things that should never have been uttered by a child of God.” Did you know that the word “mouth” is mentioned more than 100 times in Psalms and Proverbs? In these Books we read much of the saint’s mouth and the sinner’s mouth. We read; “the mouth of the sinner is full of cursing and deceit.” (Psalm 10:7). In Psalm 59:12 we read of the sin of their mouth. Yes, the mouth does sin, although the heart and mind are responsible for much of the sin of the mouth. The Psalmist said, “the Lord put a new song in my mouth,” and he prayed, “let the words of my mouth be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord.” (Psalm 19:14). Let us pray this daily.

God’s Word is clear, that He will not hold guiltless the man that taketh His name in vain. (Exodus 20:7). Some sinners use the name of God or Christ, in profanity, many, many times each day. Most of these men would not kill a man a day, or a dozen men, or a hundred men a day. They acknowledge that to kill a fellow-man would be a great sin. Sin is the transgression of the law. The law says, “thou shalt not kill.” This is the sixth commandment. Why did God place the “profanity” commandment ahead of the murder commandment? When you next decide to use the Name of God or the Lord Jesus Christ in cursing, ask and answer this question. Surely, if you have been saved by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, you will definitely decide not to use profanity, even to quote the words of a sinner. If you have not been saved by the grace of God, and faith in the shed blood of Christ, if you will receive God’s grace and God’s Son, God will pardon all of your wicked past, and help you overcome your evil habits by the new Divine power and strength that will be yours.

In James 3:9 and 10, we read concerning the use of the tongue: “therewith bless we God, the Father, and therewith curse we men, made after the similitude of God . . . Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing.”

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE WISE ARCHITECT

When Jesus Christ was here on earth He said, concerning John the Baptist, “Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” Matthew 11:11.

John was filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth. The wise architect for years was wise in his own conceit. His name then was “Saul.” He became the most spiritual, fruitful Christian of all times and wrote about one half of the Books of the New Testament Scriptures. I believe, measured by true standards, he was the greatest man who ever lived on this planet, after the fall of Adam, with the exception of the Man Christ Jesus. I hope that you will read Paul’s autobiography with great interest. In the first verse we quote the Greek word translated

masterbuilder is “architekton” from which we get our word “architect.” This word means really “chief builder.”

In this autobiography we are quoting the very words of Saul, the Jew, who became Paul, the Christian.

ACCORDING TO THE GRACE OF GOD WHICH IS GIVEN UNTO ME, AS A WISE MASTERBUILDER, I HAVE LAID THE FOUNDATION, AND ANOTHER BUILDETH THEREON. BUT LET EVERY MAN TAKE HEED HOW HE BUILDETH THEREUPON.

SINCE YE SEEK A PROOF OF CHRIST SPEAKING IN ME, WHICH TO YOUWARD IS NOT WEAK, BUT IS MIGHTY IN YOU.

I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST: NEVERTHELESS I LIVE; YET NOT I, BUT CHRIST LIVETH IN ME: AND THE LIFE WHICH I NOW LIVE IN THE FLESH I LIVE BY THE FAITH OF THE SON OF GOD, WHO LOVED ME, AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR ME. I DO NOT FRUSTRATE THE GRACE OF GOD: FOR IF RIGHTEOUSNESS COME BY THE LAW, THEN CHRIST IS DEAD IN VAIN.

PARAGRAPH ONE

For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles. Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office. Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

PARAGRAPH TWO

According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry. Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. But God

forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

PARAGRAPH THREE

I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people. And when he had given him license, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying, Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defense which I make now unto you. (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,) I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.

PARAGRAPH FOUR

Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these

accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar. I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews: Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagoge, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds. And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them: And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.

PARAGRAPH FIVE

Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 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, 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: Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God and wasted it: And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Afterward I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ: But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me. Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen; and they unto the circumcision. Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do. But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I

saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ. My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you. Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

PARAGRAPH SIX

For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you; for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand. For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you. But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; Whosoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company. But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law,

that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you. Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 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. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth. lest I make my brother to offend. That I may know Christ and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

PARAGRAPH SEVEN

Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel. For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons. Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, and have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were

with me. I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; And labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

PARAGRAPH EIGHT

But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all

boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead, according to my gospel: Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evildoer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.

PARAGRAPH NINE

Whereof I Paul am made a minister; Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily. Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words; Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ,) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he

purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full power of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen. This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

Remember that this entire autobiography of the Apostle Paul is copied from the Bible: from the Book of Acts and from Paul's Epistles. In these Books we learn that Paul referred to himself in the first person pronoun more than one thousand times. He was not egotistical, conceited, presumptuous or deluded.

Perhaps you have heard of the Jewish rabbi in London who said to one of the leading evangelical pastors of that city, "Doctor, it was not your Jesus who gave to you the evangelical Christianity which you preach and practice; it was the apostle Paul." "Your Jesus was a religious Jew, born as a Jew, who lived among the Jews and taught the Jews." The rabbi was not altogether in error, though he was not altogether correct in his statement. He undoubtedly was more familiar with the synoptic Records, Matthew, Mark and Luke, than he was with John's Gospel which teems with evangelical truth. However, even in John's Record, Christ said, "we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews." John 4:22.

While that rabbi was apparently ignorant of the fact that Paul received his message from Christ in heaven he knew from reading Matthew, Mark, Luke and John the truth that every Christian should know, the truth of Romans 15:8: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." Read the plain statement of Jesus Christ in Matthew 15:24: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Millions of Christians, who have read this plain statement of the Lord Jesus, obviously do not believe it. They have read Acts 13:23 and Acts 5:29 to 32, but the very large majority of them have paid little or no attention to the most important facts stated in these Scriptures. Note them: "Of this mans (David's) seed hath God, according to His promise, raised unto ISRAEL a Saviour, Jesus." "Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance to ISRAEL, and forgiveness of sins." Where did the Gentiles come in? They came in when Israel was set aside. Romans 11:15. That's where Paul's distinctive "grace" message came in after Israel rejected Christ both in incarnation and in resurrection.

The great turning-point in God's dealings with Israel and the Gentiles is told by Paul in Acts 13:46. When he said to the Jews: "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you (Jews): but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

Then Paul wrote one of the most significant statements in all of the Bible.

"FOR AS YE (GENTILES) IN TIMES PAST HAVE NOT BELIEVED GOD, YET HAVE NOW OBTAINED MERCY THROUGH THEIR (THE JEWS') UNBELIEF" Romans 11:30.

THE CASTING AWAY OF ISRAEL—THE RECONCILING OF THE WORLD (THE GENTILES)—Romans 11:15.

The dispensation of the Grace of God for Gentiles was committed unto Paul, by a special revelation from Christ in heaven. Ephesians 3:1 to 5. This dispensation was ushered in after Israel had committed the second of the two great sins mentioned in Acts 7:51 to 58 - They betrayed and murdered the Son of God and then they resisted the Holy Spirit's Witness of the resurrection of that Son of God. This is the message also of Acts 5:29 to 32.

Every Jew and every Gentile during this present Divine economy, or age of grace, must come as a condemned Child of Adam to the Cross of Calvary to be saved by grace, apart from any of Moses' law program or any Christian religion, by faith in the eternal, omnipotent Christ Who put away sin by His once-for-all sacrifice, but Who is now the living, glorified Man in heaven.